



Schedule at a Glance

Wednesday, November 6th

- 03:00 PM - 04:00 PM **Saco Riverfront Park Tour**
Historic Downtown Saco Tour
- 04:30 PM - 05:30 PM **Registration Open**
- 04:30 PM - 07:00 PM **Welcome Reception at Pacifico**

Thursday, November 7th

- 07:30 AM - 08:45 AM **Registration and Light Refreshments**
Design in Action: Show and Tell
- 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM **Education Sessions**
 - What Does "Main Street Is for Everyone" Really Mean?
 - Playing in the Sandbox Together: Municipalities and Main Street Working Together
 - Emergency Preparedness 101
 - Downtowns: Where Tourism Comes Alive
- 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM **Education Sessions**
 - Beyond Shelter: Understanding the Complexities of Housing Insecurity in Communities
 - A Lifetime of Floods: Hallowell's Emergency Response and Recovery
 - More Hands On Deck: Strategies for Capacity Building
 - Building Community Through Spaces



Schedule at a Glance

Thursday, November 7th

- 11:30 AM - 01:00 PM

Lunch & Conversation (retrieve lunch ticket at registration)

- 01:15 PM - 03:00 PM

Keynote and MDC Annual Awards

Erin Barnes, President & CEO, Main Street America

- 03:15 PM - 04:15 PM

Education Sessions

- Office Hours and Rapid Fire Consultations
- Community Crowdfunding: Fueling Innovation with Coffee & Cookies

Tours

- Biddeford Mills Tour

- 04:15 PM - 05:15 PM

Reflect & Connect Social Debrief

November 6th

Welcome Reception



We hope you will join us for an experiential welcome reception where you can connect with fellow attendees, share insights, and kick off this exciting event in style. Enjoy delicious bites and beverages while having some fun mingling amongst local artisans and musicians. Join us at Pacifico in Saco from 4:30-7:00PM.

This reception is included with your conference registration!

Tours - 3:00-4:00PM

Saco Riverfront Park Tour

Meeting Location: Pacifico

Speakers: Angie Presby (Saco Main Street)

Description: Join us for a walking tour of Riverfront Park to discover the exciting improvements made possible by the T-Mobile Hometown Grant. The tour highlights the creation of the Riverwalk walkway, which enhances access to the Saco River, providing beautiful views and recreational opportunities. Along the way, we'll share some fascinating river history, including its role in powering local mills and shaping the community. Activating the Saco River – in Saco – is the focus of Saco Main Street's Experiential Tourism project with Planeterra.

The walk covers about 1.5 miles, offering a scenic and informative journey through this revitalized public space. Don't miss this chance to see how the park is being transformed for all to enjoy!

Historic Downtown Saco Tour

Meeting Location: Pacifico

Tour Leader: Anatole Brown

Description: Take a stroll down Main Street in Saco and discover the rich history woven into its buildings and streets. This walking tour will guide you through the heart of downtown, where 19th-century brick structures stand tall as a testament to the city's industrial past. Learn about the mills that powered Saco's growth, the historic storefronts that once served bustling businesses, and the architectural details that make this area unique. As we walk, you'll hear stories of the people who shaped the community, from local entrepreneurs to influential families, and how the area has transformed over the centuries while preserving its charm. The tour is ADA accessible on flat sidewalks.

Session Details

November
7th

Breakout Sessions
09:00-10:00AM

What Does "Main Street Is for Everyone" Really Mean?

Location: Biddeford City Council Chambers

Speakers: Tae Chong (Maine State Chamber of Commerce), Denise Cilley (Sunrise County Economic Council), Shelly Gibson (City of Biddeford), Delilah Poupore (Heart of Biddeford)

Description: The core of the Maine Downtown Center approach to revitalization is a commitment to creating places of shared prosperity, equal access to opportunity, and inclusive engagement. Explore the business, ethical, and community engagement aspects of social inclusion through this dynamic session. Case studies will highlight how relationship-building has either advanced or impeded progress in various settings. Participate in an interactive activity to apply these insights and enhance your approach to inclusive practices.

Playing in the Sandbox Together: Municipalities and Main Street Working Together

Location: Sacred Profane Brewing

Speakers: Ross Cunningham (Town of Lisbon), Melissa Lindley (City of Gardiner), EJ Roach (City of Old Town)

Description: Join us for a dynamic talk show-style discussion. We'll delve into the crucial collaboration between downtown organizations and local government to achieve revitalization goals. Learn practical strategies for building partnerships, navigating bureaucratic processes, and advocating effectively with city staff and officials. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights from experienced professionals and enhance your revitalization efforts.

Emergency Preparedness 101

Location: McArthur Library

Speakers: Jack Clukey (Town of Dover-Foxcroft), Shanna Cox (LA Chamber of Commerce), Clare Marron (Monkitree, Gardiner)

Description: In this session, we'll explore comprehensive strategies for emergency preparedness, focusing on building resilience from natural or human-made crises on downtown businesses and organizations. Learn how to prepare communications, navigate resources, fortify infrastructure, and bolster small business readiness. Join our expert speakers for a valuable discussion on preparedness strategies for your community.

