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## Where Y'at?: An Evaluation of Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs in New Orleans

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# *Where Y'at?:* An Evaluation of Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs in New Orleans



**Alena Anderson**

With

Michelle M. Thompson, PhD.

University of New  
Orleans-

Department of Planning  
and Urban Studies

**Spring 2012**

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## ABSTRACT

This report highlights several Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in New Orleans, LA. Designated Main Streets programs and other Business and Property Owners Associations (BPOAs) have been included to illustrate the diversity of approaches to increasing local economic development along vital commercial corridors of the city. An examination of the national Main Street Program and how this is adopted by local organizations is described. Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) are used as vehicles to encourage and inspire urban economic development. Based upon interviews with program managers and community residents, the impact of Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) is summarized. Since the goals of Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) are as unique as the neighborhoods they reside in, there has not been way to summarize the findings in a heuristic or best practice with each case study. This is a first look at how the program goals have been applied and can be a starting point for discussions on if/how/why one program may be considered more relevant and/or successful than another.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## Chapter 1:

### INTRODUCTION/ PURPOSE

After Hurricane Katrina, the National Trust for Historic Preservation selected several local commercial corridors to be designated Main Streets. Like many urban Main Streets throughout the United States, these programs were presented with specific sets of unique historical and cultural challenges to economic development. In addition to recognized Main Streets, other Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) have committed themselves to similar revitalization efforts. Several of these Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) have obtained a substantial amount of attention from local media agents, officials and planning professionals affiliated with neighborhood development and economic growth.

New Orleans Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) are designed to minimize blight, increase the number of jobs and businesses, attract private developers and investors, support historic preservation, promote arts /cultural identity, and increase community engagement in neighborhoods. Though New Orleans Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) have been able to have a positive impact on the communities, there is significant room for improvement.

This report evaluates the existing state of specific Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in several unique New Orleans neighborhoods. The goal of this report is to provide local officials, planners and future researchers with a consolidated reference to the goals, objectives and missions of existing Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in New Orleans. This study also provides some examples of programs, projects and funding resources utilized by these Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) to increase economic activity in each prospective neighborhood studied. Information regarding supporting businesses, primary stakeholders, partnerships and events affiliated with Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) will provide insight on potential areas of improvement. Some best practices and guidelines for assessment were included to provide some strategies for short and long term goals for economic development.



## Chapter 2:

### BACKGROUND

#### National Trust for Historic Preservation:



#### History of the Main Street Center

Prior to World War II, main streets functioned as primary nodes of commercial activity in the United States. These walkable corridors allowed for mixed land use and medium density development. However, with the proliferation of the automobile, suburbanization and sprawl in the 1960's and 1970's, the commercial centers of cities experienced a sharp decline. Many Small "Mom and Pop" Shops were forced to close their doors due to the growth and popularity of "Big Box" Retail stores and shopping centers. As a result, cities experienced a substantial amount of urban decay and significant loss of their tax base.

*"People forgot how important their downtown and its historic commercial buildings were in reflecting their community's unique heritage."*

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**

In 1980, the National Trust for Historic Preservation established the National Main Street Center. This center has been instrumental in establishing, supporting, and promoting local commercial development and community

revitalization all over the United States. The National Main Street Center's, *Four Point Approach*<sup>1</sup>, has been recognized as one of the fundamental guide for the organization, implementation and management of Main Street Programs.

With the negative effects of sprawl beginning to surface, cities began to establish community revitalization projects and Main Street Programs. Community leaders started to realize that the cultural and historic nature of urban centers was lost in most suburban communities. In 2005, roughly 25 years after it was first established, the National Main Street Center has been accredited for helping over 1,500 communities create 72,000 new businesses and 330,000 new jobs.<sup>2</sup>

Based on what was learned from the national study, the National Trust for Historic Preservation established the following criteria for which to develop and maintain successful Main Street Programs.

<sup>1</sup> "National Accreditation Standards of Performance" National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2012. Web. 21 Mar. 2012. <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-programs/performance-standards.html#>

<sup>2</sup> "Main Street Center History". National Trust for Historic Preservation. Web 2012. 21 March 2012. <http://www.preservationnation.org/about-us/history.html>

## **10 Standards for Main Street ® Programs<sup>3</sup>**

It is the responsibility of Main Street® Coordinating Programs to make sure that Main Street Programs are adhering to the following standards:

- 1) Have a paid membership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- 2) Hire a Paid Professional as Executive Director/ program overseer
- 3) Designate an elected/ appointed Board of Directors and Committee Members
- 4) Establish a written "Vision" and "Mission Statement"
- 5) Is supported by local residents ,surrounding community members, public and private sector and partners as a viable commercial revitalization effort
- 6) Complete an in- depth work plan
- 7) Make sure the program has an sufficient operating budget
- 8) Ensure that Historic Preservation is a major proponent of the urban design, construction and revitalization efforts affiliated with the Main Street program
- 9) Collect, Study and Analyze Data exemplifying the effects of the Main Street Program on the local economy
- 10) Offers training for staff members, community partners and residents

*"The National Trust for Historic Preservation® owns the trademark for the phrase "Main Street" as it applies to the revitalization of traditional and historic commercial districts."*

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**

In addition to adhering to strict standards, organizations participating in the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program must also follow a specific organizational structure, the Four- Point Approach, in order to become officially designated.

## **Four- Point Approach© TM<sup>4</sup>**

### **1) Organization**

involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

### **2) Promotion**

sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourage consumers and investors to live, work, shop, and play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and

<sup>3</sup> National Accreditation Standards of Performance" National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2012. Web. 21 Mar. 2012.

<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-programs/performance-standards.html#>

<sup>4</sup> "Main Street Four Point Approach". The National Trust For Historic Preservation. 2012. 21 March 2012.

<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-approach/>



marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

### **3) Design Elements**

make Main Streets more attractive and inviting places for commercial and human activity. From creating elaborate window displays, designated building improvements, walkable sidewalks, streetscapes, and signage, there are certain elements that make these attractive. Main Street Programs often provide economic incentives for their members that include incorporating historic preservation buildings practices and certain rehabilitation and remodeling standards.

### **4) Economic Restructuring**

strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street Program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Though the National Trust for Historic Preservation has strict rules and standards for participating organizations, there are some benefits that designations have that are not available for similar organizations affiliated with the commercial corridor revitalization. Only designated Main Street Programs are eligible for certain grants and funds affiliated with the Main Street Program. These funds are facilitated through the regional (state) Main Street Office.

## **Louisiana Main Street Programs**

The following section provides an overview of the Louisiana Main Street Program guidelines and provisions. This information was gleaned from available public documents including websites.

### **Louisiana Main Street Program**

P.O. Box 44247 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804  
Phone (225) 342- 8162  
Fax (225) 219- 0765  
Email: [rscriber@crt.state.la.us](mailto:rscriber@crt.state.la.us)  
Website: [www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm](http://www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm)

**Figure 1. Map of Louisiana Main Streets**



Source: "Louisiana Main Street Program". The National Trust for Historic Preservation. Web. 2012. 21 March 2012. [www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm](http://www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm)

### **Louisiana Main Street Programs and Grants**

#### **Louisiana Main to Main Street Program: "A Cultural Roadshow"**

The State Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism has established an annual month long initiative in November to help encourage local economic development, increase cultural awareness and promote Main Street programs across the state. As part of this project, state-wide Main Street Programs host fairs, events or festivals that showcase the food, heritage and identity of various communities. From "The Giant Omelet" Celebration in Abbeville to "Chalking up St. Claude" Project

in New Orleans, this program is designed to attract visitors and locals alike to Main Streets across Louisiana.<sup>5</sup>

### **Louisiana Main Street Redevelopment Incentive Grant Program**

*Louisiana Main Street Training and Technical Services*

*Managed by: The Office of Cultural Development Division of Historic Preservation*

The Louisiana Division of the Historic Preservation has created a program that provides financial incentives for restoring older buildings along designated commercial corridors, in order to preserve the historical and cultural identity, aesthetics and design elements of buildings in New Orleans and other Main Street host cities in the state. For developers, business and property owners to be eligible for this grant, standards for the rehabilitation of the interior and exterior of buildings need to be adhered to. The character, features and historical use of the property must be preserved. Modifications due to severe degradation and deterioration must be clearly documented and justified.

### **What is the difference between urban and rural “Main Streets” in Louisiana?**

Of the 34 designated Main Streets in Louisiana, 29 of them are located in rural towns and communities. New Orleans is the only city that is the host of urban Main Streets. This has created some disconnect between the types of programs. The standards for Main Streets do not account for the diversity of demographics of residents, needs and infrastructure nor competition amongst competing corridors in urban communities. This is one reason why some Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in New Orleans have refrained from participating in the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program.

The following urban Main Street Program Case Studies will exemplify possible best practices and/or future recommendations for Main Street Programs and other Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in New Orleans.

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<sup>5</sup> “Louisiana Main Street Program”. The National Trust for Historic Preservation. Web. 2012. 21 March 2012. [www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm](http://www.louisianamp.org/intro.htm)

## Case Studies: Urban “Main Streets”

### Introduction

Though the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program was designed to help revitalize rural main streets, the model has also been implemented in several urban communities across the United States. Due to the sheer size, limited financial resources and social/ cultural issues, urban main streets must adhere to different challenges than their rural counterparts. New Orleans Main Street Programs and other Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) have to adhere to the

certain bureaucratic idiosyncrasies that affect their effectiveness and make coordination amongst the programs very difficult. Despite these challenges, there are a few cities that have been able to establish successful urban Main Street Programs. Both Boston, MA and Baltimore, MD have been able to maintain viable and sustainable designated Main Street Programs. Many of the strategies implemented in these cities can be applied to New Orleans Main Street Programs.

### **Boston Main Streets: Boston, Massachusetts**

### History

In 1983, local officials introduced the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Program as a primary means of improving the quality of life and encouraging reinvestment in Roslindale neighborhood near Boston, MA. By using the organizational structure designed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, within three years, the volunteer operated organization was able to help create over 130 new jobs and \$5 million dollars in investment. Aesthetic modifications, such as the renovation of 43 dilapidated commercial buildings and over 70 façade improvements, revamped the historic nature and charm of the Roslindale community.<sup>6</sup>

Roughly 12 years after the Main Street Program in Roslindale was established, the mayor of Boston, Thomas Menino, encouraged the National Trust for Historic Preservation to modify their Main Street Program for his city. In 1995, the Boston Main Streets program became the first urban Main Streets Program. Unlike many rural communities that have participated in the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Boston Main Streets Program involved several neighborhoods with their own impediments, cultural identity, social dynamics, character and needs. Currently, there are nearly twenty different commercial districts that have been established since 1995. In addition to community organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring, many designated Main Street Programs in Boston also incorporate a technology component into the organizational structure of their program.

**Figure 2. Mission Hills Main Street in Boston**



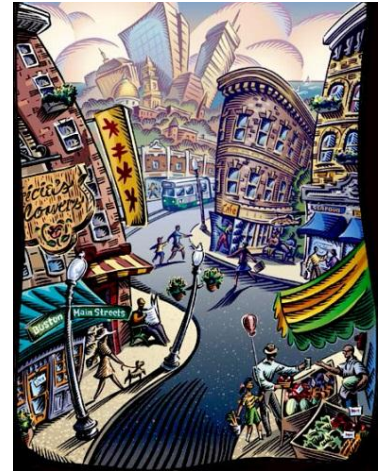
Source: *Mission Hills Main Street at Night*. Digital Image. LightBoston.org. Web. 18 May 2012. <http://www.lightboston.org/images/MissionHill-Kiosk.jpg>

<sup>6</sup> "About Main Streets Boston." *About Boston Main Streets*. City of Boston, 2012. Web. 21 May 2012. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/obd/about.asp>

Figure 3. Boston Main Streets Poster

## Overview

One of the major reasons why the Boston Main Streets Programs have been so successful is that receive financial assistance, technical support, training and oversight from the City of Boston Main Streets office. Six full time city staffers work within the City of Boston Main Streets office. In addition to having support from the employees in the City of Boston Main Streets office, managers of these designated main street districts also have access to architects, designers, transportation planners and technical assistance specialists that also work for the city of Boston. By having designated representation in city government, these programs have viable liaisons that have a firm understanding of the specific needs of each designated commercial district and have the resources to enhance to best suit each specific program as well. The City of Boston Main Streets office works with hired executive directors from each Main Streets Program to fulfill annual goals. Despite the fact that the organizational structures of Main Street Programs are standardized, the specific activities that each program reflects the cultural, physical and social identity of that particular commercial district. Some of these include building façade improvement grants, historic tax credits, monthly and annual local fundraising activities and events that are designed to help promote and revitalize the district.



Source: *Boston Main Streets Graphic*. Digital image. Jim Starr Images. Jim Starr. Web. 17 May 2012. <http://www.jimstarr.com/Pages/Styles.aspx?style=14>

## Program Funding

The primary source of funding available for Boston Main Streets Programs is provided by the City of Boston. These funds include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds and Neighborhood Development Funding (NDF). The funding provided by the city is utilized for the executive director's salary, physical improvements, technical and marketing/promotion. Some additional supportive services that are provided by the city include design assistance and the necessary training to allow each designated commercial district to be viable and successful.

## Measuring the Success of Boston Main Streets

In 2010, the City of Boston Main Street office released data on the economic impact these Main Street commercial districts have had since 1995. According to the City of Boston, over 700 new businesses and 5,000 new jobs have been created between 1995 to 2010. <sup>7</sup>In addition to the impact on the local economy, these programs have improved the quality of life for the stakeholders, residents and consumers that utilize this space.

