Impact Reporting & Communication: An Overview and Model for MainStreet/ACD Programs

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WHY an Annual/Impact Report?

- Provide **local government partners** with information about your performance, impact, and your leveraging of resources. **Supports contract negotiations**!
- Communicates your position as an economic catalyst for the community.
- Strengthens relationships with **community stakeholders**, **business/property owners**, and **residents**.
- Share vision for the future and generate resources (**volunteers**, **donors**, etc.).
- Supports your MSA Accreditation.
I. Broad-based community commitment
II. Inclusive Leadership & Organizational Capacity
III. Diverse Funding & Sustainable Program Operations
IV. Strategy-Driven Programming
V. Preservation-Based Economic Development
VI. Demonstrated Impact & Results

1 FOCUS AREA III: Communications and Public Relations, INDICATOR III-d.
2 FOCUS AREA III: Promoting Progress and Demonstrating Impact and Results, INDICATOR I-d.
INDICATOR I: The district’s revitalization programming, achievements, stories, and reinvestment statistics are promoted. Examples of how these are demonstrated include:

a. Sharing through the Coordinating program reporting system according to the timeline outlined in annual agreements.

b. Sharing with district stakeholders, local units of government, anchor organizations, funders, and the community at large.

c. Highlighting and publishing success stories of impactful projects on digital platforms (website, social media channels, etc.) and local media outlets.

d. Publishing and distributing an annual report and summary of revitalization statistics.

e. Highlighting key statistics and testimonials on website and other marketing materials.
## Elements of the Impact Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINIMUM EXPECTED</th>
<th>OPTIONAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Message from the Director</td>
<td>• Vision Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mission Statement</td>
<td>• ETS Project Lists (current)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ETS’s</td>
<td>• Outcomes &amp; Highlight Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact Data</td>
<td>• Quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Project Highlights (3-6)</td>
<td>• Donors, Funders, Contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Looking Ahead</td>
<td>• Board/Bios and Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Board/Staff Roster</td>
<td>• Volunteer Acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PHOTOS!</td>
<td>• Financials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. NMMS prepares the report that aligns with your brand; only minimal editing without a service request.

2. Think **VISUAL**!

3. Secure photo permissions and credits.

4. Period covered (data): 1 year vs. multi-year. *You already have data from quarterly report submissions; add TA values.*

5. Wordsmithing is essential before submission.
6. If you have multiple projects, pick those that: a) have the greatest impact to the district, b) cross the Four Points. (note: balance the highly visible projects with those that people need to know about).

7. Present a vision of what’s coming in the Looking Ahead section (generates excitement, support, resources, etc.).

8. Recognize, acknowledge partners, donors, contributors.

9. Be clear and succinct when reporting financials.

10. Partition the Impact Report from other communications, but use to support other messages to stakeholders and constituents.
Support Local Business Needs and Lead Economic Revitalization in the District

Facilitate a sustainable, diverse economy that meets the needs of locals and visitors. Encourage a strong, diversified entrepreneurial environment where existing businesses and startups can thrive. Support an appropriate mix of retail, restaurants, entertainment, and housing in the district.

- Convening monthly meetings of the TMS Merchants Advisory Council for the purpose of identifying needs and priorities of existing businesses and prioritizing projects and solutions to support business retention and recruitment
- Continue and expand the Business Alive Project
- Coordinate with Taos County on redevelopment of the old County Courthouse facilities on Taos Plaza for the purposes of creating a downtown shared workspace center
- Implement 1-3 events/activities annually that bring people to district businesses
- Compile and disseminate information to district businesses with respect to funding and training resources to help stabilize operations and safely adapt to current climate
## Period of Data Coverage

### AT A GLANCE · OUR 2021-2022 IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Impact Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People Engaged</td>
<td>6,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses Served</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events Implemented</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Jobs Added</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Businesses Added</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Placemaking Projects Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Investment</td>
<td>$270,851</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TAOS MAINSTREET: AT A GLANCE · OUR IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Impact Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Businesses Supported</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Businesses Added</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Received</td>
<td>$3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Hours</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Received</td>
<td>$51k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Investment</td>
<td>$270,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Investment</td>
<td>$68,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Partnerships</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design/Placemaking Projects Completed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings Rehabilitated</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Jobs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Building Rehabilitation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the coming year, we look forward to continuing the operations of the Tucumcari Railroad Museum, Tucumcari Talking Tour and events such Fired Up, Down At The Depot. Very Many Tucumcari that work to bring people downtown! We are in the process of completing the property assessment and mixed use zoning overlay to present to the City of Tucumcari for review and approval. High on our priority list is the continuation of the Forge Business Accelerator Program. We have also begun looking into the design and implementation of wayfinding signage for the community.

