



## Frequently Asked Questions

### *Downtown Morehead City Revitalization Association*

#### **Where is Downtown Morehead City?**

The commercial and residential area from the NC Port to 14th Street and north to Calico Creek and south to Bogue Sound, including Sugarloaf Island.

#### **What is the Downtown Morehead City Revitalization Association?**

DMCRA is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to making Downtown Morehead City a vital community. This is done through the Main Street 4-Point Approach to downtown revitalization strategy: *Organization – Promotion – Economic Restructuring - Design.*

#### **How did DMCRA begin and why?**

In November 1996 the Morehead City East division of the Carteret County Chamber of Commerce determined it would be beneficial to the community to develop ways to improve business conditions to attract more people to the waterfront and Arendell Street. In April 1997 a presentation was made about the NC Main Street Program and 65 people attended. From that group, a 17-member steering committee was formed, consisting of interested downtown business and property owners, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown MHC Merchant's Association and town and county government officials. This group reorganized itself into the present Downtown MHC Revitalization Association in July 1997. Morehead City became a Main Street Community in June 2000.

#### **Why should I become a member of the DMCRA? (What's in it for me?)**

DMCRA is working toward "branding" Downtown Morehead City as a destination for shoppers, visitors and local residents. You should become a member of DMCRA because:

- DMCRA is the only organization whose sole interest is in making downtown Morehead City successful
- An organization of many members provides a stronger voice than one individual.
- DMCRA provides opportunities for cooperative advertising and promotional campaigns
- The annual *Downtown Visitor's Guide* provides a map & directory to your business
- A quarterly newsletter (soon to become monthly) features downtown events, people, attractions and new and expanding businesses. The newsletter reviews DMCRA activities and contains articles of interest to business and property owners
- A Downtown MHC Website ([www.downtownmoreheadcity.com](http://www.downtownmoreheadcity.com)) provides a source of information about downtown (you!)
- You may have a FREE link from [www.downtownmoreheadcity.com](http://www.downtownmoreheadcity.com) that leads to your business
- The FREE use of a Downtown Morehead City logo in your advertising and literature is available
- *Downtown Morehead City Weekly Update* is available via email and fax
- LOW COST advertising in the Downtowner newsletter and website (future) is available to you
- FREE downtown Design Assistance & technical literature are available to you
- There are opportunities to make business contacts and business referrals to help you become established

#### **What does DMCRA need money for?**

In general, funding is needed to do the things necessary to promote and improve the downtown business district.

Although many of the programs and activities of our four standing committees are funded by grants and individual sponsorships, that's not the case for all of them. For example, education materials for our

reference library, communication materials and postage may not always qualify for grant funding. Some projects and activities need seed money to get started before they begin to pay for themselves.

In addition, funds are needed to pay a full-time executive director and part-time assistant to manage the day-to-day activities of the association. Funds are also needed for the usual costs associated with running an office and non-profit organization, such as rent, utilities and office supplies.

### **How is DMCRA Funded?**

Funding comes from memberships, fundraising events, and grants. The Town of Morehead City and County of Carteret have also provided funding for operations and specific projects.

### **What is the NC Main Street Center?**

It is a human and technical reference center established to administer the Main Street program in North Carolina; it works to stimulate economic development within the context of historic preservation. The North Carolina Main Street Center is in the Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance. The Center utilizes the approach developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and operates through their National Main Street Center (NMSC).

### **What is the Main Street Approach?**

It is a comprehensive revitalization process designed to improve all aspects of the downtown, producing both intangible and tangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation and making downtown a fun place to visit are as critical to Main Street's future as recruiting new businesses, rehabilitating buildings and expanding parking.

Building on downtown's inherent assets-rich architecture, personal service and traditional values-the Main Street approach has rekindled entrepreneurship, downtown cooperation and civic concern. It has earned national recognition as a practical strategy appropriately scaled to a community's local resources and conditions. Four elements are combined to create a well-balanced program.

**ORGANIZATION:** Building partnerships to create a consistent revitalization program and develop effective management and leadership downtown. Diverse groups - merchants, bankers, public officials, the chamber of commerce and civic groups - must work together to improve downtown.

**PROMOTION:** Reestablishing downtown as a compelling place for shoppers, investors and visitors. This means not only improving sales but also rekindling community excitement and involvement. Promotion ranges from street festivals to retail merchandising, from community education to aggressive public relations.

**DESIGN:** Enhancing the visual quality of the downtown. Attention must be given to the elements of the downtown environment-not just buildings and storefronts but also public improvements, rear entries, signs, landscaping, window displays and graphic materials.

**ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:** Strengthening the existing economic assets of the business district while diversifying its economic base. Activities include market analysis to understand the changing market place; adaptive reuse of vacant structures as entertainment or cultural facilities; and sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants.

**NC Main Street Communities** New Bern, Salisbury, Shelby, Tarboro, Washington, Morganton, Statesville, Rocky Mount, Goldsboro, Lenoir, Reidsville, Wilson, Sanford, Henderson, Hendersonville, Kinston, Smithfield, Waynesville, Clinton, Wadesboro, Burlington, Elizabeth City, Aberdeen, Lumberton, Mooresville, Concord, Newton, Rutherfordton, Mocksville, Southport, Albemarle, Boone, Brevard, Lexington, Spruce Pine, Farmville, Elkin, Lincolnton, Monroe, Roxboro, Sylva, Oxford, Sparta, Belmont, Hertford, North Wilkesboro, Morehead City.