

**Chapter 43.360 RCW  
WASHINGTON MAIN STREET PROGRAM**

**Sections**

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*Tax incentives for Washington main street program: Chapter 82.73 RCW.*

**RCW 43.360.005 Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds:

(a) The continued economic vitality of downtown and neighborhood commercial districts in our state's cities is essential to community preservation, social cohesion, and economic growth;

(b) In recent years there has been a deterioration of downtown and neighborhood commercial districts in both rural and urban communities due to a shifting population base, changes in the marketplace, and greater competition from suburban shopping malls, discount centers, and business transacted through the internet;

(c) This decline has eroded the ability of businesses and property owners to renovate and enhance their commercial and residential properties; and

(d) Business owners in these districts need to maintain their local economies in order to provide goods and services to adjacent residents, to provide employment opportunities, to avoid disinvestment and economic dislocations, and to develop and sustain downtown and neighborhood commercial district revitalization programs to address these problems.

(2) It is the intent of the legislature to establish a program to:

(a) Work in partnership with these organizations;

(b) Provide technical assistance and training to local governments, business organizations, downtown and neighborhood commercial district organizations, and business and property owners to accomplish community and economic revitalization and development of business districts; and

(c) Certify a downtown or neighborhood commercial district organization's use of available tax incentives. [2005 c 514 s 901.]

**Short title—2005 c 514 ss 901-912:** "Sections 901 through 912 of this act may be known and cited as the Washington main street act." [2005 c 514 s 1310.]

**Effective date—2005 c 514:** See note following RCW 83.100.230.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2005 c 514:** See notes following RCW 82.12.808.

**RCW 43.360.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Area" means a geographic area within a local government that is described by a closed perimeter boundary.

(2) "Department" means the department of archaeology and historic preservation.

(3) "Director" means the director of the department.

(4) "Local government" means a city, code city, or town.

(5) "Qualified levels of participation" means a local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program that has been designated by the department. [2010 c 30 s 3; 2009 c 565 s 44; 2005 c 514 s 908.]

**Finding—2010 c 30:** "Many of Washington's communities use the main street program to address issues facing their older traditional commercial districts. The main street program is a preservation-based economic development program that assists communities in implementing a locally driven downtown revitalization effort. However, the main street program is broader than merely preserving a community's downtown, it is the revitalization of that community's downtown. Downtown revitalization creates jobs and puts people to work. Downtown revitalization attracts new businesses and offers local investment opportunities. New and expanding downtown businesses generate increased sales tax and attract export dollars to the community. Therefore, the legislature finds that the movement of the main street program from the department of commerce to the department of archaeology and historic preservation is designed to provide for both the preservation of a community's downtown and economic development for that community." [2010 c 30 s 1.]

**Effective date—2010 c 30:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2010." [2010 c 30 s 7.]

**Short title—2005 c 514 ss 901-912:** See note following RCW 43.360.005.

**Effective date—2005 c 514:** See note following RCW 83.100.230.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2005 c 514:** See notes following RCW 82.12.808.

**RCW 43.360.020 Program created—Duties.** The Washington main street program is created within the department. In order to implement the Washington main street program, the department shall:

(1) Provide technical assistance to businesses, property owners, organizations, and local governments undertaking a comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization initiative and management strategy. Technical assistance may include, but is not limited to, initial site evaluations and assessments, training for local programs, training for local program staff, site visits and assessments by technical specialists, local program design assistance and evaluation, and continued local program on-site assistance;

(2) To the extent funds are made available, provide financial assistance to local governments or local organizations to assist in initial downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program start-up costs, specialized training, specific project feasibility studies, market studies, and design assistance;

(3) Develop objective criteria for selecting recipients of assistance under subsections (1) and (2) of this section, which shall include priority for downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization programs located in a rural county as defined in \*RCW 43.160.020(12), and provide for designation of local programs under RCW 43.360.030;

(4) Operate the Washington main street program in accordance with the plan developed by the department, in consultation with the Washington main street advisory committee created under \*\*RCW 43.360.040; and

(5) Consider other factors the department deems necessary for the implementation of this chapter. [2005 c 514 s 909.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 43.160.020 was amended by 2009 c 565 s 35, changing subsection (12) to subsection (5). RCW 43.160.020 was amended by 2024 c 86 s 1 and 2024 c 47 s 1, changing subsection (5) to subsection (7).

\*\* (2) RCW 43.360.040 was repealed by 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 s 68.

**Short title—2005 c 514 ss 901-912:** See note following RCW 43.360.005.

**Effective date—2005 c 514:** See note following RCW 83.100.230.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2005 c 514:** See notes following RCW 82.12.808.

**RCW 43.360.030 Designation of specific programs—Criteria.** (1) The department shall adopt criteria for the designation of local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization programs and official local main street programs. In establishing the criteria, the department shall consider:

(a) The degree of interest and commitment to comprehensive downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization and, where applicable, historic preservation by both the public and private sectors;

(b) The evidence of potential private sector investment in the downtown or neighborhood commercial district;

(c) Where applicable, a downtown or neighborhood commercial district with sufficient historic fabric to become a foundation for an enhanced community image;

(d) The capacity of the organization to undertake a comprehensive program and the financial commitment to implement a long-term downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program that includes a commitment to employ a professional program manager and maintain a sufficient operating budget;

(e) The department's existing downtown revitalization program's tier system;

(f) The national main street center's criteria for designating official main street cities; and

(g) Other factors the department deems necessary for the designation of a local program.

(2) The department shall designate local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization programs and official local main street programs. The programs shall be limited to three categories of designation, one of which shall be the main street level.

(3) RCW 43.360.020 does not apply to any local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program unless the boundaries of the program have been identified and approved by the department. The boundaries of a local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program are typically defined using the pedestrian core of a traditional commercial district.

(4) The department may not designate a local downtown or neighborhood commercial district revitalization program or official local main street program if the program is undertaken by a local government with a population of one hundred ninety thousand persons or more at the time of designation. [2022 c 50 s 1; 2005 c 514 s 910.]

**Short title—2005 c 514 ss 901-912:** See note following RCW 43.360.005.

**Effective date—2005 c 514:** See note following RCW 83.100.230.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2005 c 514:** See notes following RCW 82.12.808.

**RCW 43.360.050 Washington main street trust fund account.** The Washington main street trust fund account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from private contributions, federal funds, legislative appropriations, and fees for services, if levied, must be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the operation of the Washington main street program. [2005 c 514 s 912.]

**Short title—2005 c 514 ss 901-912:** See note following RCW 43.360.005.

**Effective date—2005 c 514:** See note following RCW 83.100.230.

**Part headings not law—Severability—2005 c 514:** See notes following RCW 82.12.808.