Future Projects

- Completion of Phase 1 & 2 Great Blocks on Main Street
  This infrastructure project is designed to make the district more pedestrian friendly with improved sidewalks, pedestrian level lighting and landscaping.

- Community Wayfinding
  Planning work on this project will begin later this year with technical assistance from NM MainStreet.

- Forge Business Accelerator
  Cohort 3 of our tiered business accelerator program is scheduled for August 2022.

- Sands Dorey Park Development
  Design work on this project will begin in late fall 2022 and will include public input, design assistance from NM MainStreet. Once plans are in place, we will begin looking for funding.

- Legacy Business Project
  Many of the businesses in the Tucumcari MainStreet have been in operation for forty plus years. This project will honor their contribution to downtown Tucumcari.

“Tucumcari MainStreet has been a great partner for Quay County Health Council from providing committee meeting space to co-sponsoring events that encourage physical activity. The director, board members, and museum volunteers are always friendly and helpful.”
— Brenda Bishop
Quay County Health Council Coordinator

In 2017, the City of Tucumcari in partnership with Tucumcari MainStreet adopted the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan with the vision for Downtown Tucumcari as “a unique, thriving, business and cultural center where local residents and visitors alike consider a destination point for entertainment, shopping, and dining.” It is the cornerstone of the community that creates a unique sense of identity and is the point of pride for the residents.” The Economic Transformation Strategies adopted by Tucumcari MainStreet are derived from this plan.

TAOS MAINSTREET: LOOKING AHEAD

Physical Improvements

- Pop-up Park: identify location for pop-up park (tables, chairs, and plants) and install for summer Downtown Walkability Initiative.
Start developing plans for walkability improvements such as alleyway activation projects, wayfinding, lighting, sidewalk repair, and ADA access.

- Clean-ups: organize 2-3 more cleanups in downtown.

- Traffic Signal Box Art: install 17 graphic wraps on the traffic signal boxes around town designed by students and local artists.

- Facade Improvement Program: implement 3 facade improvements within district.

Economic Revitalization

- Merchant Advisors: continue to hold monthly meetings with merchant advisors to get input on priorities for downtown.

- Taos Events (Small Business Saturday, Taos Roundup, Dancing in the Plaza): continue to host events in downtown Taos to attract locals and visitors.

- Outdoor Recreation: incubator begins development of program to rollout in 2023.

- Construction Mitigation: work with DOT to create communication resources for downtown Taos about upcoming US 64-68 construction.

Besides our regular operational tasks, we plan to implement our new fundraising plan, apply for more grants, and create a volunteer recruitment plan.

Capacity Building

Contact the Taos MainStreet Executive Director at director@taosmainstreet.org or visit taosmainstreet.org for more information.

Want to get involved?
Partners

Foundations, agencies, or institutions that are providing funding, goods, or services (including in-kind supports)

- Government partners (state/local) to the NMMS biannual MOU
- Entities with which you have longstanding engagements or formal agreements to collaborate on projects; or which lend unique and ongoing support to the organization.

Donors

- Chris Pieper
- Bill Bryans
- Clean Taos Inc
- Juniper Leherissey
- Elizabeth Palacios
- Marcus and Edith Whitson
- Ace Hardware
- Magpie Taos
- Rolling Still
- Renuex
- Lun+Ojo
- Ampersand
- FX-18
- Alley Cantina
- Boxie Tees
- MODA
- The Gorge Bar and Grill
- The Taos Inn
- Clean Taos
- Las Comadres
- Cinnamon's Botanicals
- Twirl
- Clark & Co. Menswear
- Hitching Post Shave Co.
- tea.o.graphy
- Mudd n Flood
- Taos Mesa Brewing
- Monet’s Kitchen
- Ammann Gallery

Foundations
Includes any support for which you had to apply for funding — including government agencies