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<sup>7</sup> "About Main Streets Boston." *About Boston Main Streets*. City of Boston, 2012. Web. 21 May 2012. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/obd/about.asp>

## Special Features

- As seen in many urban centers across the country, the diverse mix of neighborhoods and commercial districts allow for unique strategies to best suit each specific commercial district to be implemented. The fact that the overseers of these programs, at the local government level, have a firm understanding of the unique strengths, attributes and potential for investment of each area is an essential reason why Boston has emerged as a premier place for urban Main Streets.
- Boston Main Street Program coordinators strategically invest in the historical, economic and cultural centers of various neighborhoods around the city. Individuals involved with organizing these Main Street Programs and key stakeholders are able to create nodes of sustainable economic growth.
- As seen in the Boston Main Streets Program, it is not the role of the local government to define the social and cultural identity of the designated commercial district. It is up to the residents, business owners and stakeholders to take the lead in perpetuating local economic growth and promotion of various events and activities sponsored by the program.
- New Orleans and other cities like Boston, share a similar urban framework for the numerous commercial districts. Thus, there is hope that similar Main Street sponsored commercial districts can be successfully implemented.

## **Baltimore Development Corporation and the Baltimore Main Streets Program:** **Baltimore, Maryland**

### History

Baltimore Main Streets operates within the Baltimore Development Corporation, a 501 c (3) designated non-profit partnered with the City of Baltimore. The Baltimore Main Streets Program was established by the Mayor's office in 2000. The Baltimore Main Streets program established its framework by utilizing the Four-Point Approach, sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to help revitalize and increase economic growth in many of Baltimore's historic and cultural neighborhoods.

*"The City of Boston, through a community-based, public-private partnership, has established Boston Main Streets, a successful model for urban commercial district revitalization that strengthens local business districts through strong organizational development, community participation, resident and merchant education and sustainable development." City of Boston Main Streets*

### Overview

Currently, there are ten (10) designated Main Street Programs operating within the city of Baltimore. Like in Boston, the designated commercial districts affiliated with the city-sponsored Main Street Program represents a diverse mix of neighborhoods. From boutiques to bio-tech

research, the unique characteristics of variety commercial districts seem to be supported by this program.<sup>8</sup>

### Program Funding

In a recent article published by the National Historic Preservation, a recent visit of the director at the Baltimore Main Streets Program to the White House was showcased. The Revolving Microloan Program is innovative financing strategy that has been successfully implemented by the Federal Hill Main Street to promote entrepreneurship and financial assistance for the small business members of their organization.<sup>9</sup> Currently the program offers small loans, sums of \$ 3, 000 or less, with a 5% percent interest for three years or less. This program gives loan recipients a mini boost to get started, grow and contribute to the economic prosperity of the designated Main Street Program.

### Measuring the Success of the Baltimore Main Streets and Baltimore Development Corporation

As host of the 2012 National Main Street Program Conference, Baltimore Main Streets is gaining national recognition as being the next up and coming locale for urban Main Street investment and success.

### Special Feature

- One of the biggest barriers to success to urban Main Streets is lack of adequate funding to support entrepreneurs and local small business owners. The Revolving Micro Loan Program is just one example of a creative financing strategy that can be incorporated by other Main Street organizations in other various urban communities.

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<sup>8</sup> Dono, Andrea. "Main Street Takes on the White House." *Main Street Story of the Week*. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 7 Dec. 2012. Web. 21 May 2012. <http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2011/111207/main-street-takes-the-white.html>

<sup>9</sup> *Baltimore Main Streets*. Baltimore Development Corporation, 2005. Web. 21 May 2012. <http://www.baltimoremainstreets.com/neighborhoods.html>



## Chapter 3:

### METHODOLOGY/ LIMITING CONDITIONS

The project used primary and secondary information to identify, analyze and report on the state of Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) in New Orleans, LA. The primary data was obtained through interviews using the survey instrument found in the appendix. The survey questions were developed using standard qualitative guidelines and tested in a pilot prior to using them with the survey participants. All participants were provided with the IRB/Human Subjects Survey protocol and were notified that their answers were going to be recorded and included in a public document.

Secondary information, including the literature review and best practices summary, was used to identify and explain data gaps that were caused by lack of literature and/or historic references (e.g. change of director or staff at the Main Street organization/ or other Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs).

All of the known, and active, New Orleans Main Street Programs were included in the study. Two (2) other Business and Property Owners Associations (BPOAs) were incorporated in the analysis. They were identified first from the State records, survey from the internet and by word of mouth.

The study limitations are typical for a research project. Being able to locate historic documents, interview the prior program leaders and/or business participants, obtaining financial records and operation manuals were not consistent or easy to obtain. The ability to generalize and/or do comparison between the programs or evaluate using a best practice scale was not possible. The interviewees were, at times, cautious in their responses.

## Chapter 4:

### ORGANIZATION PROFILES

#### “Main Street” Programs

##### **North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI)**

**Office Address:** 632 N. Rampart Street New Orleans, LA 70112

**Mailing Address:** 632 N. Rampart Street New Orleans, LA 70112

**Website:** [www.northrampartmainstreet.org](http://www.northrampartmainstreet.org)

**Email:** [manager@northrampartstreet.org](mailto:manager@northrampartstreet.org)

**Phone:** 504-256-4848

**President/ Executive Director or Representative:** Laurie Taups



**Official Designation:** The North Rampart Main Street Inc. is a designated 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization that is also recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a designated urban Main Street.

**Official Boundaries:** **Official Boundaries of North Rampart Main Street, Inc.:** Canal Street to Esplanade on North Rampart Street

##### **Background:**

The North Rampart Main Street Inc. was established in 2006 to help the surrounding community recover from Hurricane Katrina. The organization focused on strengthening the viability of the neighborhood by supporting the renovation and redevelopment of many commercial, mixed use and residential properties on North Rampart Street. Though the organization was designed to help the community recover from the aftermath of the storm, a great deal of the structural damage, blight and crime plaguing the corridor was a problem even before Hurricane Katrina hit in August of 2005. Over the last five years, the organization has contributed greatly to the continuous prosperity of the corridor. NRMSI has helped business obtain available tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, attract new business and investors into the area, increase the walkability and change the negative preconceived attitudes about the corridor. With the help of NRMSI, North Rampart Street has reemerged as a premier vibrant, progressive, mixed use corridor.

##### **Funding Sources:**

The NRMSI, like most Main Street programs in New Orleans, acquire a majority of their funding through a five- year incremental funding program overseen by Louisiana Main Street Program. Grants and donation from various foundations are essential secondary funding resources. Recently, the North Rampart Main Street received between \$35,000 to \$40,000 in grants.

##### **Public and Private Partners:**

The Brown Foundation  
The Keller Family Foundation  
French Quarter Citizens  
Vieux Carre Property Owners and Resident Association (VCPORA)  
Esplanade Ridge and Treme Civic Association (ERTCA)

“North Rampart Main Street, Inc. is designed to revitalize North Rampart Street that encompasses the properties located between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue. These properties, whether through abandonment, neglect, or Katrina damage, are to be nurtured back to the glory days when Rampart Street meant prosperity, vitality, and life on the edge of the historic French Quarter and Tremé. The goal of North Rampart Main Street is to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses that have the vision to stay the course, and help rebuild the street to its rightful place of honor.”

**North Rampart Main Street, Inc.**

Historic Faubourg Treme (HTF)  
Organization for the Renaissance of Rampart (ORR)  
New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival  
Downtown Development District  
Whitney Bank  
Covenant House of New Orleans  
Arts Council of New Orleans  
City Works Organization

**Events:** The NRMSI has helped organize and host a few successful festival and fundraisers. In 2009, the NRMSI hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual North RampART festival. The NRMSI held a fundraiser called the Speakeasy for a Cause! A Swell Affair, in June 2010. The events were an immense and raised roughly \$10,000 for the organization. Though NRMSI has been affiliated with several different events in years past, the organization has shifted the majority of its efforts toward the economic restructuring, redesign and historic revitalization of the buildings, streetscape, and economic viability of the corridor. The NRMSI benefits from the success of the numerous festivals and events held in the French Quarter. The NRMSI is a primary partner of the Covenant House's weekly Marketplace at Armstrong Park.<sup>10</sup>

### **Programs/ Project**

#### *Economic Rehabilitation Programs*

The NRMSI offers technical assistance and consulting services for those business owners or potential investors that are interested in applying for historic redevelopment improvement grants offered by the state of Louisiana. This program is designed to encourage historic restoration, community engagement and affordable investment on several of the city's historic commercial corridors. The NRMSI also provides businesses with assistance incorporating certain design elements into these renovation projects.

*Cultural Products District:* The NRMSI has also been instrumental in making North Rampart a certified Cultural Products District. This means that art purchased/ sold does not have to be subjugated to the state sales tax.

*Streetcar Initiative-Beautification Projects:* The NRMSI is an active RTA Community Liaison for the N. Rampart/ St. Claude Streetcar Project. The NRMSI is primarily concerned with the potential effects the construction of the streetcar will have on residents and business owners.<sup>11</sup>



### **Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

*Historic Preservation:* The NRMSI is committed to promoting, encouraging and facilitating historic renovation of existing buildings on the corridors.

*Safety and Crime:* The NRMSI has worked the City of New Orleans and City Works to fix broken streetlights on the corridor. By doing this, the organization hopes to promote walkability and increase the perceived sense of safety on the corridor. According to an annual report published in 2010, the NRMSI also initiated a program during the holiday season that encouraged business owners on the corridor to light up the corridor.

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<sup>10</sup> 2010 North Rampart Main Street Annual Report. Rep. NRMSI, 30 June 2010. Web. 30 Apr. 2012.

<http://www.northrampartmainstreet.org/annualreport.html>

<sup>11</sup> 2010 North Rampart Main Street Annual Report. Rep. NRMSI, 30 June 2010. Web. 30 Apr. 2012.

<http://www.northrampartmainstreet.org/annualreport.html>

**Potential and Existing Barriers Impeding Local Economic Development:**

Streetscaping barriers: The NRMSI is concerned that the construction of the N. Rampart St/ St. Claude Avenue Streetcar Line will have a negative impact on participating businesses.



**St. Claude Main Street (SCMS)**

**Website:** [www.stclaudemainstreet.com](http://www.stclaudemainstreet.com)

**Email:** [info@stclaudemainstreet.com](mailto:info@stclaudemainstreet.com)

**President/Executive Director/ Representative:** Michel T. Martin

**Official Designation:** The St. Claude Main Street is a designated 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that is also recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a designated urban Main Street

**Official Boundaries:** St. Claude Avenue between Elysian Fields and Press St (extended from original boundaries that had the stretch ending at Poland Ave)

**Background:** The St. Claude Main Street was established in 2007. Over the last few years the St. Claude Main Street (SCMS) has experienced a unique set of challenges. From leadership turnover to some mismanagement of funds by former program managers, the St. Claude Main Street has had to overcome its share of adversity. Despite these impediments to success, there seems to be a lot room for growth and prosperity for the future of the St. Claude Main Street Program. After one year of serving as an active board member, Michael Martin was recently hired as the executive director of the organization. Currently Martin and Board Members are in the process of restructuring the organization to best suit the corridor and help contribute to the growing popularity and economic prosperity of the re-emerging corridor.

*“St. Claude Main Street, Inc. (SCMS) was founded in 2007 to encourage community revitalization along the St. Claude corridor through strategic economic development, thoughtful preservation of historic assets, and the involvement of neighborhood partners. SCMS works within the state-designated St. Claude Cultural District, including Faubourg St. Roch, Bunny Friend, Bywater, and Faubourg Marigny, with specific focus on the development of St. Claude Avenue from Elysian Fields to Poland Ave.”*  
**St. Claude Main Street**

**Funding Sources:** Like other Main Street Programs in New Orleans, the SCMS acquires a majority of their funding through a five- year incremental funding program overseen by Louisiana Main Street Program primary source funding. Recently, SCMS has been awarded a significant grant from Art Place.

**Membership:**

The primary members of the organization are the participating neighborhood association and business and property groups servicing the Bywater community. The St. Claude Main Street (SCMS) is designed to function as a liaison amongst neighborhood and/or future merchants and business association.

**Public and Private Partners<sup>12</sup>:**

Louisiana Office of Cultural Development

<sup>12</sup> “St. Claude Main Street”. St. Claude Main Street. Web 2012. March14 2012. [www.stclaudemainstreet.org](http://www.stclaudemainstreet.org)

Division of Historic Preservation  
City of New Orleans, Mayor's Office of Cultural Economy  
City Council Member Kristin Gilson-Palmer, District C  
The St. Roch Project  
Bywater Neighborhood Association  
Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association

**Events:** After the immense success of the St. Claude Night Market, last year, Martin and members of the St. Claude Market are in process of making the Night Market a monthly event that occurs every second Saturday of each month. The first official Night Market of 2012 was held Saturday, May 19, 2012.

*We are working toward the equitable, sustainable and prosperous development of St. Claude Avenue and its surrounding communities. Since 2007, SCMS has focused its economic development initiatives on engagement with small businesses and community partners. In working to catalyze economic growth, SCMS has provided individualized assistance for existing and prospective businesses, from direct funding for façade improvements, to consulting and technical assistance on issues including design, zoning, marketing, community relations and financial planning. With a focus on small, locally-owned businesses, SCMS supports their development through community-wide marketing and public events. SCMS coordinates these activities closely with neighborhood groups, including regular meetings with neighborhood representatives to discuss issues of shared concern. " St. Claude Main Street*

**Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

The SCMS is committed to equitable development and the implementation of creative "place-making" strategies" in the revitalization of the St. Claude commercial corridor.

