



411 Garrison Avenue
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901
mainstreetfs.org

Downtown Growth and Grants Specialist

Job Title: Downtown Growth and Grants Specialist

Reports To: Executive Director, Main Street Fort Smith (Amanda Hager)

Location: Fort Smith, AR

Position Type: Full-Time (Some nights and weekends required)

Position Summary: Main Street Fort Smith and the Central Business Improvement District (CBID) are seeking a proactive, community-minded Downtown Growth and Grants Specialist to lead efforts that foster economic vitality, small business development, and strategic growth within the overlapping CBID and Main Street Fort Smith district. This position plays a critical role in researching and developing business incentives, managing special projects—including a small business incubator—and coordinating closely with local stakeholders to promote sustainable economic development. This person should be passionate about Fort Smith and committed to promoting growth and economic vitality in the downtown area.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Economic Development & Business Support**
 - Identify opportunities for new business recruitment, small business expansion, and property activation in the CBID and Main Street districts.
 - Provide one-on-one support to entrepreneurs, property owners, real estate agents, and developers—including guidance on available incentives and connections to key resources.
 - Assist in the creation and delivery of incentive packages (façade grants, tax credits, financing tools, etc.) and track their usage.
 - Maintain and regularly update a comprehensive downtown business directory and available property inventory.
 - **Track progress through measurable indicators** such as:
 - Number of new business openings and business expansions assisted
 - Property improvements initiated or completed
 - Incentives utilized and dollars leveraged
 - Stakeholder consultations held (property owners, brokers, developers)
 - Changes in vacancy rate and downtown business mix
- **Grants & Incentive Research**
 - Research and apply for federal, state, and private grant opportunities aligned with downtown development goals.



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- Collaborate with city officials and partners to assemble comprehensive incentive packages.
 - Maintain a database of relevant grant and funding opportunities.
- Special Projects Oversight
 - Lead and manage special initiatives, including oversight of a small business incubator program.
 - Monitor project timelines, budgets, and outcomes to ensure alignment with Central Business Improvement District (CBID) and Main Street Fort Smith's strategic goals.
- Community Engagement, Promotion & Organizational Support
 - Serve as an active member of the Main Street Fort Smith team, contributing to organizational planning, reporting, and downtown programming.
 - Collaborate with CBID, civic partners, business owners, and nonprofit leaders to promote shared goals for downtown vitality.
 - Assist with event planning and execution for initiatives that boost business activity and community engagement within the district.
 - Represent Main Street Fort Smith at meetings, forums, and public events as needed.
 - Contribute to marketing and outreach efforts, including business spotlights, social media content, blog features, and promotional materials.
 - Participate in the preparation of quarterly and annual reports, stakeholder presentations, and internal planning meetings.

Qualifications:

- A love of Fort Smith and desire to see growth in downtown
- Bachelor's degree in related fields; advanced degree or relevant experience preferred; however, candidates with 3+ years of experience in community and economic development will also be strongly considered, even without a formal degree.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively.
- Willingness to work some evenings and weekends as needed for events or community meetings.

Preferred Skills:

- Knowledge of Arkansas-specific grant programs and historic preservation incentives.
- Experience with small business incubators or entrepreneurial support programs.
- Comfort with public speaking and community outreach.

To Apply: Interested applicants should submit a resume, cover letter, and references to director@mainstreetfs.org