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**Funders & Sponsors**

Corporations, foundations, agencies, or institutions that are providing grants, funding, goods, event/project sponsorship or services greater than $2,500

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**Donors/Sponsors**

- 1st Assembly of God Church
- Annie & Shaun McCauley
- Blanco Creek Boutique
- Del’s Restaurant
- Desert Gypsy Beauty Bar
- Desert Inn
- Dr. Marshall & Jane Whitmire
- Everyone’s Federal Credit Union
- First Title Services
- Frank Turner
- Glenda Reid
- Greater Tucumcari EDC
- Huffman Counseling & Wellness
- Jackalope Coffee Haus
- JDCE
- KTNM-KQAY Radio
- Louis Parmer
- Love’s Travel Stop
- Lowe’s
- Mesalands Community College
- Mike Cherry
- New Mexico Bank & Trust
- Phillip & Kathleen Box | Box Farms
- Quay Schools Federal Credit Union
- R. Kelly McFarland, CPA
- Roadrunner Lodge
- State Farm Insurance
- Subway
- Tucumcari General Insurance
- Wellborn Pharmacy
- Young Insurance
- Edward Burkhardt
- Charles Hunt
Donors & Contributors

Individuals or businesses that have donated cash, goods, or professional services for your operations or projects; generally, those providing gifts of less than $2,500

If you have a tiered contribution program (e.g., bronze, silver, gold) you can list donors/contributors under those tiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chris Pieper</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ace Hardware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magpie Taos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rolling Still</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renuex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lun+Ojo</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>
Financials

Revenue
- Grants: $24,474
- Government Revenue: $22,200
- Contracts: $54,167
- Direct Public Support: $7,909
- Program Fees: $2,325
- Total Revenue and Support: $111,075

Expenses
- General & Admin: $92,517
- Programs: $11,786
- Total Expenses: $104,303

Total Revenue and Support: $111,075

Explain the financials

Coordinate with Organization Specialists on financial reporting (as needed)
Uhhhh, now hang on...
Am I making this Impact Report or are you?

#ihavequestions

...glad you asked. Here is:
The PROCESS
Includes checklist

Your working doc (can be filled out/edited throughout the year)

Tool for determining paragraphs/stories/narrative wordcounts

Final step for you

Copy/paste all text from your working Word doc into the form

Upload photos directly into the form

No e-mailing needed!

We work our magic

Brand your data, text, report style to your existing organization/district

Includes additional (relevant) calls to action that you didn’t directly provide
Impact Report Submission Form

This form is set up as a tool for you to use to prepare (as a working document) for your final Impact Report submission online. Please DO NOT submit this form to us, rather, copy and paste your entries below into the corresponding fields within the online submission form.

Basic Info

Executive Director's Name *(if not you)*
First Name Last Name

Your Name *
First Name Last Name

Your Organization's PARENT Organization or Corporate Name *(if applicable)*
Enter here

Your Organization *
Organization Name

Organization Email *(if different from your email)*
example@example.com

Organization Mailing Address
123 Sesame Street, Anytown, NM 88123

Your Email *
example@example.com

Organization Phone Number *
Please enter a valid phone number.

Social Media

Please list your organizational social media accounts
Facebook: @handle
Instagram: @handle
Linkedin: profile name
Twitter: @handle
Other: enter platform and profile name
Other: enter platform and profile name

Your Annual Report Content Checklist

Please select items that you have prepared to include in your Annual Report. If you do not select an item, it WILL NOT be included in your final Annual Report.

Please select the main sections/elements you wish to include in your annual report:

- Opening Message from the Director
- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- ETS’s
- ETS Supporting Project bullets
- Year-at-a-Glance Infographic *(see next section)*
- Previous Year Project Highlights *(up to six, w/photos)*
- Outcomes and Highlights *(stories or data regarding the impacts of your work)*
- Quotes from community members/partners
- Looking Ahead *(future project summaries — up to 3)*
- Donor/Funder/Contributor Acknowledgements
- Donor Spotlight story
- Board/Staff Roster
- Board/Staff Bios
- Board/Staff Photos *(individual head shots)*
- Volunteer Acknowledgements *(list)*
- Year-to-date revenues/financials

NOTES FOR PHOTO SUBMISSIONS: You will have the opportunity to submit high resolution images/photos for project highlights, staff and board members, donor and volunteer spotlights, and additional images that you feel highlight your MainStreet district. If you have project images *(conceptual drawings, photos)* "coming year" projects, submit those as well.

