



High Springs Main Street Program Long Term Strategic Plan: 2008 Update

High Springs Main Street Project Vision:

A vibrant, economically-sustainable High Springs downtown district that respects and preserves its historical, small-town assets.

High Springs Main Street Project Mission:

To provide education, support, guidance and vision for the preservation, improvement and economic restructuring of the historical High Springs downtown district.

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High Springs Main Street Project Goals:

Organization Committee Goal	Each committee will meet to develop its own goal statement by July 31, 2008.
Design Committee Goal	
Promotions Committee Goal	
Economic Restructuring Committee Goal	

Introduction

This 2008 update to the strategic plan for High Springs Main Street was developed through a collaborative process involving many High Springs stakeholders – board members, staff, city government and community partners – and Nonprofit Management Consulting, LLC. The goals and objectives reflect the stakeholders’ perceptions of High Springs Main Street’s most important challenges, opportunities and responsibilities.

A useful strategic plan must be an evolving, living document. Strategies develop and change constantly in response to a changing environment. Objectives change periodically as they are achieved or updated. An organization’s goals will change very gradually over a period of many years, while its mission and vision will change only rarely, if ever.

Because of the importance of change and evolution in response to internal and external factors, this plan becomes progressively more general as it addresses longer-term objectives. While it is appropriate to have a very detailed action plan for the objectives High Springs Main Street will tackle in the next year, it would be counterproductive to commit to a rigid long-term path without knowing what the future will bring. New opportunities and new challenges will require High Springs Main Street to remain flexible while constantly adhering to its mission and goals.

This plan should be reviewed annually and updated or revised as necessary to ensure that it keeps pace with changing needs. As longer-term objectives move into focus, they can easily be used to support more detailed work plans.

Objectives and strategies in this plan are categorized according to the four points of the Main Street Approach:

- **Organization: Objectives 1A through 1L**
- **Economic Restructuring: Objectives 2A through 2K**
- **Promotion: Objectives 3A through 3H**
- **Design: Objectives 4A through 4I**

Usage Notes

- Each Main Street committee will develop its goal statement by July 31, 2008. Objectives and strategies should be developed and refined with an eye to how they support each committee’s articulated goals. Objectives and strategies may speak to more than one goal and fall under the purview of more than one committee; in these cases, both committees should take responsibility for developing their part of the action plan and reporting on progress to the Board.
- As each committee works with its list of objectives, it should assign responsibility for each objective to a **specific person** on the committee. Persons assigned “Lead Responsibility” for each objective will not necessarily be the actual implementers of the objective. Those with Lead Responsibility should take an executive role in ensuring that progress toward the objective remains on track and that the implementation team is meeting performance deadlines and providing ongoing reports to the Board of Directors.
- As the Main Street committees develop their action plans to support each objective, they will break objectives down into smaller action steps and assign specific responsibility and interim timelines to assure that the objective is achieved on schedule.

1. Organization Committee Objectives	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>1-A. Develop a Membership Recruitment Plan. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mailing/email list of potential members and sponsors. • Develop speaking opportunities at meetings of community groups and service clubs. Schedule a minimum of four speaking opportunities for 2008 to publicize Main Street and recruit members. • Develop a direct mail piece that explains the benefits of memberships and provides an easy way to join Main Street by mail. Do a bulk mailing to all High Springs residents and businesses. • Have each board member commit to speaking directly with at least one friend or contact to encourage them to join Main Street. Keep track of board contacts and offer a prize for the board member who has recruited the most dues-paying members by the end of 2008. • Staff a membership booth at all MS events. • Schedule Membership Mixers and benefits presentations. • Speak at Homeowners Association meetings to recruit members. 	<p>Mailing list: Gene Levine and Ross Ambrose</p> <p>Membership Campaign: Susan Beck</p>	<p>Membership plan in place by 7/31/08</p> <p>100 new members by 12/31/08</p>
<p>1-B. Revamp and update the High Springs Main Street website to be more attractive, informative and user friendly. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add video clips • Add links to downtown businesses • Update the website with events and news at least weekly 	<p>Constance Heuss</p>	<p>Complete website revamp by 8/31/2008</p> <p>Ongoing updates</p>
<p>1-C. Develop Personnel Policies and Procedures for High Springs Main Street. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research model policies as a starting point • Include sick and vacation leave policies, benefits policies, etc. 	<p>Responsibility to be assigned</p>	<p>Policies & Procedures Manual approved by 10/31/2008</p>