**Crime:** Perceived sense of crime is uncontrollable. The only way Main Street Program can improve and increase sense of safety is by promoting redevelopment of remaining blighted buildings along the corridor.

**Blight:** SCMS is interested in compiling inventory of

blighted property so they can work with community leaders and business groups to find prospective buyers and/or investors for these listings.

**Cultural District:** Like Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. St. Claude is emerging as a vibrant cultural and arts district of New Orleans. With its monthly Night Market, SCMS is trying to establish the St. Claude corridor as a distinct, eclectic culturally unique neighborhood of New Orleans, LA.

**Community Outreach/ Social Networking:** St. Claude Main Street is currently working on restructuring their marketing/ promotion strategies. Within the last few months, the organization started revamping their website and experienced a growth in exposure via Facebook and Twitter.

**Urban Design:** Encourages potential developers to incorporate storefront setbacks, mixed use and higher density development.

**Potential and Existing Barriers Impeding Local Economic Development:**

Spurring local economic development along a heavily blighted and dilapidated commercial corridor is a primary challenge for SCMS coordinators and stakeholders.





## **Broad Community Connections (BCC)**

**Office Address:** 2803 St. Philip Street, New Orleans, LA 70119

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 19231, NOLA 70179

**Website:** [broadcommunityconnections.org](http://broadcommunityconnections.org)

**Email:** [info@broadcommunityconnections.org](mailto:info@broadcommunityconnections.org)

**Phone:** 504 722 3628



**President/ Executive Director/ Representative:** Jeffrey Schwartz, Executive Director

**Official Boundaries of Broad Community Connections:** Tulane Avenue to Bayou Road on Broad Street

**Official Designation of Broad Community Connections:** The Broad Community Connections is a designated 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization that is also a recognized by the National Trust of Historic Preservation as an urban Main Street since 2009.<sup>13</sup>

**Background:** Broad Community Connections was established in 2008 as a non-profit organization whose primary objective was to promote commercial revitalization on Broad Street as well as help revitalize neighboring communities Post –Katrina. In Broad Community Connections adopted the Four-Point Approach and became recognized as urban Main Street in January of 2009.

**Membership:** Broad Community Connections is open to businesses and residents of neighborhoods surrounding the North Broad Corridor. There are no fees to join. It is difficult for local business owners to take time away from their businesses to participate in the organization. Thus, the majority of Broad Community Board Members are residents.

### **Funding Sources:**

The Broad Community Connections, like most Main Street programs in New Orleans, acquire a majority of their funding through a five- year incremental funding program overseen by Louisiana Main Street Program. After five years of functioning a designated Main Street, B.C.C. will no longer be eligible for these funds. Grants and donation from various foundations are essential secondary funding resources. Writing and applying for these grants is both time and labor intensive which detracts support and available manpower that could be spent supporting viable projects and initiatives that could potentially spur a great deal of local economic development.<sup>14</sup>

*“Broad Community Connection’s mission is to revitalize Broad Street from Tulane Avenue to Bayou Road as a vibrant commercial corridor, bringing together the surrounding neighborhoods and promoting their economic, residential, and cultural development”*

**Broad Community Connections**

<sup>13</sup> “Broad Community Connections”. Broad Connections. Web. 2012. 21 March 2012. [www.broadcommunityconnections.org](http://www.broadcommunityconnections.org)

<sup>14</sup> Schwartz, Jeffrey. “Understanding Broad Community Connections”. Telephone Interview. 9 May 2012.



**Public and Private Partners<sup>15</sup>:**

- Foundation for Louisiana*
- Mid City Neighborhood Organization*
- Friends of Lafitte Corridor*
- Tulane School of Medicine*
- Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association*
- Greater New Orleans Foundation*
- Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club*
- Downtown Neighborhood Improvement District*

**Events:**

The major event the BCC is affiliated with is the annual Brewhaha on Bayou Road which is held during November. The Brewhaha is a street festival that is designed to celebrate the city’s long history of coffee and beer brewing. BCC that has been served as a primary sponsor and contributor for the events since it was established in 2009.

**Programs/ Projects:**

Broad Community Connections (BCC) is dedicated to taking holistic approach to commercial revitalization and local economic development. Instead of scattering limited funding and/or resources to several small efforts, programs and projects, Broad Community Connections (BCC) has dedicated its efforts to a few major projects.

*Refresh Project:* The ReFresh Project is a program designed to coordinate more organization amongst the numerous non-profit organizations that are dedicated to promoting urban agriculture and local growers and producers.

*Iconic Signage:* With the support of the New Orleans Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, several businesses have been able to create interesting and artistic signage for their businesses along Broad Street. As seen in some of the recent large scale development projects in surrounding neighborhoods, the use of creative signage is a viable means of revitalization older establishments. Since the program was created over half a dozen businesses along corridor have participated.



*Broad Street Story Project:* The Broad Street Story Project is a program that focuses on showcasing the stories of major stakeholders, business owners and residents of the community. The program is designed to highlight the unique urban fabric and cultural identity of Broad Street communities.<sup>16</sup>

**Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

*Economic Restructuring:* Broad Community Connection members are interested in creating creative strategies to combat blight along the corridor. By working with various private and public partnerships in a particular sector has been a key strategy for redevelopment of the Broad Street

Corridor.

<sup>15</sup> “Broad Community Connections”. Broad Connections. Web. 2012. 21 March 2012. [www.broadcommunityconnections.org](http://www.broadcommunityconnections.org)

<sup>16</sup> “Broad Community Connections”. Broad Connections. Web. 2012. 21 March 2012. [www.broadcommunityconnections.org](http://www.broadcommunityconnections.org)

*Promotion:* Schwartz believes that if the corridor is able to attract a strong anchor business, others will benefit from it and spur more growth along the corridor. BCC has also utilized social networking entities as a means of promoting the organization and keep members, affiliates and others posted on what's happening on Broad Street.

### **Potential and Existing Barrier(s) Impeding Local Economic Development:**

The primary barriers impeding local economic development is the substantial inventory of underutilized, blighted and abandoned commercial properties located long. Not only are these buildings an eyesore, but have been major deterrents for potential developers and investors. These blighted properties deter pedestrian activity along the corridor.

Despite the fact there is still a great deal of work needs to be done along the corridor, recently there have been major strides of success that have the potential to serve as a true catalyst for revitalization. In early May 2012, it was announced that Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club had committed to redeveloping the abandoned and blighted the former Schwegmann's grocery store at 300 N. Broad into an African American Community Center.<sup>17</sup> Creating a collaborative network of urban agriculture and local fresh food nonprofit organizations are also a major project and goal for the BCC as well.

### **O. C. Haley Blvd. Merchants & Business Association (OCHMBA)**

**Office Address:** 1712 O. C. Haley Blvd, Unit 302 New Orleans, LA 70113

**Mailing Address:** 1712 O. C. Haley Blvd, Unit 302 New Orleans, LA 70113

**Website:** [www.ochaleyblvd.org](http://www.ochaleyblvd.org)

**Email:** [ochaleymainst@bellsouth.net](mailto:ochaleymainst@bellsouth.net)

**Phone:** 504) 528- 1806

**President, Executive Director, Representative:** Dorian Hastings, Interim Director

**Official Designation:** 501 c 4 non-profit organization and designated Main Street program

**Official Boundaries:** Philip Street to Calliope on Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard

#### **Funding Sources:**

The OCHMBA, like most Main Street programs in New Orleans, acquires a majority of their funding through a five- year incremental funding program overseen by Louisiana Main Street Program. The organization is also involved with helping businesses along the corridor qualify for Redevelopment Incentive Grants provided by the state of Louisiana.



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<sup>17</sup> Mowbray, Rebecca. "Zulu May Purchase Former Grocery Building." *Times- Picayune*. Nola.com, 16 May 2012. Web. 21 May 2012. [http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2012/05/zulu\\_plans\\_a\\_new\\_den\\_in\\_former.html](http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2012/05/zulu_plans_a_new_den_in_former.html)

**Membership:**

The O.C. Haley Main Street Program offers free membership to residents, small businesses and larger businesses along the corridor.

**Public and Private Partners:**

- Ashe Cultural Arts Center*
- Central City Renaissance Alliance*
- Good Work Network*
- ECD/Hope*

**Events:**

Though the OCHMBA does not host monthly events, they do work with the OCH Art Market to host a monthly market on the corridor. The OCHMBA also participates in the Louisiana’s “Main to Main” Festival season during the month of November. The organization supports all events held along the corridor by selling non-alcoholic beverages and refreshments .

*“The mission of the organization is to cultivate economic sustainability throughout the organization’s service area by: retaining and facilitating growth and enhancement of existing businesses; recruiting new enterprises that are consistent with the Afro-Caribbean arts and cultural vision of the community; developing diverse economic resources to assist member businesses, artists and culture bearers; and responding to the economic needs of the O. C. Haley Boulevard business and artisan community.”*

**Oretha Castle Haley Merchants, Business Association**

**Programs/ Projects:**

O.C. Haley works with the Ashe cultural Arts Center and Café Reconcile to promote activities and increase support for the African American community. Several pipeline projects are in the process of being approved from implementation on Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard. OCHMBA has been working with the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority on combatting blight on the corridor. The agency has relocated their offices on the corridor as well. In addition the Friday Night Boxing Gym and Food and Wine Museum also plan to set up shop along Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard in the near future.

**Primary Area(s) of Interest/ Concern:**

*Culture and Art:* One of the primary objectives of this organization is to exemplify the cultural viability of the corridor. With the opening of the Ashe Cultural Arts Center and the continued prosperity of the Zeitgeist Multi- Disciplinary Arts Center, .O. C. Haley is emerging primary locale for showcasing multi-disciplinary arts.

*Urban Design:* OCHMBA continues to encourage certain street signage strategies and the organization uses banners as a means of advertising the corridor and the O.C. Haley Main Street Program.

*Grassroots Community Outreach:* Currently, the primary means of outreach OCHMBA is through grassroots promotion efforts. The organization reaches out to churches throughout Central City to promote the organization and provide information regarding the main objectives.

**Potential and Existing Barriers Impeding Local Economic Development:**

*Crime:* One of the biggest problems facing the Oretha Castle Haley is the perception of the crime along the corridor. The lack of businesses opened during the mid-afternoon to early evening hours, high visibility of poverty and homelessness.

Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard is attracting attention from the local media and is gaining momentum for growth and revitalization. This energy and support will be instrumental to ensuring the economic viability and sustainability of the corridor and the Central City Community.



There was a study of development opportunities along the OC Haley corridor conducted by Luis Cabrera, UNO PLUS Community Development Finance Intern (Fall 2010). This study supported the work of the O.C. Haley Merchants Association and informed the Crescent City Community Land Trust on potential areas for a commercial land trust.

In addition, the Fall 2009 MURP 4050/G "Information Technology for the Planning Profession" and Spring 2010 Milano New School Finance Course conducted a pilot community development finance project. The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority was provided a study along the Broad Street and O.C. Haley corridors to identify investment areas for new commercial development.

**Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC)**

**Mailing Address:** P.O. Box 740181 New Orleans, LA 70174

**Website:** <http://oldalgiersmainstreet.org/>

**Email:** [info@oldalgiersmainstreet.org](mailto:info@oldalgiersmainstreet.org)

**Phone:** (504) 362- 8813

**Figure 4. Map of Historic Buildings in Old Algiers Point**



**Source:** Old Algiers Main Street Corporation

*“The program seeks to stimulate community reinvestment by promoting the rich culture, educating youth, growing small businesses, creating jobs, attracting new residents through commercial and residential rehabilitation, and by growing the local tax base. All of these initiatives will help make the Old Algiers community one of the best neighborhoods to live, work and operate a small business in the City of New Orleans.”*  
**Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC)**

**President/Executive Director/ Representative:** Valerie Robinson, OAMSC president

**Official Designation:** The OAMSC is a designated 501 (c) 3 nonprofit corporation and is recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as an urban Main Street. Though the corporation was originally founded in 1996, it did not become a designated Main Street until 2005.<sup>18</sup>

**Boundaries:** The Main Street program is concentrated on Teche Street and Newton Street. On Teche Street, the boundaries of the program are between Opelousas Street and Ptolemy. On Newton Street, the boundaries of the program are between Teche Street and Behrman Street.

<sup>18</sup> Old Algiers Main Street Corporation. OAMSC, 2011. Web. 21 May 2012. <http://oldalgiersmainstreet.org/>

**Funding Sources:** The OAMSC, like most Main Street programs in New Orleans, acquire a majority of their funding through a five- year incremental funding program overseen by Louisiana Main Street Program.

**Membership:** Membership is open to all individuals interested in improving the business environment, commercial viability and future economic growth of Old Algiers Point that are willing to pay \$25 membership fee.

**Public and Private Partners:**  
Riverfest Foundation

**Events:** The OAMSC works with the Riverfest Foundation to put on the annual Algiers Riverfest festival that is held during the spring every year. The Algiers Riverfest is an event to showcase the local music, food, arts and culture of Algiers and the Greater New Orleans area.



**Programs/ Projects:**

*Cultural Products District:* Like the NRMSI, the OAMSC, is a designated Cultural Products District. All culture and arts products sold within the designated Main Street program were not subjugated to Louisiana sales tax.