PLEASE ENSURE your organization either owns or you have explicit permission to use the photos you provide. If a photo credit is required, please note the credit in the filename of the photo(s).

Photos of individuals *(staff/board member roster section)* should include their first and last names in the photo filename.
Projects

You must include between 3-6 Project Titles and Summaries. Feel free to combine several projects into one title and summary (example: your organization hosted 4 events last year. Rather than listing 4 projects, combine them into one listed project and mention all events within the same summary). Supporting project photos are encouraged, but optional.

**Project #1 Title and Summary** *
2-5 word title and keep summary between 50-200 words

**Project #1 Supporting Photo(s)**
OPTIONAL BUT ENCOURAGED — PREPARE 1-5 high resolution photos that highlight your project

**Project #2 Title and Summary** *
2-5 word title and keep summary between 50-200 words

OPENING CONTENT

Use the form fields below to enter your content for the sections checked above (NOTE: your content should be FINAL, EDITED (not a draft) copy; please maintain recommended word counts and don’t forget to run a spell check before submitting.

**Cover Photo**
PREPARE a high resolution photo that you feel best represents your organization/district as a whole and/or reflects the work you’ve accomplished in the past year. Please note: cover image will be cropped as a vertical (tall with a relatively narrow width) image, so choose an image you feel will work in that format.

**Impact Report Title**
SUGGESTION: Short, snappy title for your current year’s report (examples: “Changing our Community for the Better” or “A Year in Review”)
Impact Report Submission Form

This form is set up as a tool for you to use to prepare (as a working document) for your final Impact Report submission online. Please DO NOT submit this form to us; rather, copy and paste your entries below into the corresponding fields within the online submission form.

Basic Info

Executive Director’s Name (if not you)
Nolan Ojeda

Your Name *
Nolan Ojeda

Your Organization’s PARENT Organization or Corporate Name (if applicable)
none

Your Organization *
Alamogordo MainStreet

Organization Email (if different from your email)
director@alamogordomainstreet.org

Organization Mailing Address
PO Box 2646, Alamogordo, NM 88311

Your Email *
director@alamogordomainstreet.org

Organization Phone Number *
575-446-3612

Social Media
Please list your organizational social media accounts
Facebook: @alamogordomainstreet
Instagram: @alamogordomainstreet

Linkedin: none

Twitter: none

Other: none

Other: none
Relatively self-explanatory: copy/paste from your Word document into the online form.

Photos associated with each section can be uploaded directly within the form itself.
When you’re done with all the entries, photo uploads, etc.: Press the button... you know the one.

Submit
...then the MAGIC happens...
Your content dictates which parts of the template are used.
Tucumcari Railroad Museum

In 2021 Tucumcari Main Street took over operation of the Tucumcari Railroad Museum that is housed in a 1920’s era railroad depot (where the Main Street office is also located). Volunteers and staff run the museum which is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday. The museum has been open under the auspices of Tucumcari Main Street for one year and has quadrupled both attendance numbers and income during that time.

“[Tucumcari Main Street has done a remarkable job in bringing life back into one of the most unique and beautiful buildings in Tucumcari, the Tucumcari Train Depot. It is returning to being a center of activity for the community.]”
— Frank Turner, founding Board Member of the Tucumcari Railroad Museum

This coming year the Railroad Committee has plans to expand an exhibit on the significance the town of Dawson, NM played with coal being shipped to Tucumcari in the early days of the 21st century. The museum will also be expanding its inventory of items for attendees to purchase as a keepsake of their visit in the small gift shop.

Tucumcari Forge

Tucumcari Forge is a tiered business accelerator program designed to position very early stage businesses or individuals interested in starting a business to benefit from the MainStreet Microloan program. The program invites participants to network with area resource partners, receive technical assistance as well as refine their business offerings, identify customer market and start their business. To date, eight individuals have completed the program with four individuals opening their business!

Great Blocks on MainStreet

The Great Blocks on MainStreet project is part of an effort to revitalize the historic downtown district. The plan calls for many aesthetic improvements in the project areas along Second Street and Main Street, including trees and landscaping, pedestrian level lighting as well as new sidewalks, benches, bike racks and public art to encourage walking, socializing, shopping and gathering in the downtown area. The Great Blocks on MainStreet project was recently awarded $400,000 by New Mexico Mainstreet for completion of Phase 1 of the project.