1. Organization Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>1-D. Develop a Budget Subcommittee to oversee budgeting and set fundraising targets. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select 3-4 members of the Board with expertise/interest in finance to serve on committee. Define the role of the committee. • Develop fiscal year budget based on planned activities to determine fundraising needs. Work with Promotions, Design and ER committees to ascertain budget requests and expected income from activities and decide what can be funded. • Set fundraising targets for year, including goals for net profit from events, membership drive and other activities. <p>Ensure that event and membership committees understand their fundraising targets and report accordingly.</p>	<p>Mellissa Wohlstein</p>	<p>Written budget and fundraising targets set by 9/30/2008</p> <p>Develop future fiscal year budgets by June 1 of each year</p>
<p>1-E. Hire a new Main Street Program Manager. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify budget resources and set salary and benefits range. • Convene Search Committee. • Advertise in <i>Gainesville Sun</i>, <i>High Springs Herald</i>, and on Florida Main Street website and Program Managers' Listserv. • Develop scoring matrix to rank applications. • Screen applications and select applicants for interview. • Conduct interviews and score applicants. • Select Program Manager candidate, make hiring recommendations to full Board of Directors. • Extend offer of employment. 	<p>Organization Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>Identify budget resources by 9/30/2008</p> <p>Complete hiring process by 1/31/2009</p>
<p>1-F. We will maintain a board membership of 11 – 15 active and committed board members. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct proactive recruiting to replace departing members. • Conduct ongoing training for board members to provide awareness of best practices and new developments in downtown preservations, and to keep skills sharp. (Minimum of 4 board trainings per year) 	<p>Sandy Flaitz</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

1. Organization Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>1-G. Re-implement quarterly Main Street newsletter. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile email and mailing lists for newsletter distribution. Continue to add to and update this list as new contacts are developed. Investigate inclusion of newsletter with water bills; sharing Chamber email list. • Estimate needed press run and research printing costs (copy machine vs. print shop). • Gather first issue content: local stories, national and Florida Main Street information, local business spotlight, current local Main Street news, post event surveys, etc. • Complete first issue newsletter layout in publication software. • Post newsletter on Main Street website and distribute electronically to email list. • Get hard copies of newsletter printed. • Distribute hard copies of newsletter to mailing list and around town. • After the first issue is distributed, plan for issues quarterly at the beginning of April, July, October and January. • Periodically review and improve newsletter format. 	<p>Susan Beck Isabel Smith Linda Cohen Darryl Steinhauser</p>	<p>Distribution begun 07/01/2008</p>
<p>1-H. By October 31, 2008, all board members will be able to articulate the High Springs Main Street mission statement. New Board members will receive training on the mission statement.</p>	<p>Organization Committee</p>	<p>10/31/2008</p>
<p>1-I. Develop a detailed fundraising plan keyed to fundraising targets set by the Budget Subcommittee. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help secure \$40,000 in new corporate sponsors • Develop a signature annual event with a target of raising a significant portion of the annual budget. Develop budget; identify net amount to be raised after costs. • Include membership dues targets in fundraising plan • Include annual mail-out appeal in fundraising plan • Long-term: explore feasibility of employing or contracting a grantwriter 	<p>Plan: Melissa Wohlstein</p> <p>Event in partnership with Promotions Committee (Lani)</p> <p>Lucie Regensdorf</p>	<p>Fundraising Plan in place by 10/31/2008</p> <p>\$10,000 in corporate sponsorships by 12/31/2008</p> <p>Signature event developed in 2009</p>

1. Organization Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>1-J. Develop and implement a Public Relations plan to promote the Main Street organization (as opposed to downtown High Springs, which is handled by the Promotions Committee). Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue monthly press releases to all local media to highlight the Main Street organization’s activities and accomplishments (new businesses recruited, new hires, statewide recognition, etc.) • Develop strategies to improve relationships with local media (personal visits, media kits, etc.) • Develop a speaking calendar to ensure board members are helping publicize Main Street at least quarterly • Develop a Powerpoint presentation and script that board members can use in doing presentations. • Develop printed materials to educate the public about High Springs Main Street and promote the organization. 	<p>Lani Simmons</p>	<p>Public Relations plan in place by 10/31/2008</p> <p>Press releases monthly beginning in November 2008</p> <p>Powerpoint presentation complete by 1/31/2009</p> <p>Main Street brochure by 3/31/2009</p>
<p>1-K. Move the Main Street office to independent, non-shared downtown space. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify budget resources. • Identify appropriate rental or donated downtown space • Negotiate lease 	<p>Organization Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2009</p>
<p>1-L. Implement volunteer management procedures for High Springs Main Street. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key board members will participate in volunteer management training • Identify and implement appropriate volunteer management software (Volgistics?) • Develop plan to recruit, retain and reward project and event volunteers. 	<p>Darryl Steinhauser</p>	<p>2009</p>

