



MAIN
STREET
Now

APRIL 13-15, 2026

TULSA
OKLAHOMA

A photograph of a city skyline at dusk, featuring several illuminated skyscrapers and a street with trees in the foreground. The image is partially obscured by a large, light blue and green geometric shape that serves as a background for the text.

8-Point Visual Check For a Better Main Street

Dr. Wei Liu, AICP, CNU-A

Assistant Professor

University of Oklahoma

Institute for Quality Communities



POSITION STATEMENT

This session introduces a simple tool for evaluating and improving Main Streets, developed through a real-world project and designed for immediate use in all communities.

AGENDA

- + **The Challenge**
- + **The Case**
- + **The Tool**
- + **Application**
- + **Key Takeaways**

Main Street Pizza & Noodle to close after 35 years in Park City

by Heather Bergeson
Published: Apr 2, 2026 at 12:03 pm



Main Street P...
PARK CI...
around t...
Street, t...
at 3 p.m.

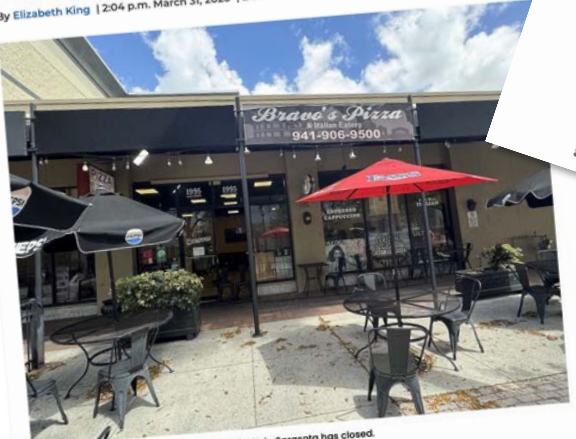
Business Observe

NEWS STRATEGIES ENTREPRENEURS M&A LEADERSHIP REGIONS INDUSTRIES

Where there's a will, David Newton finds a way.
Expert SBA lending from Gulfside Bank—built around your business goals.

Pizzeria closes on Main Street in Sarasota

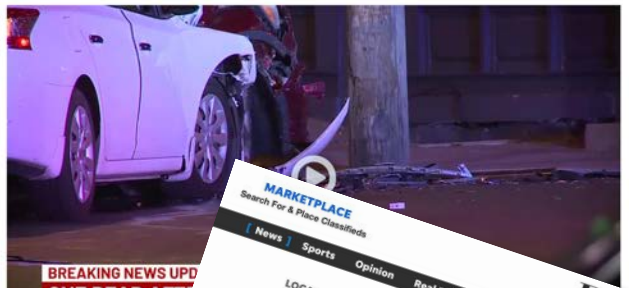
By Elizabeth King | 2:04 p.m. March 31, 2026 | 2 Free Articles Remaining!



... 1805 Main St. in Sarasota has closed.

80°
Lexington, KY

Woman killed in West Main Street crash



BREAKING NEWS UPD...
ONE DEAD AFT...
WEST MAIN & JEFFE...
WINCHEST...

A passenger was killed in a car crash!

By WKYT News Staff
Published: Apr. 7, 2026 at 10:...

Hesperia man, 60, killed in two-car crash on Main Street

By Brian Day
Victorville Daily Press
Updated April 6, 2026, 5:30 p.m. PT

(This story has been updated with additional information.)
A 60-year-old Hesperia man died following a crash between two cars along Main Street early Wednesday, authorities said.

Martin Ramirez was killed in the wreck, which took place about 6:25 a.m. April 8 at Main Street and Balsam Avenue, according to San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department officials.

Sheriff's officials said the crash involved a 2025 Toyota Camry and a 2015 Toyota Camry.

One of the drivers, a 23-year-old man, was found standing outside the newer car when first responders arrived, according to a sheriff's department statement. He was taken to a hospital with injuries described as minor.



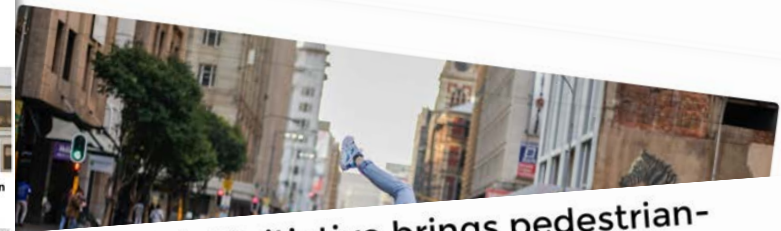
The intersection of Main Street and Balsam Avenue in Hesperia. Provided By Google