“With passion and vision Connie Loveland and her team at Tucumcari MainStreet are building a network of partners that promises to transform Tucumcari.”
— Jim Hinckley, Jim Hinckley’s America
and again... Wordcounts are important!

Quarter Page No Pic

This section should be **150-200** words total. Quatemque volum et ut quosanda int qui sam volo eicatia quas iur re debitia nam re minci re volupatatem sintia dipsandae mintur? Xerferorio berro bla dolum alitat.

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Vert Quarter Page Project

This section should be **50-75** words total. Quatemque volum et ut quosanda int qui sam volo eicatia quas iur re debitia nam re minci re volupatatem sintia dipsandae mintur? Xerferorio berro bla dolum alitat.

Excesse rem. Obit, si denem. Itatibus, ni velesti to optates totatio. Iberum re solum quunt eum vid que pori optatia volupatatem aliquodit idus illabo. Les esciis is aut debitia nam re minci re volupatatem sintia dipsandae mintur?

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The Great Blocks on MainStreet project was recently awarded $400,000 by New Mexico Mainstreet for completion of Phase 1 of the project.

...not just for the template, but for your audience as well!
YOU play a part in determining visual IMPACT

This section should be 50-100 words total. Condum iurem iu. Ti. Dio. octem, omena hocus, que nie pictur loca atum su? Utam ego reneque atus inligug, consum ac ne poposu? Nihil occidentem tam in duce interdum ex arbetuque arquitadu. Esom endum audem. Opto en mement su virtuqque patren

MEET OUR BOARD & STAFF

Catalina Hershey
Vice President
Catalina joined Cityville MainStreet in 2018 and enjoys seeing the downtown area thrive. She’s passionate about 20 words or less.

Christopher Locke
Secretary
Catalina joined Cityville MainStreet in 2018 and enjoys seeing the downtown area thrive. She’s passionate about 20 words or less.

LOOKING AHEAD

The more relevant content you provide, (photos, stories, etc.) the more engaging your report will be!

Future Projects — List

- List Item — short description and/or time frame
- List Item — short description and/or time frame
- List Item — short description and/or time frame
- List Item — short description and/or time frame
- List Item — short description and/or time frame

Future Project - Photo Highlight

Future Project - Text Highlight

Catalina Hershey
Vice President
Catalina joined Cityville MainStreet in 2018 and enjoys seeing the downtown area thrive. She’s passionate about 20 words or less.

Contact the Cityville MainStreet Executive Director at director@cityvillemainstreet.org or visit cityvillemainstreet.org for more information.
Below are the primary typefaces for the Taos MainStreet brand to be used for print and web (social media).

**Primary Typeface**

- **Montserrat**
  - use for: headlines, subheadlines, body copy
  - weights: light, regular, medium, semi-bold, bold, extra-bold
  - download: Google Fonts

**Legal/Professional Typeface**

- **Palatino**
  - Palatino is the supporting typeface for the Taos MainStreet brand. It should only be used in legal and professional documents and letters. It's available as a default system font on both Mac and Microsoft Windows computers. Please note that Palatino is labeled as "Palatino Linotype" on Windows systems.
Your district or organization's STYLE GUIDE is our primary source for fonts/colors/logo usage/etc.
Final Specs
what you’re getting (and not getting) when all is said and done
Deliverable Specifications

- 8.5” x 11” Print-ready (professional or office printing) PDF
- Expect 8-20 pages (multiples of four) – overall length is determined by the amount of content YOU provide
- No bleed
- CMYK Color Space
- 2 PDF files: one displayed as single pages, another displayed as spreads
Not “just” a booklet

OTHER USES:

• Print a single page for a poster or individual flyer
• Post the complete digital document (suggest the spreads version) on your website or social media
• Extract individual pages to include in other reports
• Include one, two, or however many printed pages with your fundraising materials
What we can’t deliver after you submit your form

- Proofreading services
- Spellchecking services
- Rewrites
- Extensive design edits
- Photo resizing
- Extensive photo editing
SO before you submit your form to us:

- PROOF

- Select and submit HIGH-resolution, PRINT-READY photos

- PROOF AGAIN

- Ask someone else to PROOF yet again
The Right Way to Write for Impact

When, who, what, how, and everything in between.
At the beginning of the year (fiscal or calendar)...
At the beginning of the year (fiscal or calendar)...