2. Economic Restructuring Committee Objectives	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>2-A. Implement a Downtown Retailer Roundtable meeting to determine needs and wishing of downtown merchants. Follow up with a calendar of quarterly seminars on topics of interest to local businesses. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule and publicize Roundtable meeting. Invite merchants through personal contact. • Conduct needs assessment at Roundtable meeting. • Maintain annual seminar calendar based on identified needs. • Recruit presenters; implement seminars. 	<p>Roundtable meeting & needs assessment: Lucie Regensdorf & Lani Simmons</p> <p>Calendar & seminars: Tom Weller</p>	<p>First Roundtable meeting held June 2008</p> <p>First seminar held by 10/31/2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2-B. Develop and implement a plan to improve the walkability of downtown High Springs. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with Dan Burden on low-cost, easily completed walkability projects. • Participate in the City's renovation planning for James Paul Park to include walkable links with the rest of downtown. • Continue working with the City and DOT on re-routing truck traffic away from downtown. 	<p>Tony Boothby</p> <p>Partnership with Design Committee</p>	<p>Develop plan by 1/31/2009</p>
<p>2-C. Work with City to address lighting problems along NW 1st Ave. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop short-term solutions such as solar lighting, spots and floods in planters and on buildings, etc.. • Identify budget resources to implement short-term solutions. • Install short-term lighting. • Work with City/CRA to identify budget resources for long-term solution. (\$30K to \$40K to rewire lights) 	<p>Marilyn Vanover</p>	<p>Short-term solutions in place by 12/31/2008</p>

2. Economic Restructuring Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>2-D. Develop a bikeability program in downtown High Springs. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Santa Fe Bicycle Outfitters to develop a bike rental program for visitors. Promote the availability of rental bikes at hotels, B&B, etc. • Identify bike trails and routes connected with downtown. • Develop a brochure and bike map of routes connecting with downtown. • Work with Promotions Committee to advertise High Springs as a bike destination on bicycle websites, travel publications, through press releases, etc. 	<p>Marilyn Vanover</p>	<p>Bike rental program in place by 1/31/2009</p> <p>Bike maps & brochure complete by 1/31/2009</p> <p>Promotions begin 3/1/2009</p>
<p>2-E. Develop and implement a plan for recruiting new businesses to complement the current business mix & boost downtown's share of the marketplace, using data from the market study. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to update the commercial real estate inventory booklet for downtown High Springs; include the inventory on the High Springs Main Street website. • Update and implement business relocation package to recruit and support business owners considering opening or relocating to High Springs. • Update and implement plan to welcome and promote new downtown businesses through Main Street social events, press releases and other activities. 	<p>Tony Boothby Marilyn Vanover</p>	<p>Plan complete by 10/31/2008</p> <p>Report on recruitment and welcome activities monthly</p> <p>Update inventory quarterly</p>
<p>2-F. Develop and implement a program to help downtown business owners establish consistent hours of operation, including evening and weekend hours. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Promotions Committee to create/continue evening and weekend events. • Develop incentives for businesses to stay open late. • Work with Promotions Committee to develop cross-promotions with the Priest Theater & Community Theater. 	<p>Lucie Regensdorf (Partnership with Promotions Committee)</p>	<p>Plan complete by 12/31/2008</p>

2. Economic Restructuring Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>2-G. Participate in the City’s renovation of the Old School to ensure that it is linked to downtown and the park and enhances the historic character of downtown High Springs and help obtain grant money for construction.</p>	<p>Tom Weller</p>	<p>2009-2010</p>
<p>2-H. Develop a long-term plan for downtown High Springs to serve as a destination for statewide meetings and conferences. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify appropriate meeting/conference facilities. • Publicize availability. • Market High Springs to State, County and private organizations. 	<p>ER Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2010</p>
<p>2-I. Develop a book highlighting High Springs history, architecture, and ecology.</p>	<p>ER Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2010</p>
<p>2-J. Develop a downtown transport system that allows visitors to access the springs, campgrounds and other attractions in the area and brings them to downtown for restaurants, hotels and shopping. Utilize trolleys, trams or vans.</p>	<p>ER Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2011</p>
<p>2-K. Develop a River Research and Education Center. Seek national Scenic River designation for the Santa Fe.</p>	<p>ER Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2012</p>