Downtown: Where Tourism Comes Alive

Location: City Theater

Speakers: Carolann Ouellette (Maine Office of Tourism), Jamie Sweeting (Planeterra)

Description: Tourism is increasingly recognized for its potential to transform communities, with Maine's vibrant downtowns being a prime example. Learn about MOT's priorities for marketing Maine and the role of downtowns. Explore the intersections of MOT and Planeterra's (a worldwide organization turning travel into positive community impact) work to enhance economic recovery and resilience while offering insights into tourism's role in sustainable development.

Session Details

Session Group 2 10:15-11:15AM

Building Community Through Spaces

Location: McArthur Library

Speakers: Amy Grommes-Pulaski (Discover Downtown Westbrook), CJ Opperthausen (Friends of Congress Square Park), Abby Wilson (Discover Downtown Westbrook)

Description: Join us for an engaging and hands-on session that delves into the dynamic world of placemaking and placekeeping. Discover how to transform underutilized spaces into vibrant community assets by honoring the rich tapestry of local stories and integrating untold narratives. This session will explore strategies for activating spaces while fostering deep connections between community members, business owners, municipalities, and elected officials. Through an interactive charrette, participants will gain practical insights into the placemaking process, learn how to effectively navigate different interests, and develop actionable plans for creating meaningful, inclusive spaces.

Beyond Shelter: Understanding the Complexities of Housing Insecurity in Communities

Location: Biddeford City Council Chambers

Speakers: Victoria Abbott (Bread of Life Ministries), Jake Hammer (City of Biddeford), Cary Tyson (Portland Downtown)

Description: Explore the complex challenges of balancing downtown revitalization with housing insecurity. Our expert speakers will discuss their challenges and insights working with revitalization efforts and all community members. Discover how downtown associations can effectively collaborate with social service agencies to ensure that safety and inclusivity are prioritized for business owners, downtown visitors, and unhoused community members.

A Lifetime of Floods: Hallowell's Emergency Response and Recovery

Location: City Theater

Speakers: Fred LaMontagne (Avangrid), George LaPointe (City of Hallowell), Lauren Roderigue (CMP)

Description: This session will focus on emergency response and recovery strategies for downtown businesses and organizations, housed in the case study of Hallowell's lifetime of floods. Learn best practices for emergency response and recovery, with a specific lens on electrical power restoration and community resilience for longterm recovery. Learn hot tips for what to do in an emergency involving power. Speakers will share lessons learned from flood responses, recovery funds, and strategies for long-term recovery and rebuilding. Participants will learn how to assess damage, prioritize recovery efforts, and access resources to rebuild and restore their operations, communities, and downtown areas.

Session Details

More Hands on Deck: Strategies for Capacity Building

Location: Sacred Profane Brewing

Speakers: Kristina Cannon (Main Street Skowhegan), Angie Presby (Saco Main Street), Cara Romano (Heart of Ellsworth)

Description: Dive deep into the world of capacity building for small downtown organizations. This session will unleash a treasure trove of innovative strategies directly from Main Street leaders. Directors of three Main Street programs will share practical tools, success stories, and lessons learned from their hands-on experiences. Whether you're looking to enhance your organization's operational efficiency, engage your community more effectively, or unlock new avenues for growth, this session promises to deliver actionable insights and inspire new ways of thinking. Don't miss this opportunity to gain the inside scoop on what's working and how you can apply these strategies to elevate your organization's impact.

Session Group 3
03:15-04:15PM

Office Hours and Rapid-Fire Consultations

Location: City Theater

Content Experts: Anne Ball (Maine Downtown Center), Mac Collins (Preservation Architect), Abbe Levin (Cultural Consultant), Brett Richardson (Town of Freeport), Janet Sydnor (Maine Development Foundation)

Description: Have an issue in your downtown you would like help with? Come by and ask an expert your most burning downtown revitalization questions related to organization, design, events, economic vitality, tourism and more! How do you start a downtown revitalization effort? What do you do about a downtown building or streetscape that needs help? Do you need ideas to attract more retail or another business type? Do you want to know how to work with tourism partners? Need help with fundraising for a downtown initiative? Our experts are standing by ready to brainstorm and troubleshoot with you!

Community Crowdfunding: Fueling Innovation with Coffee & Cookies

Location: McArthur Library

Speakers: Ross Chanowski (NuMarket), Matt Wagner (Main Street America), Mary Chapman (The Cheese Shop/Sissle & Daughters), John Stirratt (Otyokwa)

Description: Join us as we examine the future and far too often misunderstood world of crowdfunding through a new lens in which small businesses are able to attract needed investment as a direct result of the strong connections they've built with their customers and community. This session will be part of a new episode of the Main Street Business Insights podcast from Main Street America, where we'll lead a conversation with the founder and CEO of NuMarket, a unique crowdfunding platform operating in Maine and growing across with country. We'll also hear from the real-world experiences of two of NuMarket's small business campaign participants right here in Maine.

Session Details

Biddeford Mills Museum Tour

Meeting Location: City Theater (3:10PM)

Speakers: Mills Museum Tour guide(s)

Description: Take a dive into Biddeford's history as a mill town and see the updated museum space. Walking tours are often guided by former mill workers, who know first-hand the history of these old brick buildings. See the unique architecture of a cotton house, walk among the towering walls of a weave shed, and visit the underground canals where the Saco River once powered these historic textile mills.

Tour is designed for those able to climb minimal stairs. Walking shoes should be worn.



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