- Define the purpose of your report and ensure it supports your larger goals.
  
  *This will help you decide what information to include and keep you from scrambling at the last minute!*

- Assign report tasks
  
  *Collect report content throughout the year.*

  *Assign content contribution tasks to board members/volunteers (photos, data collection, financials, etc.)*

- Take pictures at events and volunteer opportunities
  
  *Organize the photos. Use images of people enjoying the district and your activities.*
Don’t make it all about you.

• Appeal to your readers and their interests. Share how THEIR support helps you accomplish your goals.

• Consider your audience when choosing report style.
  
  The Message from the Executive Director might be a good place for folksy while the rest of the report is professional.

  You can write in a professional manner while also using language that paints a picture of your work for readers.
Use compelling testimonials from your supporters.

Instead of:

Try:

"Shelbyville MainStreet Rocks!"

"Shelbyville MainStreet Rocks!"

"Shelbyville MainStreet staff made sure I had everything I needed to get my business off the ground and made a point of touching base with me once a week. I'm so glad I chose to locate my business downtown."
FOCUS on accomplishments, NOT activities.

What resulted from what you did? Why did you spend your time the way you did? What difference did it make?

Instead of:

“In 2021, Shelbyville MainStreet continued to implement events, such as the Downtown Growers Market and the Downtown Fall Festival which attracted thousands of people to downtown.”

Try:

“Over fifteen market days from June through September, the Downtown Growers Market attracted 4,500 attendees who purchased fresh, local produce and hand-made crafts, listened to live music, and enjoyed breakfast burritos, locally-roasted coffee, and freshly-baked goods. The 2021 season saw a 25 percent increase in total vendors (from 20 to 25), resulting in a 20 percent increase in overall vendor sales (from $30,000 to $36,000). As a series of family-friendly “mini-events,” the Downtown Growers Market annually provides access for residents to nutritious local produce, supports our vendors’ “micro” businesses, and attracts thousands of people to the downtown district.”
Inspire your report readers with accomplishments related to your mission, leave the administrative items for your monthly board report.

Instead of:

“We developed and executed a plan for Small Business Saturday that included marketing for downtown businesses, partnering with Amex to promote shopping small, a raffle, and free gift wrapping for shopping.”

Try:

“Shelbyville MainStreet supported “shopping small” on Small Business Saturday (SBS) – partnering with Amex to provide SBS swag, marketing downtown businesses, raffling off business gift certificates, and providing free gift wrapping for shoppers.”
Be RELEVANT.

Know your audience.
Share only what’s relevant and of interest to them. Ask yourself, “So what?” before including it.
Highlight what funders made happen.

Demonstrate how donors/grantors money helped move your mission forward. Don’t just acknowledge them, share how their money was used and the impact it had.

**Instead of:**
“We installed holidays lights in the district to spread holiday cheer.”

**Try:**
“The generous support of donors enabled the expansion of holiday lights in the district from 500 to 1000 strands, helping our organization blanket the entire downtown in holiday cheer.”
Triple-check your donor lists.

Don’t sabotage future donations with a misspelled name in the report.
Highlight volunteers’ accomplishments and thank them for their involvement.

Instead of:
“As part of our beautification efforts, Shelbyville MainStreet organized two downtown clean ups in 2021.”

Try:
“In 2021, Shelbyville MainStreet’s two downtown cleanups were a massive success, thanks to the 35 total volunteers that picked up trash, covered graffiti with paint, and pulled weeds alongside SMS board and staff.”
Sprinkle throughout the report!
Explain your financials.

Include a paragraph or two that explains the numbers, line items, funding gaps, etc.
Highlight future plans and goals.

Provide a sneak peek at upcoming events/projects/fundraising goals.

Describe your plan for addressing any challenges of the previous year.

Instead of:

“We plan to implement a new fundraising plan, apply for more grants, and create a volunteer recruitment plan.”

Try:

“SMS Capacity Building Goals for 2023:

- Generate $20,000 in donations by implementing an annual donor drive and hosting fundraising house parties.

- Seek grants to fund operations and projects, such as Biz Boot Camp and the Holiday Light Festival.