3. Promotion Committee Objectives	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>3-A. Contract for placement of a billboard on I-75 to promote downtown High Springs. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact billboard company to determine available spots, costs, and any match or donations available to 501(c)(3) organizations. • Identify budget resources to fund billboard (first estimate: \$7,500) • Develop graphics and message for billboard. Sponsor a contest for design or photo to be used? • Issue press release and conduct media event when billboard is unveiled. 	<p>Promotion Committee Constance Huess</p>	<p>Billboard in place by 12/31/2008</p>
<p>3-B. Create and implement a plan for organizing cooperative business promotions for downtown High Springs merchants. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ER Committee to determine downtown merchant promotional needs during Roundtable meeting. • Identify budget resources available to help with costs of advertising. • Work with local, state and national media to identify cooperative advertising opportunities and costs. • Develop a schedule of four cooperative advertising projects each year that will allow downtown businesses to work together in promoting downtown merchants. 	<p>Promotion Committee Lani Simmons Donna Mogler</p>	<p>Participate in Roundtable meeting by 8/31/2008</p> <p>Develop plan by 12/31/2008</p> <p>Begin coop advertising in 2009</p>
<p>3-C. Work with the Organization Committee to ensure that the new Main Street Program Manager to be hired will have a demonstrated track record of professional promotions experience. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include promotions experience as a qualification in Program Manager job description • Draft interview questions that will elicit specific information about promotions experience and success 	<p>CDC Board</p>	<p>Hiring process to be completed by 1/31/2009</p>

3. Promotion Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>3-D. Develop the downtown Main Street office as visitor information center. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage for the office indicating “Visitor Information Available Here.” • Wayfinding signage at other downtown locations and gateways indicating Main Street office as Visitor Information Center. • Ensure that Main Street office is stocked with brochures, maps and information about area springs, parks, bike trails, hotels, restaurants and history. • Ensure that Main Street office is staffed during appropriate hours to be available to visitors, and that staff/volunteers are trained to answer visitor questions. • Publicize the Visitor Information Center in press releases, on billboard and at appropriate locations. 	<p>Promotion Committee Jim Dodson</p>	<p>Visitor Information Center fully operational by 12/31/2008</p> <p>Ongoing publicity activities</p>
<p>3-E. Develop a plan and calendar for downtown festivals and events. Events to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Music Festival in 2009 • Downtown Art Walk in 2009 • River Fest in 2010 • Bring Bike Fest back downtown in 2011 • Scuba-related event or festival in 2011 • History Festival in 2012 	<p>Promotion Committee Lani Simmons Dot Harvey</p>	<p>Plan complete by 12/31/2008</p> <p>Implement events between 2009 and 2012, ongoing</p>
<p>3-F. Partner with the Priest Theater and High Springs Community Theater to produce events and cross-promotions that will bring visitors downtown to dine and see a show, etc. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with HSCT Board and Priest Theater management to discuss opportunities for cross promotion. • Meet with local restaurants and other businesses to develop coupon or discount program (for example, show ticket stubs to receive free appetizer; have house manager announce restaurant specials while making house announcements before a play) • Publicize cross promotions through press releases and advertising. • Conduct ongoing meetings with theaters and businesses to develop partnership. 	<p>Promotion Committee Dot Harvey</p>	<p>Cross-promotion partnership operating by 3/31/2009</p>

3. Promotion Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>3-G. Implement a schedule for weekly downtown entertainment at Sinkhole, Pocket Park or other downtown locations. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop calendar of entertainment aimed at adults during 2009 • Add calendar of entertainment for youth and children during 2010 	<p>Promotion Committee Leda Carrera Dot Harvey</p>	<p>Plan complete by 1/31/2009</p>
<p>3-H. Develop a long-term plan to promote downtown and area parks and springs as “The Other Florida”. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a member of Visit Florida • Utilize “Enjoy Our Good Nature” slogan in all advertising • Develop ecotourism promotions • Develop ways to link downtown businesses to “The Other Florida” image (history, old-fashioned service, family-owned, etc.) • Promote High Springs through advertising and press releases to statewide and national media with branding as “The Other Florida” • Develop a media kit 	<p>Joint task partnering Promotions (Lani Simmons) Economic Restructuring (Tony Boothby) and Chamber of Commerce (Tom Weller)</p>	<p>Plan complete by 3/31/2009</p> <p>Begin implementing activities in 2009 and ongoing</p>