*Other Programs:*

- Storefront Improvement Grant
- Litter Abatement
- Algiers Riverview Neighborhood Plan
- ENVIREVIEW Housing Initiative

**Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

*Historic Preservation:* The OAMSC has played an important role in the renovation a restoration of some very important historic buildings in Algiers and in New Orleans. From churches to famous jazz halls, the efforts of the OAMSC have been vital to longevity of these important buildings.

*Culture and the Arts:* The OAMSC is committed to supporting local musicians, artists and supports activities related to the preservation of traditions and cultural identity.

The growth and prosperity of the Federal City has had and will continue to contribute to the economic prosperity of business community in the Old Algiers Point community.





## Business and Property Owners Associations associated with commercial corridor revitalization efforts

### Merchants, Residents and Property Owners Association of Oak Street (MRPO)

Website: <http://onlyonoak.org/>

**President/ Executive Director/ Representative:** Ralph Driscoll, president

**Official Designation:** The Merchants, Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street (MRPO) is a designated 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, but is no longer a designated Main Street Program affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Official Boundaries:** Between the railroad tracks near River Road and S. Carrollton Avenue on Oak Street

**Background:** In 2003, proposed plans for major street repairs, paving and sidewalk improvements motivated the merchants of Oak Street to be more active in their level of community organization. Like several other commercial corridors in New Orleans, in 2006, Oak Street became a designated Main Street program supported by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Conflict between merchants and hired personnel and discontent with irrelevant standards/requirements for their organization caused the original leaders of the corridor to establish their own separate organization that was not, in any way, affiliated with the National Main Street Program in 2009. The Merchants, Residents and Property Owners Association (MRPO) have been extremely successful. MRPO has been able to recruit nearly 80 local businesses to become members their organization, the immense popularity and success of the annual Poboy Festival in November and the strong sense of community advocacy has helped make Oak Street a destination for both local and visitors alike. <sup>19</sup>



**Membership:**

MRPO is open to all residents, business owners, and others interested in participating in affairs pertaining to Oak Street are encouraged to become members. Since most of the businesses have alternative business hours (many restaurateurs and bar owners are unable to attend night meetings) voting on community issues are done via email.

*“As merchants and residents of the Oak Street community, we work together to improve its appearance and safety, to preserve our historic integrity and local culture, and to attract, support, and promote diverse, sustainable businesses”.*

**Merchants , Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street**

**Events:** The largest and most popular event affiliated with the MRPO is the annual Poboy Fest. MRPO works with the for profit, Poboy Fest group to put on the large poboy festival held in November. One charity- fundraiser, the organization helps organize, is the St. Baldrick’s Day Block Party for Cure The proceeds from this event go toward supporting childhood autism research.

<sup>19</sup>Driscoll, Ralph. “Understanding Merchants, Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street” In person Interview. 24 April 2012.



**Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

*Community Engagement/ Participation:* The primary objective of (MRPO) is to address the issues and concerns of residents and business owners residing or operating along the corridor or within the Oak Street-Carrollton Neighborhood.



## **Freret Business and Property Owners Association (FBPOA)**

**Website:** <http://thenewfreret.com/>

**Email:** [thenewfreret@gmail.com](mailto:thenewfreret@gmail.com)

**President/ Executive Director/ Representative:** Kellie Grengs  
(Board Member)

**Official Designation:** The FBPOA is considered to be a nonprofit organization in the state of Louisiana, but is not recognized as such by the IRS. It is not designated Main Street Program sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

**Official Boundaries:** Between Jefferson Avenue and Napoleon Avenue on Freret Street



**Background:** The Freret Business and Property Owners Association (FBPOA) was originally established in the early 1990s, but did not start gain deal of momentum and support for commercial revitalization until 2006. In 2006, FBPOA applied to the National Main Street Program sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Though there was sense of disappointment in not acquiring Main Street status, it ended up being a blessing in disguise. Through the perseverance and hard work of volunteer members, the FBPOA has distinguished itself as one of the premier programs associated with commercial corridor in the city of New Orleans. In 2008, Freret Street became a recognized Cultural District.

### **Funding Sources and Membership:**

The FBPOA is funded through membership dues and a generous private donation from Markham Vineyards. Participating business owners and residents are required to pay \$120 each year to be a member of the organization. According the FBPOA website, there are nearly 60 businesses represented by the FBPOA. <sup>20</sup>

### **Public and Private Partners:<sup>21</sup>**

*Freret Street Market*  
*Neighborhood Partnership Network (NPN)*  
*Neighbor's United*  
*NOLA Hoods*  
*Stay Local*  
*Urban Conservancy*  
*Uptown Messenger*

**Events:** The FBPOA works a for profit organization, the Freret Market, to host the monthly Freret Street Farmer's Market and Annual Freret Street Festival. The FBPOA does not have the sufficient funds to support these large events on their own.

*"The driving force behind Freret in the past 5 years has been the private citizens investing and renovating blighted properties. We also work directly with our Council member, Quality of Life Officer and the city to ensure the revitalization benefits all of the stake holders." Kellie Grengs*

<sup>20</sup> "The New Freret". The New Freret. Web. 2012. 20 March 2012. <http://thenewfreret.com/>

<sup>21</sup> "The New Freret". The New Freret. Web. 2012. 20 March 2012. <http://thenewfreret.com/>

**Programs:**

*Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit and Restoration Tax Abatement Program:* For many years, the Freret Street corridor had the reputation of being unsafe, heavily blighted and filled with dilapidated abandoned buildings. Over the last few years, the FBPOA has been instrumental in assisting and attracting investors to utilize these programs to start new businesses on the street. Within the last few years alone, there has been a significant amount of new businesses to utilize these resources to start new businesses on this vibrant corridor.

**Primary Areas of Interest/ Concern:**

*Marketing/Social Networking:* Effective marketing has been a viable strategy for attracting residents and visitors to the Freret Street Corridor and has greatly contributed the massive transformation of Freret. The (FBPOA) have been able to recruit over 500 friends on their Facebook page, onlyfreret.



*“The mission of the Freret Business and Property Owners Associations (FBPOA) was to establish an image that Freret Street is a safe, vibrant, easily accessible destination to shop, dine, play, work and live. Their goals include promoting Freret Street through consistent marketing and community events, encourage investment on the corridor, and provide a clean corridor and enhance safety.”* **Freret Business and Property Owners Association**

### PLANNING ANALYSIS/ BEST PRACTICES

#### Cultural District Designation

In 2007, The Louisiana state legislature passed Act 298, which established the official Louisiana Cultural Districts Program. The Louisiana Cultural Districts Program was created to help promote cultural diversity and stimulate economic growth.

The program is also designed to:

- Create economic incentives for a diverse group of potential business owners
- Provide opportunities and amenities for artists and musicians
- Strengthen the sense of neighborhood character and identity

#### Impacts of Cultural District Designation on Commercial Corridor Revitalization

In New Orleans, there seems to be a strong correlation between commercial corridors and cultural districts. All of the programs discussed in this report are located within the boundaries of designated cultural districts. Main Streets and other revitalizing commercial corridors tend to have a variety of business types, occupancy of historic buildings and are embedded in culturally rich neighborhoods. These corridors also seemed to be associated with medium to high density commercial activity, and thus this type of designation could potentially impact a substantial proportion of business owners and/or professional artists.

Two major programs that have been utilized by several of the Main Streets and Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs are the state tax credits affiliated with the rehabilitation of historic buildings and the Cultural Sales Tax Exemption Districts Program. The first of the two provides financial support for those business owners that invest in rehabilitating or renovating historic buildings. The Cultural Sales Exemption program allows for the omission of the state sales tax in the selling/buying of original art pieces.

Over the last five years, the Louisiana Cultural Districts Program has played an instrumental role in contributing to the prosperity and growth of New Orleans Main Street programs and commercial corridor revitalization programs around the city. Growth in popularity and positive economic impact of cultural districts.

**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** North Rampart Main Street, Inc.

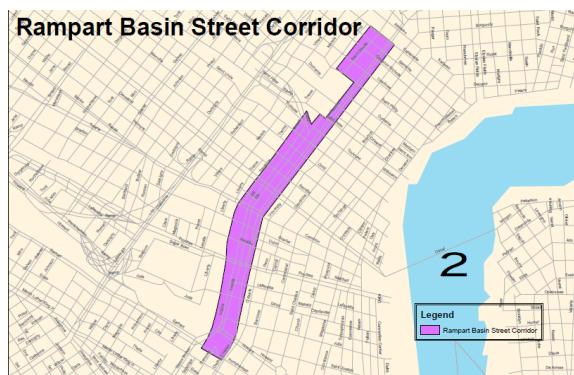
**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008

**Boundaries:**

Saratoga Street - North Rampart Street  
Canal Street - Esplanade Avenue

**Connections to Cultural District:** The NRMSI is affiliated with many projects that are partially funded by historic tax credits and also participates in the Cultural Tax Credit Exemption Program.

**Figure 5. Map of Rampart Basin Cultural District**



**Source: Louisiana Department Of Culture,  
Recreation and Tourism**

**Figure 6. Map of St. Claude Corridor Cultural District**

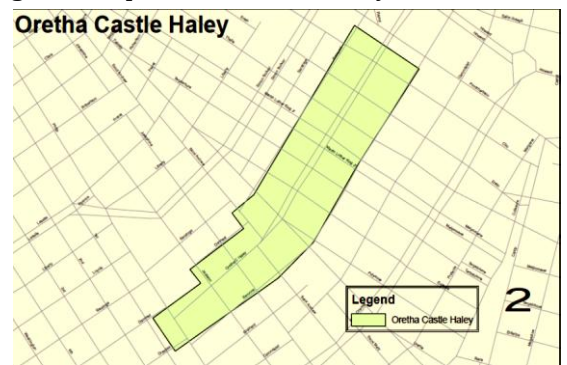


**Source: Louisiana Department of Culture Recreation and Tourism**

**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** St. Claude Main Street (SCMS)  
**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008  
**Boundaries:** Elysian Fields – Poland Avenue  
 Mississippi River – Mazant except between Elysian Fields and Clouet  
 Between Elysian Fields and Clouet the district extends just past Claiborne Avenue  
**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor Program** SCMS has been the recipient of grant funding for promotion of the arts. The establishment of the Bywater Artist Lofts and growing success of the Night Market exemplifies the artistic and cultural identity of the emerging community.

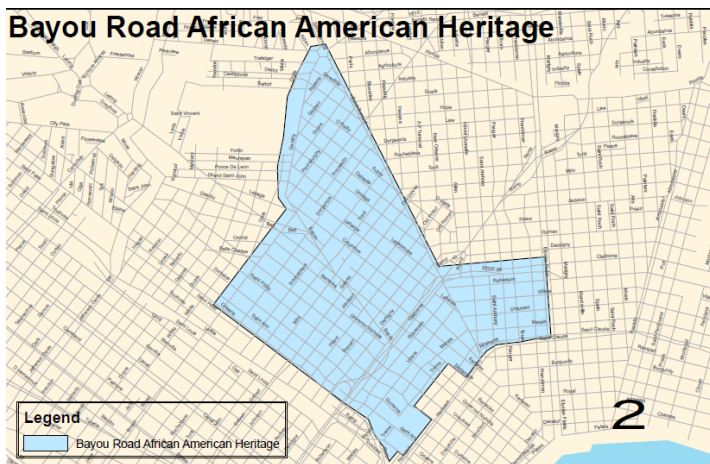
**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** Oretha Castle Haley Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA)  
**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008  
**Boundaries:** Danneel- Dryades /Barrone Philip/ First Street- I- 10  
**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor Program:** The OCHMBA helps business owners acquire historic tax credits for building rehabilitation; the organization also has strong partnerships with Ashe Cultural Arts Center and Zeitgeist Multi-disciplinary Arts Center.

**Figure 7. Map of Oretha Castle Haley Cultural District**



**Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism**

**Figure 8. Map of Bayou Road African American Heritage Cultural District**

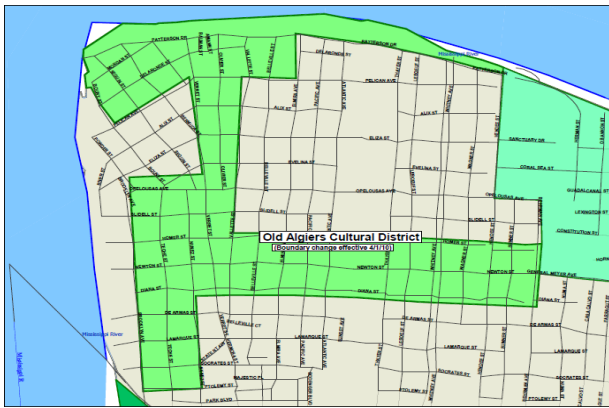


**Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism**

**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** Broad Community Connections  
**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008  
**Boundaries:** refer to map  
**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor Program:** BCC is working with the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club to promote the strong cultural identity of the neighborhoods surrounding Broad Street.



**Figure 9. Map of Old Algiers Cultural District**



**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC)

**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008

**Boundaries:** Refer to map on the left

**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor**

**Program:** The OAMSC is affiliated with many projects that are partially funded by historic tax credits and also participates in the Cultural Tax Credit Exemption Program.

Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** Merchants and Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street (MRPO)

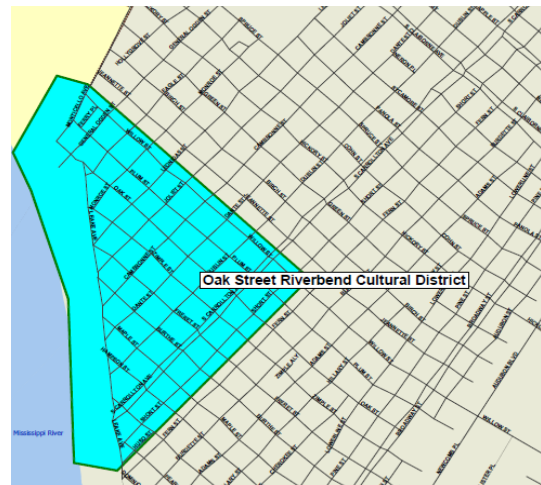
**Date Designated:** October 1, 2008

**Boundaries:** Mississippi River to Willow Street  
Mississippi River to Short Street

**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor**

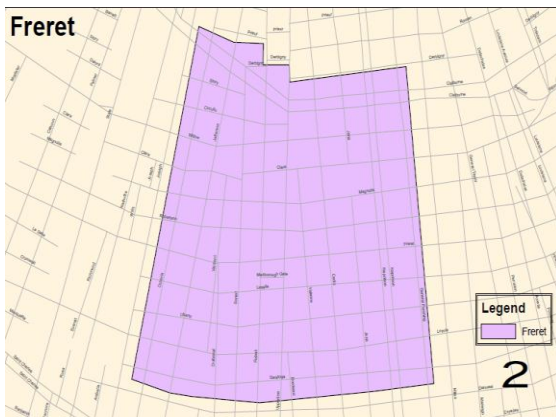
**Program:** MRPO supports members, activities, festivals and events that are affiliated with the arts, music and cultural identity of New Orleans and their community.

**Figure 10. Map of Oak Street Riverbend Cultural District**



Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

**Figure 11. Freret Cultural District**



Source: Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

**NOLA Main Street or BPOA:** Freret Business and Property Owners Associations (FBPOA)

**Designation Date:** October 1, 2008

**Boundaries:** Derbigny- Milan  
Octavia- General Pershing

**Relevance of Culture and Art to Commercial Corridor**

**Program:** The FBPOA provides assistance and encourages business owners and investors to obtain historic tax credits for rehabilitation purposes. The organization also supports music and art programs at monthly and annual events.



## Historic District Designation

The historic district designation of neighborhoods is under the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission (HDLC). Historic Preservation and restoration is a major overarching theme for Main Street and commercial corridor revitalization in Louisiana. Since historic preservation is so important, neighborhoods with historic designation have some more support than those outside the boundaries. The North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI), St. Claude Main Street (SCMS), Broad Street Community Connections (BCC) and Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC). For these organizations, Historic designation has at least some residual effect on the vitality and viability of their organization.

### Canal Street

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans Historic Landmark Jurisdiction:** North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI)  
**Designation Date:** 1993

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial**

**Corridor Revitalization:** In the mid 1800's, Canal Street and upper section of North Rampart were premier centers for commerce and robust activity. Today, many of the current land use, building types and streetcars continue to reflect this essential node for New Orleans. The NRMSI has established strong partnership with downtown development entities to encourage fluid commerce along Canal and North Rampart Street.

### Tremé

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans Historic Landmark Jurisdiction:** Broad Community Connections (BCC), North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI)

**Designation Date:** 1998

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial Corridor Revitalization:** Tremé is recognized as the one of the most prestigious and oldest African American communities in New Orleans. Both the BCC and NRMSI work have supported development projects that exemplify New Orleans African American culture. From Mardi Gras Indians to the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club, iconic stakeholders of the Tremé neighborhood and African American community have established relationships with these organizations.

### Faubourg Marigny

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans Historic Landmark Jurisdiction:** North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI) and St. Claude Main Street (SCMS)

**Designation Date:** 1978

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial Corridor Revitalization:** The eclectic mix of cultures, architecture and people that resided in this community in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century is still resonant in the neighborhood today. The variety of types of businesses along North Rampart Street and St. Claude Avenue reflects the unique urban fabric of the community today.

Figure 12. Map of Canal Street Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

Figure 13. Map of Tremé Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

Figure 14. Map of Faubourg Marigny Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

### **Bywater**

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans Historic Landmark Jurisdiction:** St. Claude Main Street (SCMS)

**Designation Date:** 1993

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial Corridor**

**Revitalization:** Even in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Bywater was a neighborhood that encouraged mixed land use and modern urban design standards. Many of the original commercial buildings that lined along St. Claude Avenue do not have setbacks.

Figure 15. Map of Bywater Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

Figure 16. Map of Esplanade Ridge Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

### **Esplanade Ridge**

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans Historic**

**Landmark Jurisdiction:** A small section of Broad Community Connections (BCC)

**Designation Date:** 1979

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial Corridor**

**Revitalization:** The Esplanade Ridge district still resembles the old French plantation community in its architecture and numerous landmarks.

Figure 17. Map of Old Algiers Point Historical District



Source: New Orleans Historic District Landmark Commission

### **Old Algiers Point**

**Main Streets or BPOAs within the City of New Orleans**

**Historic Landmark Jurisdiction:** Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC)

**Designation Date:** 1993

**Highlights of the Neighborhood relevant to Commercial Corridor**

**Revitalization:** The OAMSC has dedicated much of its efforts to rehabilitating and showcasing historic buildings as a means of preserving the cultural identity of the neighborhood. Much of Algiers today, resembles what it looked like in the early 1800s.

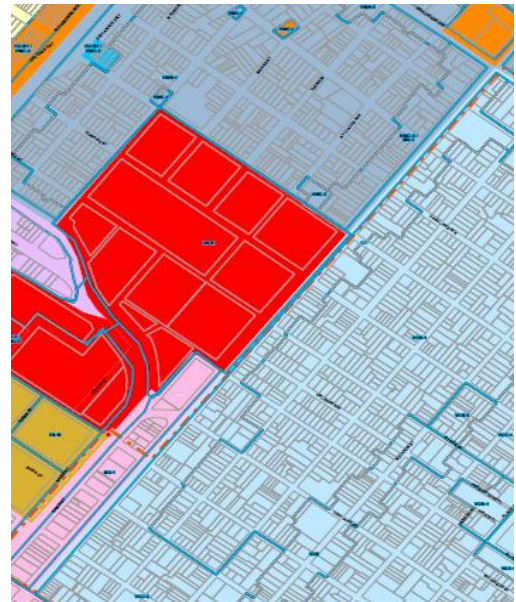
Of the seven organization showcased in this report, three of them are not affiliated with historic districts under the jurisdiction of the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC). These include the Oretha Castle Haley Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA), The Merchants, Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street (MRPO) and the Freret Business and Property Owners Association (FBPOA). Though these organizations are not operating within these zones, they seem to be thriving and gaining a lot of support and interest from planners, community activists, developers and local officials.



## Proposed Mixed -Use Zoning for CCRPs

Currently, the City Planning Commission is in the process of drafting a new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance for that correlates to the goals and objectives addressed in the *Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: New Orleans 2030*. By gaining a firm understanding of the proposed zoning designation(s) of each commercial corridor will highlight distinct differences and similarities in densities and permitted uses in the future. Within the jurisdiction of each of the Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs), some level of mixed use zoning has been proposed . Mixed use zoning allows these corridors to become premiere locations for a variety of uses and services.

**Figure 18. Proposed Zoning Map for NRMSI**



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

### **Proposed Zoning for North Rampart Avenue-**

***Boundaries:*** Between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue

***Summary:***

The proposed zoning for the section of North Rampart Street that is under the jurisdiction of the (NRMSI) is unique from other corridors because the corridor is a part of two primary districts in the city (Vieux Carre, Historic Marigny/Tremé) neighborhoods. Louis Armstrong is represented with the “Open Space” designation.

***Understanding the Codes:***

MU-1:Medium Intensity Mixed Use District

VCC-2:Vieux Carre Commercial District

OS-R: Regional Open Space District

HMC-2: Historic Marigny/ Tremé Commercial District

### **Proposed Zoning for St. Claude Avenue**

***Boundaries:*** Between Elysian Fields and Poland Avenue

***Summary:***

The proposed zoning for the section of St. Claude Avenue that is under the jurisdiction of the St. Claude Main Street (SCMS) is the only commercial corridor, of this study, that is partially zoned for light industrial uses. To accommodate for population growth and attractiveness of mixed use properties along the corridor, parts of the corridor are zone for high intensity mixed use.

***Understanding the Codes***

MC-2:High Intensity Mixed Use District

HML1: Historic Marigny/ Tremé Light Industrial District

MU-1:Medium Intensity Mixed Use District

HU-MU: Neighborhood Mixed Use District

**Figure 19. Proposed Zoning Map for SCMS**



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

**Figure 20. Proposed Zoning Map for BCC**

**Proposed Zoning for Broad Street -**

**Boundaries:** Between Tulane Avenue and Bayou Road

**Summary:**

The proposed zoning for the section of North Broad Street, under the jurisdiction of Broad Street Community Connections, covers a wide range of uses. This is due in large part to the large surface area that falls within the boundaries of the organization. The wide variety of uses also reflects a wide variety of interests of residents and members of the organization.

**Understanding the Codes:**

HU-MU: Neighborhood Mixed Use District

HU-B1: Neighborhood Business District

HU-RD1: Two -Family Residential District

HU-RD2: Two- Family and Townhouse Residential District



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

**Figure 21. Proposed Zoning Map for OCHMBA**

**Proposed Zoning for Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard**

**Boundaries:** Between Philip Street and Calliope Street

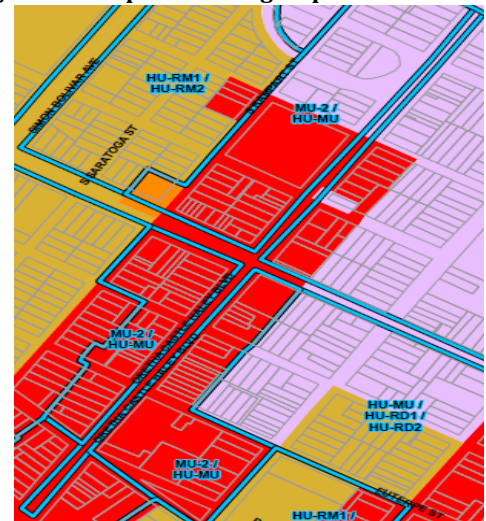
**Summary:**

The proposed zoning for the Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard illustrates that this corridor is a possible, premier target area for increasing density dramatically.

**Understanding the Codes:**

MU-2: High Intensity Mixed Use District

HU-MU: Neighborhood Mixed Use District



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

**Proposed Zoning for Newton Street (Old Algiers)**

**Summary:**

The proposed zoning for Newton Street, under the jurisdiction of the Old Algiers Main Street Corporation (OAMSC), is still up for debate. There are many ways this corridor could be developed for the future.

**Understanding of the Codes:**

HU-B1: Neighborhood Business District

HU-MU: Neighborhood Mixed Use District

HU-RD2: Two-Family and Townhouse Residential District

**Figure 22. Proposed Zoning Map for OAMSC**



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission



Figure 23. Proposed Zoning Map for MRPO

**Proposed Zoning for Oak Street:**

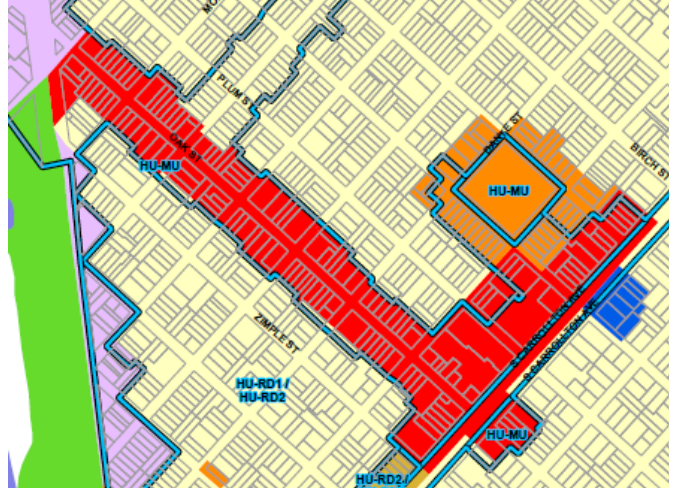
**Boundaries:** Mississippi River to Carrollton Avenue

**Summary:**

The zoning for Oak Street that is within the jurisdiction of the Merchants Residents and Property Owners (MRPO) is congruent throughout the corridor. Though the corridor is predominately used for commercial activity, many of the buildings have the capability of partially being transformed into residential apartments. This is why a general mixed used designated is suited for this corridor.

**Understanding the Codes:**

HU-MU: Neighborhood Mixed Use District



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

**Proposed Zoning for Freret Street:**

**Boundaries:** Jefferson Avenue to Napoleon Avenue

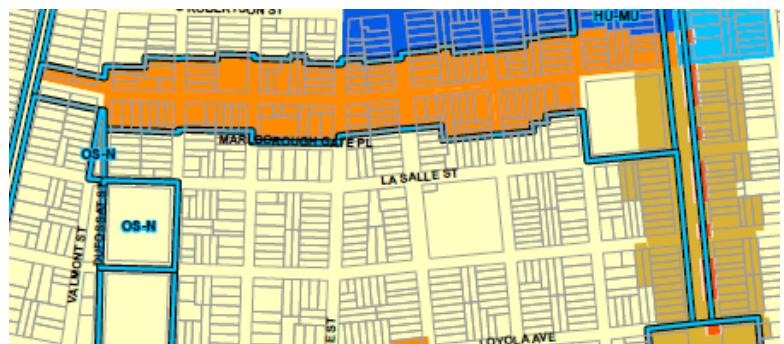
**Summary:**

The proposed zoning for Freret Street, under the jurisdiction of the Freret Business and Property Owners Association (FBPOA) has traditionally been recognized as a Neighborhood Business District.