- Recruit volunteers to support the organization at all levels, from leadership positions on the board and taskforces, to “episodic” volunteer opportunities, such as downtown clean ups, community art installations, and decorating the district with holiday lights.”
Tell supporters how they can help
Tell supporters how they can help

• Give the deets on donation and volunteer opportunities.

• Share specific opportunities to engage with the organization. Supporters are more likely to stay involved when they know you have a calendar of exciting events and new initiatives.

• Direct them to social media accounts and your website.

Inspire your readers to TAKE ACTION!
Stay away from industry jargon.

**Instead of:**
“We are in the process of completing the property assessment and mixed-use zoning overlay to present to the City of Shelbyville for review and approval.”

**Try:**
“We are in the process of completing the property assessment and mixed-use zoning overlay to present to the City of Shelbyville for review and approval. Approval of the overlay will allow downtown property owners identified in the property assessment to redevelop the second stories of their buildings into residential units, creating built-in customers for our MainStreet district businesses and generating additional revenue for businesses and the City.”
Be user-friendly.

• Don’t state your organization name over and over and over again. Try alternating it with “our organization” or “we”.
  Generally, refer to “Shelbyville MainStreet” or “SMS,” then “our organization” and back to “SMS” again – so forth and so on.

• Spell out all acronyms the first time you use them.
  Shelbyville MainStreet = SMS
  Economic Transformation Strategy = ETS
  New Mexico MainStreet = NMMS
  Metropolitan Redevelopment Area = MRA

• Eliminate extra/unnecessary words.
  Instead of:
  “Start developing a plan for downtown improvements…”

  Try:
  “Develop a downtown improvement plan…”
Active Voice versus Passive Voice
Active Voice versus Passive Voice

• Active Voice Sentence = Actor + Verb + Target

• Passive Voice Sentence reverses the formula.

*Active Example:* Participating businesses built e-commerce websites to sell their goods.

  Actor: Participating businesses
  Verb: built
  Target: e-commerce websites

*Passive Example:* E-commerce websites were built by participating businesses to sell their goods.
Active Voice versus Passive Voice

Active Example: The Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted the downtown district.

Passive Example: The downtown district was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Passive with no “actor”: The downtown district was significantly impacted.

Impacted by WHAT?
Active Voice versus Passive Voice

• Use the active voice most of the time. Use the passive voice sparingly.

• Advantages of active voice:

  Most readers mentally convert passive voice to active voice, spending more time processing.
  Passive voice muddles your ideas, turning sentences on their head. Indirectly reports action.
  Omitting an actor forces the reader to guess the actor’s identity.
  Active voice is generally shorter.
I or Me? Us or We?

To determine if you should use *I* or *me*, leave out the extra object in your sentence and see if it is still correct.

Maybe? “Would you explain that to John and *I*?”

OK, no. “Would you explain that to *I*?”

Sounds better... “Would you explain that to *me*?”

OK, got it! “Would you explain that to John and *me*?”
I or Me? Us or We?

• To determine if it should be *we* or *us*, try making the sentence singular.

Not sure? “Our mothers and us are going shopping.”
Def not. “My mother and me are going shopping.”
How about… “My mother and I are going shopping.”
Soooo, “My mother and we are going shopping.”
Still confused? Eliminate everything but the pronoun and the verb.

No way! “Us are going shopping.”

100% “We are going shopping.”
Ipso facto, “My mother and we are going shopping” is correct!
Numbers: To spell or not to spell?
Numbers: To spell or not to spell?

Spell out **One** through **Nine**.
For **10** and up, use numbers.
Spell out numbers at the beginning of sentences (Ex. **Forty**), except for years (Ex. **2022**).

**Also:**

- Be consistent with formatting for Dates, Times, and Addresses.

  **August** vs. Aug.

  **August 5** vs. August 5\(^{th}\)

  **10 am** vs. 10:00 am

  **Santa Fe Avenue**, not Santa Fe Ave.

  **123 W. Santa Fe Ave.** or **123 West Santa Fe Avenue**, not 123 West Santa Fe Ave. or 123 W. Santa Fe Avenue
SOURCES

5 Tips for Creating a Better Nonprofit Annual Report - crowdspring Blog
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Active voice vs. passive voice | Technical Writing | Google Developers
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Thank You!

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