4. Design Committee Objectives	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>4-A. Develop plan for installation and landscaping of downtown gateway signage at 4 more locations. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and obtain easements • Identify budget resources: estimated need is \$1,200 per sign plus \$200 landscaping per sign for a total budget need of \$5,600. Can the signs be sponsored? • Install signs • Work with Organization Committee to publicize new sign project through press releases, photo ops, etc. 	<p>Leda Carrero</p>	<p>Develop plan by 7/31/2008</p> <p>New signs in place by May 31, 2009</p>
<p>4-B. Replace the High Springs sign near City Boys. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify budget resources for project • Arrange for removal of existing sign • Develop design for new sign in accordance with existing signage and design principles • Install sign • Work with Organization Committee to publicize new sign through press releases, photo ops, etc. 	<p>Kathy Pults</p>	<p>Meet with City Boys by 8/31/2008</p> <p>New signs in place by May 31, 2009</p>
<p>4-C. Design and produce a second set of downtown street banners to alternate with the current set of recreation-themed banners. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a common theme for the second banner set (Celebration, History, Cultural Diversity, Holiday, etc.) • Identify budget resources for project • Arrange for design and production of banners • Publicize installation of new banners with press release, photo ops, etc. 	<p>Linda Hewlett</p>	<p>Identify new banner theme by 9/30/2008</p> <p>Production of new banners completed by 3/31/2009</p>

4. Design Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>4-D. Continue to meet regularly with City building permit and planning staff to regularly address design concerns and troubleshoot specific issues in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Ross Ambrose</p>	<p>Contact City staff at least quarterly; meet as needed</p>
<p>4-E. Develop a plan to improve the aesthetic appearance of utility service in downtown High Springs. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a meeting between Progress Energy, City staff and Main Street members to discuss possible improvements. • Develop long-term strategies to support underground utilities. • Identify budget resources that will be needed. 	<p>Ross Ambrose</p>	<p>Initial meeting by 8/15/2008</p> <p>Plan developed by 12/31/2008</p>
<p>4-F. Complete feasibility study and concept presentation on developing a 2-4 block pocket park in the downtown area (similar to Alachua’s Theater Park). Potential site is along Railroad Avenue. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop detailed drawing of proposed park, utilizing input from nearby business owners, City staff and community members. • Explore inclusion of a water feature such as a fountain or splash play area in the park design to highlight High Springs’ connection to local rivers and springs. • Visit other Florida cities that have installed similar parks for design inspiration. • Identify budget resources needed and potential sources (grants?) • Develop implementation plan 	<p>Alice Green</p>	<p>Concept presentation by 12/31/2008</p> <p>Develop implementation plan during 2009</p>

4. Design Committee Objectives (continued)	Lead Responsibility	Timeline
<p>4-G. Advocate for the adoption of the James Paul Park Master Plan. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a meeting with the CRA, Parks Board, City staff and Main Street members to discuss the plan and vision submitted for James Paul Park. • Identify how High Springs Main Street should participate in park development. • Develop a detailed plan of action. 	<p>Dot Harvey Partnership with Economic Restructuring Committee</p>	<p>2009</p>
<p>4-H. Develop concept plans for a Downtown Mural Project and a large-scale public art project. Strategies to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit mural projects in nearby cities such as Palatka or New Port Richey for inspiration on how a similar project could be implemented in High Springs. • Identify budget resources needed. • Develop detailed mural project plans for inclusion in future Strategic Planning. • Research and develop plan for public sculpture project similar to Chicago Cows or Gainesville Gators (turtles? Divers?) 	<p>Ross Ambrose</p>	<p>2010-2011</p>
<p>4-I. Develop visual concepts for City Hall façade improvements. Those that are approved by the board will be developed for presentation to the City Manager and City Commission.</p>	<p>Design Committee (lead to be assigned)</p>	<p>2010</p>