**Understanding the Codes:**

HU- B1: Neighborhood Business District

Figure 24. Proposed Zoning Map for FBPOA



Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission

The proposed zoning (s) distinctions for each commercial corridor reflect current and future trends in population growth, resident's changing attitudes toward density and larger project and plans in the works for certain target areas/ neighborhoods throughout the city.



## Best Practices for CCRPs

- Social Networking has been instrumental to the growth in popularity of several of the CCRPs mentioned in this report. Through Facebook, twitter, etc. CCRPs have been able to keep residents, members and others interested and informed about new developments, events and news stories that are relevant or affiliated with the organization.
- As part of the redevelopment process, several CCRPs have been able to attract potential developers and investors by providing incentives for remodeling and/or rebuilding former blighted properties. Removing blight has been a catalyst for success for such corridors as Freret Street, North Rampart Street and Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard.
- In order to better understand the impact of CCRPs on local economic development assessment measures should be applied in order to determine the true impact these programs have on the local economy. The Annual Report published by the NRMSI in 2010 is a good model for benchmarking success. Semi-annual updates of business inventories, CCRPs budgets and project descriptions are a few other examples of ways CCRPs can track success.
- Increasing the perceived sense of safety of users along target commercial corridors is essential to the success of CCRPs. Since many of the businesses along these corridors benefit greatly from increased foot traffic, minimizing crime along these thoroughfares should be a major priority for these programs.
- Since many of the CCRPs mentioned in this report have fixed budgets, creating and building strong relationship with private partners has been an alternative means of financing CCRP sponsored events, markets etc. For example the OCHMBA works with OCH to host the Art market. The FBPOA works with the Freret Street Market and MRPO works with the Poboy Fest (private organization) to host large events that require a substantial amount of funding.
- Several of the CCRPs are affiliated with Farmer's Markets and urban garden programs. More individuals are opting to buy local produce from these outdoor markets. By associating themselves with these types of markets, CCRPs are able to get more people interested in their particular efforts.

## Chapter 6:

# ASSESSING COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

Figure 25. New Orleans Commercial Corridor Assessment Table

|   | Part of Designated Cultural/ Arts District | Part of Designated Historic District | Utilizes popular social network entities | Mixed- Use Zoning | Current Problems with Blight | Accessible Success Benchmarks | Perceived Sense of Crime | Affiliated with Private Partners | Supports Farmer's Markets and /or Urban Gardens | Monthly Events in 2001-2012 | Annual Events in 2011-2012 |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>DESIGNATED "MAIN STREETS"</b>  |  |                                      |  |                   |                              |                               |                          |                                  |   |                             |                            |
| North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI)                                     | X  | X                                    |  | X                 |                              | X                             | X                        |                                  | X   |                             | X                          |
| St. Claude Main Street (SCMS)   | X  | X                                    | X  | X                 | X                            |                               | X                        | X                                |   | X                           | X                          |
| Broad Community Connections (BCC)   | X  | X                                    | X  | X                 | X                            |                               |                          |                                  |   |                             | X                          |
| Oretha Castle Haley Merchants, Business Association (OCHMBA)                | X  |                                      |  | X                 | X                            |                               | X                        | X                                |   | X                           |                            |
| Old Algiers Point Main Street Corporation (OAMSC)                           | X  | X                                    |  | X                 |                              |                               |                          |                                  |   |                             | X                          |
|   |  |                                      |  |                   |                              |                               |                          |                                  |   |                             |                            |
| <b>ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED WITH OTHER COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION EFFORTS</b> |  |                                      |  |                   |                              |                               |                          |                                  |   |                             |                            |
| Freret Business and Property Owners Association (FBPOA)                     | X  |                                      | X  | X                 |                              |                               |                          |                                  | X   |                             | X                          |
| Merchants, Residents and Property Owners of Oak Street (MRPO)               | X  |                                      | X  | X                 |                              |                               |                          | X                                |   | X                           | X                          |

Source: Created by Alena Anderson 2012

## Chapter 7:

### CONCLUSIONS

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Louisiana State Main Street Program has a very strict organizational structures and set standards for participating programs in rural and urban communities. In many urban communities across the United States in Louisiana, there are unique barriers that have the potential to impede upon the success of designated Main Street Program.
- In New Orleans there are currently 5 designated Main Street Programs and at least 2 commercial corridor revitalization programs that have their own unique approaches to addressing major concerns, strengths and creative strategies to spurring economic growth and community engagement on the prospective commercial corridor of each CCRP.
- Various district designations, proposed zoning and other recurring themes amongst commercial corridor revitalization programs provide some frame of reference for establishing standard assessment and best practice strategies.
- Based on the initial interest in the City Planning Commission's Main Streets Request for Proposal (RFP) draft, the Master Plan and feedback from representatives programs showcased in this report, the City needs to take a more proactive approach to help promote, financially support and help proliferate the future success of commercial corridor revitalization efforts in New Orleans.

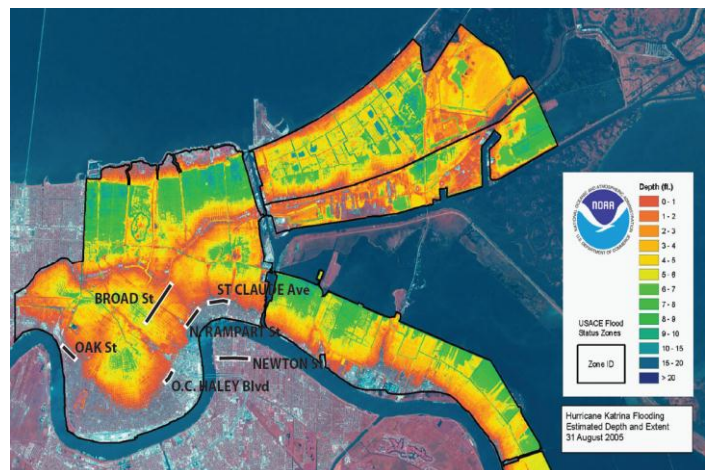
## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHERS

- **Create a more comprehensive and in-depth market analysis study to gain a better understanding of the “real” economic impacts of these, and other commercial revitalization programs throughout New Orleans**
- **Incorporate some of the best practices and assessment in the drafting of the “Main Street Resiliency Plan”**
- Currently, the New Orleans City Planning Commission is in the process of a drafting a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) for a “Main Street Resiliency Plan” .

- The goal of the plan is to encourage better communication amongst leaders of Main Street organizations, Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs

(CCRPs) coordinators and the City of New Orleans and through a collaborative efforts amongst these stakeholders to build upon effective grassroots strategies for spurring local economic development in target commercial districts throughout the city. One of the key components of this plan is to create a permanent position at the City to manage, collaborate and support existing commercial corridor revitalization programs and help create best practice strategies for the possible implementation of future commercial corridor revitalization efforts throughout the city.

**Figure 26. Map of Current Main Street Programs in New Orleans and Katrina Flood Depths (from NOAA Satellite Images)**



Source: “Main Street Resiliency Plan”, New Orleans City Planning Commission

- For these possible goals to be achieved a comprehensive market analysis study needs to be completed and CDBG funds should also be secured. This report provides a greater insight on the current commercial corridor revitalization programs and possible recommendations that could possibly be incorporated into the City Planning Commission “ Main Street Resiliency Program”.

- **The City should commit to helping future and existing commercial corridor revitalization efforts.**
- As stated in Chapter 5: Neighborhood and Housing in the *Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: New Orleans 2030*, it is important that the city establish more oversight over New Orleans Main Street Programs and commercial corridor revitalization efforts. It is essential that the City, “Establish a section that would work to organize neighborhood commercial districts, businesses and implement a variety of approaches, programming, and marketing designed to revitalize the neighborhood commercial district”(Goody Clancy, 2010, 35).<sup>22</sup>
- One of the most significant barriers to success for New Orleans Main Streets and commercial corridor revitalization is lack of sustainable funding stream. In addition to committing itself to overseeing the operations and projects affiliated with these programs, the City should also allocate a certain proportion of the budget for economic development for Commercial Corridor Revitalization programs
- **The City should address the problems, issues and concerns Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) have with The National Trust for Historic Preservation model for Main Streets.**
- Many of the representatives interviewed for this study mentioned some key flaws in the programming and organizational model endorsed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Many felt that their participation or refusal was shaped by the inability of the national and state program to proactively dealing with issues specific to urban communities in New Orleans.
- **The City should support conferences, networking functions and other events that will potentially bring representatives from the local and regional government, public private partnerships (PPP), non-profit organizations and local universities together to discuss issues related to commercial corridor revitalization.**
- The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Louisiana State Main Street Program has a very strict organizational structures and set standards for participating programs in rural and urban communities. In many urban communities across the United States in Louisiana, there are unique barriers that have the potential to impede upon the success of designated Main Street Program
- In New Orleans there are currently 5 designated Main Street Programs and at least 2 commercial corridor revitalization programs that have their own unique

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<sup>22</sup> Clancy, Goody. *Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: New Orleans 2030*. New Orleans Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance: Land Use Map. City of New Orleans, 2011. Web.



approaches to addressing major concerns, strengths and creative strategies to spurring economic growth and community engagement on the commercial corridor their organization is affiliated with.

- Various district designations, proposed zoning and other recurring themes amongst Commercial Corridor Revitalization Programs (CCRPs) provide some frame of reference for establishing standard assessment and best practice strategies.
- Based on the initial interest in the City Planning Commission's Main Streets Request for Proposal (RFP) draft, the Master Plan and feedback from representatives programs showcased in this report, the City needs to take a more proactive approach to help promote, financially support and help proliferate the future success of commercial corridor revitalization efforts in New Orleans.

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<http://www.nolamasterplan.org/>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A- Formal Questionnaire for Interviewees

**Date:**  
**Start Time:**  
**End Time:**

**NAME (of the interviewee):** \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact information for interviewee (phone number, email address)

**NAME (of the interviewer):** \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact information for the interviewer (phone number, email address)

#### **“Mainstreeting” Revitalization:**

#### *An Evaluation of the Impacts of “Main Streets” and Specific Business and Property Owners Association in New Orleans*

#### Questionnaire for Main Street Program Coordinators/ Leader Interviews

The purpose of this interview is to obtain viable information regarding this particular Main Street Program or Business and Property Owners Association in New Orleans, LA and identify any issues or concerns of those primary leaders and/or stakeholders involved with this program. This information will be compiled and published in an official report of Main Street Programs in New Orleans. The main objective of this report is to educate the public about Main Street Programs (MSP) s and specific Business and Property Owners Associations (BPOA) s and how they have impacted the urban landscape, neighborhood identity and local economy of New Orleans communities. Information regarding supporting businesses, primary stakeholders, partnerships and events affiliated with these specific main street programs will enhance an understanding of what these programs are and how they operate. Another goal of this study is to assess the impacts this “Main Street” and other MSP or BPOA in this city through the information collected through these interviews and other resources. Final copies of this study will be distributed to all participants and will be made available to the public. An increased interest in Main Street and commercial corridor revitalization may be achieved by gaining a better understanding of the individual, and collective, “impacts of Main Streets”, through this study.

#### **Official Name of the Main Street Program (MSP) or Business and Property Owner Association (BPOA)**

Primary \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Is this different from the mailing address? If yes, what is the official mailing address for this MSP?)

**What is the official URL of this Main Street Program (MSP) or Business and Property Owner Association (BPOA)? \_\_\_\_\_**

**1) What is the official designation of this “Main Street” Program (MSP) or Business and Property Organization (BPOA)?**

- A) Is it a designated non- profit organization (501 c3)?
- B) Is it incorporation (Inc.)?
- C) Is it a limited liability company (LLC)?
- D) Other, explain?

**2) Is this Main Street Program (MSP) or Business and Property Owner Association (BPOA) considered to be officially “designated” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation?**

- A) Do you know the difference between designated and non-designated MSP?
- B) What advantages/ disadvantages are associated with being official designated?
- C) What advantages/ disadvantages are associated with not being officially designated?

**3) What was the motivation for establishing the MSP or BPOA?**

- A) Who were the key players and/ or driving forces perpetuating the establishment of this Main Street Program?
- B) What year was this program created?

**3) What is the mission statement of this MSP or BPOA?**

- A) When was the mission statement created?
- B) Has this changed over time? Yes or No?
  - 1. In what way (how) did the mission change?

**4) What are the primary goals of this MSP or BPOA?**

- A) Have these changed/expanded/contracted over time?
- B) If so, how and why?

**5) What are the official boundaries for this MSP or BPOA?**

- A) What were the original boundaries for the MSP?
- B) If these changed, why and how did they change?

**6) For “designated MSPs”, was there community input as part of the MSP designation process?**

- A) Did the MSP conduct a survey or have an open forum for input?
- B) If so, did this information guide the mission/goal/boundaries?

**7) What are the economic advantages of this MSP or BPOA?**

- A) Tax incentives (in what way? Do they become or are they a Business Improvement District)
- B) Marketing (reduction of individual? Do the participating organizations have a website?)
- C) Event Planning (increases marketing; reduces overall cost for individual businesses)
- D) Other – specify [I don’t know what they are....you can add more in]

**8) What are the economic disadvantages of this MSP and or BPOA?**

- A) Fees (are there any dues?)
- B) Identity (are org's required to participate in this zone?)
- C) Taxes (are they additional fees levied by the City or State to maintain the designation?)
- D) Other – specify

**9) What strategies have this MSP put in place to help encourage economic development and/o for the adjacent (within ¼ mile) neighborhoods?**

- A) What are the key programs?
- B) How do you their measure their success?

**10) The National Trust for Historic Preservation has established guidelines for those interested in establishing MSPs across the country. Were these guidelines utilized in the implementation of this MSP? Yes or no?**

(For a quick reference of these guidelines, please refer to final page of this interview packet)

- A) “If these guidelines were not use, what guided the development of the MSP?
- B) State or Local guidelines?
- C) If so, what were these?
- D) Was there community input as part of the MSP designation process?
- E) Did the MSP conduct a survey or have an open forum for input?
- F) If so, did this information guide the mission/goal/boundaries?

**11) Many MSPs and BPOA’s have benefitted from several tax credits, subsidies, loans and grants has primary funding source. What are the primary funding sources utilized for establishing this MSP?**

- A) Have additional/ alternative funding sources been obtained to boost growth for the MSP or BPOA and its members?
- B) What additional funding sources have been contributed by private investors and/or community leaders?
- C) What type of programming do the funds cover?
- D) Can you provide me with a list of funding sources?
- E) Is there any way I can access your annual financial reports?
- F) Are these records available to the public?

**12) Community events are important tools to increase capacity for MSP and BPOA development and increased community awareness and activism. What events does your MSP or BPOA sponsor?**

- A) What affects have these events had on local community development and activity on this Main Street?

**13) In what ways has there been a perceived decrease in crime since this MSP or BPOA has been established?**

- A) How can this be attributed to the program?

**14) Are there any issues with current land use/ zoning restrictions on this corridor or in the surrounding community?**

A) How has or will the LU plan affect the commercial investments?

**15) Will you describe the events, including prior and planned that your MSP or BPOA sponsors?**

A) How does the MSP or BPOA measure success of the event?

(Attendance, number of buttons sold, amount of product sold?)

B) Do participating businesses neighborhood partners and provide you with feedback?

**16) Have or will the MSP or BPOA incorporate the following urban design elements in the development or maintenance of the program?<sup>23</sup>**

A) Is there adequate on street parking available along the corridor?

B) How have “traffic calming” design elements been utilized to make the corridor seem safe and pedestrian friendly?

C) Is there adequate sidewalk space for both pedestrian walk space and/ or street furniture?

D) How many of the participating businesses have large windows and adequate store signage that attract strolling pedestrians?

G) Other?

**17) Do you have an accessible inventory of all of the businesses participating in your particular Main Street Program?**

A) What are the businesses and their location?

B) Do they need to be ADA compliant?

**18) Is there anything about MSP or BPOA programs that I have not covered that you would like to discuss?**

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<sup>23</sup> Institute of Transportation Engineers. *Creating Quality Main Streets*. Congress for New Urbanism. Web. 5 Mar. 2012. <http://www.ite.org/css/FactSheet7.pdf>



## Appendix B- Notes from Phone Interview with Jeff Schwartz, Executive Director for Broad Community Connections

**Date:** May 9, 2012  
**Start Time:** 10:30 AM  
**End Time:** 11:10 AM

**NAME (of the interviewee):**

Jeffrey Schwartz, executive director, Broad Community Connections (BCC)  
504 722 3628  
[jeff@broadcommunityconnections.org](mailto:jeff@broadcommunityconnections.org)

**NAME (of the interviewer):**

Alena Anderson  
562 522 0894  
aanders5@uno.edu

**Official Name of the Main Street Program:** Broad Community Connections (B.C.C.)

**Office Address:** 2803 St. Philip Street, New Orleans, LA 70119

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 19231, NOLA 70179

**URL:** [broadcommunityconnections.org](http://broadcommunityconnections.org)

**Official Boundaries of Broad Community Connections:** Tulane Avenue to Bayou Road on Broad Street

**Official designation of Broad Community Connections:** non- profit organization (501 c3)

**Mission Statement and Goals:**

The Mission Statement was created when the organization was established in 2008. According to Schwartz and the Broad Community Connections Website: *“Broad Community Connection’s mission is to revitalize Broad Street from Tulane Avenue to Bayou Road as a vibrant commercial corridor, bringing together the surrounding neighborhoods and promoting their economic, residential, and cultural development”*

**Membership:**

Hard to get business owners too involved due in large part that they are business owners are dedicated to running and operating their own small businesses. According to Schwartz, the majority of Broad Community Board Members are residents.

**Broad Community Connections IS a designated Main Street Program (MSP)**

Advantages of being a designated Main Street Program: According to Jeff, the biggest attraction of the Main Street designation is the funding that is attached with it. Over a five year period , Broad Community Connections had acquired nearly \$150,000 over the last five years. These funds were made available through the Louisiana State general fund.

Disadvantages of being a designated Main Street Program: Addressing and complying with all of the standards of the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center, many of which , are not designed for urban main street programs

## **History:**

Broad Community Connections was established in 2008 as a non-profit organization whose primary objective was to promote commercial revitalization on Broad Street as well as help revitalize neighboring communities Post –Katrina. In Broad Community Connections adopted the four- point organizational approach and became recognized as urban Main Street in January of 2009.

## **Primary Motivation for Establishing Broad Community Connections :**

The primary motivation is to help revitalize and restore the commercial vitality of the corridor that had was severely damaged and partially destroyed in Hurricane Katrina. Through the Main Street program promoted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the organization was able to qualify for available state general funds. Schwartz was hired as the executive director in 2009.

## **Economic Advantages for Broad Community Connections Tax Incentives, Grants and Additional Funding Resources:**

### **Marketing/ Promotion Strategies**

#### **Events:**

##### **Monthly:**

*Flea Market*

*Nola Drive- In at the old Sweggman's grocery store*

##### **Annual:**

*Bayou Brewhaha: Annual event to promote local beer microbreweries and coffee companies*

### **Success of planned events:**

Though the organization tends to lose money on the events they sponsor, they do not view them as a failure. These events allow business owners, residents and others involved the organization to stay informed and/ or involved with the caus.

### **Economic disadvantages of Broad Community Connections:**

Fees (are there any dues?) No dues

Open to residents of nearby neighborhoods and residents

C) Taxes (are they additional fees levied by the City or State to maintain the designation?)

Schwartz has to constantly apply for grants to keep the Organization a float. Too much time writing grants and not enough time, money and support for viable projects/ initiatives to spur economic development.

**Broad Community Connections Approach to encouraging economic development in adjacent neighborhoods ( within ¼ ) :** Holistic approach. Instead of scattering limited funding and/or resources to several small efforts, programs and projects, Broad Community Connections

#### **Programs:**

*ReFresh Project:*

*Iconic Signage:*

*Cleaning and Greening Side Streets:*

#### **Crime:**

Issue of lack walkability along the corridor. Most of the businesses along the corridor have hours of operation that make them

## **Cultural District:**

**Social Networking:** Schwartz states that he “hasn’t found the web to be extremely useful means of acquiring additional funding or getting the word out.

## **Land Use/ Zoning :**

(Attendance, number of buttons sold, amount of product sold?)

B) Do participating businesses neighborhood partners and provide you with feedback?

## **Urban Design:**

*Iconic Signage*

*Developing Greener Development Projects*

## **Other Themes for Report:**

### **Lack of organization/ communication amongst Main Street coordinators and other :**

Schwartz believes that there is a lack of adequate communication amongst Main Street coordinators in the city of New Orleans. Programming Differences amongst designated Main Streets and other Business and Property Owner groups and lack of longevity of leaders of these programs are two primary reasons for this lack of organization. Schwartz supports the creation of a position within city government

## **Rural vs. Urban Main Streets:**

### **Exemplifying 1 or 2 of the points addressed in the Four Point Approach:**

**Economic Restructuring:** Broad Community Connection members are interested in coming up and pushing for creative approaches to combat blight along the corridor. By working with various private and public partnerships in a particular sector has been a key strategy for redevelopment of the Broad Street Corridor.

**Promotion:** Schwartz believes that if the corridor is able to attract a strong anchor business, the rest of the businesses will benefit from it and spur more growth along the corridor

**Increased role of the City in Helping NOLA Main Street Programs and other commercial corridor revitalization efforts:** Schwartz mentioned to me that there is a corollary fund or CDBG grant funds acquired through millage for the implementation of local economic development strategies. Possibly some of this funding can be allocated for the Main Street Program coordination efforts. Schwartz recommends that the city create a pilot Main Street program.

**Biggest Concern with Broad Community Connections:** Blighted Commercial Space.

## Appendix C – Notes from Phone Interview with Dorian Hastings, Executive Director of Oretha Castle Haley Merchants and Business Association

**Date:** May 11, 2012  
**Start Time:** 11:00 AM  
**End Time:** 11:45 AM

**NAME (of the interviewee):**

Dorian Hastings, Interim Director  
(504) 615-4434 Cell  
(504) 528-1807 Fax  
[ochaleymainst@bellsouth.net](mailto:ochaleymainst@bellsouth.net)

**NAME (of the interviewer):**

Alena Anderson  
562 522 0894  
aanders5@uno.edu

**Official Name of the Main Street Program:**

O. C. Haley Blvd. Merchants & Business Association (OCHMBA)  
Main Street Initiative  
**Office Address:** 1712 O. C. Haley Blvd, Unit 302 New Orleans, LA 70113  
**Mailing Address:** 1712 O.C. Haley Blvd, Unit 302 New Orleans, LA 70113  
**Office Phone :** (504) 528- 1806  
**URL:** [www.ochaleyblvd.org](http://www.ochaleyblvd.org)

**Official Boundaries of the Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA) :** Philip Street to Calliope on Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard  
**Official designation of the Oretha Castle Haley Blvd Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA):** 501 c 4 non-profit organization and designated Main Street program

**Mission Statement and Goals:**

*“The mission of the organization is to cultivate economic sustainability throughout the organization's service area by: retaining and facilitating growth and enhancement of existing businesses; recruiting new enterprises that are consistent with the Afro-Caribbean arts and cultural vision of the community; developing diverse economic resources to assist member businesses, artists and culture bearers; and responding to the economic needs of the O. C. Haley Boulevard business and artisan community.”*

**Membership:**

According to Ms. Hastings, the O.C. Haley Main Street Program offers free membership and has an opens membership to residents, small businesses and larger businesses along the corridor

**Public and Private Partnerships:**

*Ashe Cultural Arts Center  
Central City Renaissance Alliance  
Good Work Network  
ECD/ Hope*

## **History:**

### **Economic Advantages for Broad Community Connections**

#### **Tax Incentives, Grants and Additional Funding Resources:**

*Redevelopment Incentive Grant Programs*

#### **Events**

**Monthly:** Though the OCHMBA does not host monthly events, there is a monthly arts market that is organized, funded and supported by OCH Art Market .

**Annual:** Louisiana Main to Main Program in November . The organization supports this event by selling non- alcoholic beverages at these events

**Success of planned events:** Ms. Hastings mentioned that despite the fact the organization tends to lose money during these events, they do find the event a positive means of promoting the organization, networking with existing and potential working partners.

#### **Economic disadvantages of Oretha Castle Haley Merchants and Business Association :**

Limited funds

#### **Approach to encouraging economic development in adjacent neighborhoods ( within ¼ ) :**

**Programs:** O.C. Haley works with the Ashe cultural Arts Center and Café Reconcile to promote activities and support for the African American community. The OCHMBA works with organizations like NORA to combat blight.

#### **Crime:**

Ms. Hastings argues that one of the biggest problems facing the Oretha Castle Haley is the perception of the crime along the corridor. She states that a great deal of perception comes from the New Orleans Mission. The visibility of poverty, homelessness and despair has cast an aura of fear visitors and residents living near the corridor. Another aspect of this perceived sense of crime is the lack of businesses that are open in the mid-afternoon and evening hours. Businesses like Café Reconcile close extremely early, around 2PM, and other businesses like the Zeitgeist Center do not open up until 10PM or late in the evening. The boulevard seems sort of like a “ghost town”.

**Cultural District:** One of the primary objectives of this organization is to exemplify the cultural viability of the corridor. With the opening of the Ashe Cultural Arts Center and the continued prosperity of the Zeitgeist Multi- Disciplinary Arts Center, .O. C. Haley is emerging primary locale for showcasing multi-disciplinary arts.

#### **Marketing/ Promotion Strategies**

**Community Outreach and Social Networking:** Currently, the primary means of outreach OCHMBA is through grassroots promotion efforts. The organization reaches out to churches throughout Central City to promote the organization and provide information regarding the main objectives

**Urban Design:** According to Ms. Hastings, has encouraged certain street signage strategies and the organization uses banners as a means of advertising the corridor and the O.C. Haley Main Street Program

#### **Other Themes for Report:**

##### **Lack of organization/ communication amongst Main Street coordinators and other :**

**Rural vs. Urban Main Streets:** One of the biggest issues, Ms. Hastings mentioned about is the fact that some of the national requirements and standards for Main Streets are not conducive to the limited funds these programs have, especially in New Orleans. She mentioned the difficulty to attend necessary training workshops in other states.



**Increased role of the City in Helping NOLA Main Street Programs and other commercial corridor revitalization efforts:** Ms. Hastings supports an increased role of the City of New Orleans in managing Main Street Programs. She did mention that she does have some contact with the city via the Mayor's Office .

## Appendix D – Notes from in –person interview with Michael T. Martin, Executive Director of the St. Claude Main Street Program

**Date:** April 5, 2012  
**Start Time:** 5:30PM  
**End Time:** 6:30 PM

**NAME (of the interviewee):** Michael T. Martin  
[being.michael.martin@gmail.com](mailto:being.michael.martin@gmail.com)

**NAME (of the interviewer):**

Alena Anderson  
562 522 0894  
[aanders5@uno.edu](mailto:aanders5@uno.edu)

**Official Name of the Main Street Program:** St. Claude Main Street Program

**Office Address:** N/A

**Mailing Address:** N/A

**URL:** [www.stclaudemainstreet.com](http://www.stclaudemainstreet.com)

**Official Boundaries of St. Claude Main Street:**

St. Claude Avenue between Elysian Fields and Press St (extended from original boundaries that had the stretch ending at Poland Ave)

**Official designation of St. Claude Main Street:** is an official designated non- profit organization with 501 c3 status. The St. Claude Main Street is a designated MSP.

**History:**

The St. Claude Main Street was established in either 2006 or 2007. Over the last few years have the St. Claude Main Street, has experienced a unique set of challenges. From leadership turnover to some mismanagement of funds by former program managers, the St. Claude Main Street has had its share of adversity to overcome. Despite these impediments to success, there seems to be a lot room for growth and prosperity for the future of the St. Claude Main Street Program. After one year of serving as an active board member , Michael Martin was recently hired as the executive director of the organization.

**Primary Motivation for establishing St. Claude Main Street :**

Spurring local economic development along a heavily blighted and dilapidated commercial corridor . Those individuals responsible for establishing the organization realized the potential commercial viability of the corridor with growing popularity of the Marigny and Bywater neighborhoods in Post Katrina New Orleans.

**Mission Statement and Goals:**

*“St. Claude Main Street, Inc. (SCMS) was founded in 2007 to encourage community revitalization along the St. Claude corridor through strategic economic development, thoughtful preservation of historic assets, and the involvement of neighborhood partners. SCMS works within the state-designated St. Claude Cultural District, including Faubourg St. Roch, Bunny Friend, Bywater, and Faubourg Marigny, with specific focus on the development of St. Claude Avenue from Elysian Fields to Poland Ave.”*

**Vision**

*“We are working toward the equitable, sustainable and prosperous development of St. Claude Avenue and its surrounding communities. Since 2007, SCMS has focused its economic development initiatives*

*on engagement with small businesses and community partners. In working to catalyze economic growth, SCMS has provided individualized assistance for existing and prospective businesses, from direct funding for façade improvements, to consulting and technical assistance on issues including design, zoning, marketing, community relations and financial planning. With a focus on small, locally-owned businesses, SCMS supports their development through community-wide marketing and public events. SCMS coordinates these activities closely with neighborhood groups, including regular meetings with neighborhood representatives to discuss issues of shared concern. “*

### **Public and Private Partners of the St. Claude Main Street Program:**

Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation  
City of New Orleans, Mayor’s Office of Cultural Economy  
City Council Member Kristin Gisleson-Palmer, District C  
The St. Roch Project  
Bywater Neighborhood Association  
Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association

**Membership:** The St. Claude Main Street is designed to function as a liaison amongst neighborhood and/or future merchants and business association.

“Supports Creative Place Making strategies and equitable development”

### **Economic Advantages for the St. Claude Main Street**

#### ***Tax Incentives, Grants and Additional Funding Resources:***

*Main to Main Grant*

*\$300,000 grant for Art Place*

#### ***Events:***

**Monthly:** After the immense success of the St. Claude Night Market, last year, Martin and members of the St. Claude Market are in process of making the Night Market a monthly event that occurs every second Saturday of each month. The first official Night Market of 2012 was held Saturday, May 19, 2012.

**Annual:** St. Claude Main Street participates in the Louisiana Main to Main program.

**Success of planned events:** The success of the Night Market, last year,

### **Economic disadvantages of St. Claude Main Street:**

#### **St. Claude Main Street’s Approach to encouraging economic development in adjacent neighborhoods ( within ¼ ) :**

**Programs:** St. Claude

In the progress of creating a business inventory for all of the businesses participating in the St. Claude Main Street Program

**Crime:** Perceived sense of crime is uncontrollable. The only way Main Street Program can improve increase sense of safety by promoting redevelopment of remaining blighted buildings along the corridor.

**Blight:** St. Claude interested in pursuing or

**Cultural District:** Like Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. St. Claude is emerging as a vibrant cultural and arts district of New Orleans.

**Community Outreach/ Social Networking:**

St. Claude Main Street are currently working on restructuring their marketing/ promotion strategies. Within the last few months, the organization started revamping their website and experienced a growth in exposure via Facebook and Twitter.

**Land Use/ Zoning :**

Supportive of higher, denser commercial zoning

**Urban Design:**

Encourages potential developers to incorporate storefront setbacks, mixed use and higher density development

**Other Themes for Report:**

*Lack of organization/ communication amongst Main Street coordinators and other*

*Rural vs. Urban Main Streets:*

Mentioned disconnect with rural main street program managers. Very little

*Increased role of the City in Helping NOLA Main Street Programs and other commercial corridor revitalization efforts:*

*Biggest Concern with:* Blight.

## Appendix E Notes from Phone Interview with Laurie Taups, Board Treasurer for the North Rampart Main Street, Inc.

**Date:** April 11, 2011  
**Start Time:** 2:30 PM  
**End Time:** 3:15 PM

**NAME (of the interviewee):**

Laurie Taups, Executive Director

**NAME (of the interviewer):**

Alena Anderson  
562 522 0894  
aanders5@uno.edu

**Official Name of the Main Street Program:**

**Office Address:** 632 N. Rampart St., N.O., LA 70112

**Mailing Address:** 632 N. Rampart St., N.O., LA 70112

**URL:** [www.northrampartmainstreet.org](http://www.northrampartmainstreet.org)

**Phone:** 504-256-4848

**Official Boundaries of North Rampart Main Street, Inc. :** Canal Street to Esplanade on North Rampart Avenue

**Official designation of North Rampart Main Street, Inc.:** is an official incorporated 501c3 nonprofit organization that is operated by hard working volunteer. The organization was created in 2006.

**Mission Statement and Goals:**

“North Rampart Main Street, Inc. is designed to revitalize North Rampart Street that encompasses the properties located between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue. These properties, whether through abandonment, neglect, or Katrina damage, are to be nurtured back to the glory days when Rampart Street meant prosperity, vitality, and life on the edge of the historic French Quarter and Tremé.”

“The goal of North Rampart Main Street is to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses that have the vision to stay the course, and help rebuild the street to its rightful place of honor. “

Our Community Vision

North Rampart Main Street has a community vision to:

Form a coalition of businesses and resident associations to spur economic development and revitalization on North Rampart Street.

Pursue planning and development that

Promotes historic renovations and preserves historic buildings,

Develops plans for new construction on vacant lots.

Create landscapes and façades that enhance the street.

Promotes and strengthens existing businesses and attracts new businesses.

Enhances safety and security.

Maintains the current mixed-use zoning on North Rampart Street.

Encourages residential development and involvement on North Rampart Street.



Protects our vibrant neighborhoods adjacent to North Rampart Street.  
Results in a diverse, inclusive historic community with ample opportunity for businesses and residents to live and prosper in harmony.  
Changes the perception of North Rampart Street to progressive and thriving.  
Foster increased pedestrian activity, especially in the evening hours, to attract locals, tourists, and commuters to visit North Rampart Street as a destination.

**Membership:**

**History:**

**Primary Motivation for Establishing St. Claude Main Street, Inc. :**

“North Rampart Main Street, Inc. (NRMSI) is a community development non-profit organization created in 2006 to partner with the North Rampart community, businesses and residents to address the issues brought on by years of neglect and storm damage.”

“NRMSI is designed to revitalize the North Rampart Street corridor between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue. This community is to be nurtured back to its glory days when Rampart Street meant prosperity, vitality, and life on the edge of the historic French Quarter and Tremé. The goal of NRMSI is to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses that have the vision to stay the course, and help rebuild the street to its place of honor. “

**Economic Advantages for North Rampart Main Street, Inc.  
Tax Incentives, Grants and Additional Funding Resources:  
Historic Rehabilitation Grant/**

**Marketing/ Promotion Strategies**

**Events:** The NRMSI has helped organize and host a few successful festival and fundraisers. In 2009 the NRMSI hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual North RampART festival. The NRMSI held a fundraiser called the Speakeasy for a Cause! A Swell Affair, in June 2010. The events was an immense and raised roughly \$10,000 for the organization. Though NRMSI has been affiliated with several different events in years past, the organization has shifted the majority of its efforts toward the economic restructuring, redesign and historic revitalization of the buildings, streetscape, and economic viability of the corridor. The NRMSI benefits from the success of the numerous festivals and events held in the French Quarter.

Though the NRMSI is a primary partner of the Covenant House’s weekly Marketplace at Armstrong Park

**Economic disadvantages of North Rampart Main Street, Inc. : NONE**

**North Rampart Main Street Inc. Approach to encouraging economic development in adjacent neighborhoods ( within ¼) :**

**Programs:**

*Overview*

The initial five years for NRMSI have been successful, thanks to our generous donors and the grants that we have received. Our accomplishments have centered on driving economic development to the corridor and improving the quality of life for our community. To achieve this, NRMSI fosters economic rehabilitation by offering free technical assistance with tax incentives, navigating the

permitting process, and façade grants to combat blight. Our efforts to install bike racks and lanes, encourage traffic calming measures, and our advocacy for the restoration of neutral ground lighting along the corridor have a direct impact on public safety. NRMSI is also the appointed RTA Community Liaison for the North Rampart/St. Claude Streetcar Project, which further aids in promoting greener and pedestrian friendly transportation alternatives.

#### *Economic Rehabilitation Programs*

“The goal of this program is to leverage private improvements while making revitalization efforts affordable, creative and community-based, creating new economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for businesses and residents. Funding is provided by a 1:1 matching grant to property owners for exterior improvements to their buildings. The program offers up to \$5,000 (per project) and design assistance to improve the building facades, signs and awnings. The program advocates for community involvement through direct investment. It serves a dual purpose of assisting the business owner/grantee, as well as the community by increasing public safety and driving economic development.”

#### *Streetcar Initiative-Beautification Projects*

“As the RTA Community Liaison for the N. Rampart/St. Claude Streetcar Project, NRMSI is able to advocate for transportation as a means of community development. We have been influential in making sure that the needs of residents will be balanced with the needs of business owners. “

“NRMSI also advocates for the restoration of the historical lighting standards, and is an active partner with several other organizations in ensuring that streetscaping and neutral ground maintenance remain a top priority. NRMSI is committed to purchasing several bike racks through the Young Leadership Council of New Orleans. The racks will be placed near the entrances to Armstrong Park. In order to bring new economic development to our corridor, we must continue to promote the area as a pedestrian friendly mixed use district. Our beautification, transportation, and ‘Green’ initiatives have a direct impact on safety and community development, and we hope to continue them for many years to come.

**Crime:** The NRMSI has worked the City of New Orleans and City Works to fix broke streetlights on the corridor. By doing this, the organization hopes to promote walkability and perceived sense of safety on the corridor. According to an annual report published in 2010, the NRMSI also initiated a program during the holiday season that encouraged business owners on the corridor to light up the corridor .”

#### **Social Networking:**

#### **Urban Design:**

#### **Other Themes for Report:**

**Lack of organization/ communication amongst Main Street coordinators and other :**

**Rural vs. Urban Main Streets:**

**Increased role of the City in Helping NOLA Main Street Programs and other commercial corridor revitalization efforts:**

**Biggest Concern with:**

Economic Restructuring and Design

## Appendix F- Email from Kellie Grengs, Board representative for Freret Business and Property Association

" I know the FBPOA is recognized as a non-profit in the eyes of LA but not the IRS.

We are not a 503c3.

I believe the FBPOA was formed in 1992

. A set was put into place around 2006.

Mission and Goals on the Website

Official boundary is Napoleon to Jefferson- on the Freret corridor. The surrounding group is Neighbors United.

Economic advantages: social network with over 6000+ friends.

Membership: \$120 annually

Funding Membership Dues

We don't sponsor any event- we don't have the funding to do so.

Works with a Freret Market (a for profit group) produces a monthly market and an annual Festival

The Arts + Cultural Zoning was adopted in 2008.

A pdf copy is posted on the web site.

Freret Street applied for the Main St Program after Katrina and was not selected. The funds that have been generated have been from the member dues and a grant obtained by Markham Vineyards. The city selected Freret after Katrina to be one of the 17 redevelopment zones. We were promised over 4 million for street improvements and just this year the actual work started. However, the budget was greatly reduced to less than \$500k. They are installing bump outs on the corners, garbage cans, bike racks. Keep in mind, we are only 8 blocks long.

In the long run it has been beneficial to not have gained Main St Status post K. When the funds run dry in a non-profit, the doors close and the org is not sustainable. If you look at OCH or Oak, now the funds have expired, they have many challenges to face. We are volunteer based in our group. Oak had paid employees and now the funding is gone, so is the job. Non-profits on the corridor don't pay property taxes. With a solid property tax base, property values can actually increase and raise the value of the investments so many have made.

I really think it will be a grasp to try to include Freret in this project as we are not "apple to apple" like OCH or Oak. The driving force behind their groups was the spur of public funds. The driving force behind Freret in the past 5 years has been the private citizens investing and renovating blighted properties. We also work directly with our Council member, Quality of Life Officer and the city to ensure the revitalization benefits all of the stake holders.

I hope this helps explain a bit more.

best,

Kellie Grengs

Volunteer Board Member