50 PERGEMEN...
PBI professional benefits incorporated

Man pistol-whipped and carjacked along Highway 395 near Henderson

"Main Street Sundays" Invites Joburgers Back Into the Heart of the City

BY BRENT LINDEQUE @BRENTLINDEQUE APRIL 9, 2026



"Meet me on Main" initiative brings pedestrian-friendly weekends to Greenville

DAILY MAVERICK
MAVERICK LIFE
MAIN STREET SUNDAYS
Join Jozi's first car-free Sunday, and celebrate connection
Celebrate the spirit of Johannesburg with a day of art, games and outdoor activities that everyone can enjoy, all in a pedestrian-friendly zone with no vehicles allowed.
By Bridget Hilton-Barber
11 Apr 2026



Main Street in Marshalltown will have an open street day for the city's people, following in the footsteps of the popular Three Street Sundays in Cape Town, shown above. Photo: Mays Rogart

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TODAY
with Africans Rally to Honour Life of David Sejobe

Some Update! Giver Helps Less Man Turn His Life

Won Her Second

Rondebosch Moms Turned Sideline Cheers into Water Polo Action

MAIN STREET NOW 2026

**How Can We Do Better,
And **Easily**?
(Because It Matters)**

The Case

Dewey District Streetscape Study, Poteau, OK



Dewey Avenue, Poteau, OK

One Mile Corridor Connecting Spots



From Data to Lived Experience

How We Listen

- **Broad Input** – Community Survey
- **Field Observation** – Walking Tour
- **Deep Qualitative Insight** – Focus Groups
- **Visual Preference Testing** – Preference Polling Boards
- **Hands-On Design** – Streetscape Design Activity
- **Place-Based Storytelling** – Mapping + Storytelling Exercise

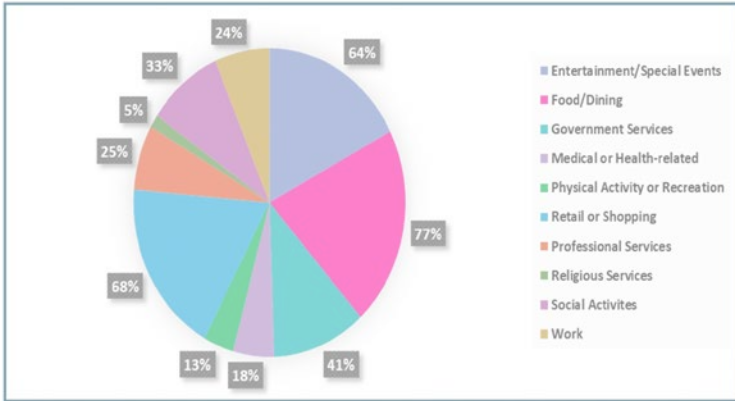
From Data to Lived Experience

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Broad Input

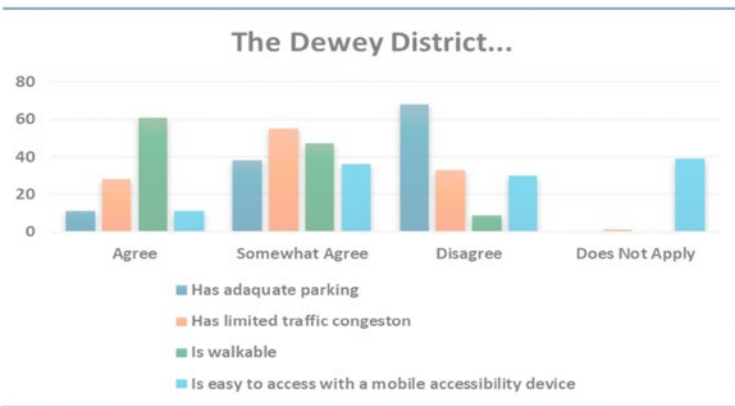
Over the past year, which of these activities has led you to visit the Dewey District?



What are your greatest concerns in the Dewey District?



Based on your experience, do you Agree, Somewhat Agree, Disagree with the following statements?



What are your priority choices for improving your greatest concerns?



DEWEY DISTRICT is planning street improvements to create a more connected, livable, and thriving place for everyone.

Come to our public **VISIONING SESSION** to shape the future of Dewey District.

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, November 7th, 2025
1:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Poteau Chamber of Commerce
Donald W. Reynolds Community Center
501 S. Broadway Street

LIGHT REFRESHMENT SERVED

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Scan the QR Code to Take Survey
Win a \$50 Walmart Gift Card

CHRISTOPHER C. GIBBS COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
INSTITUTE FOR QUALITY COMMUNITIES
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Chamber of Commerce

Poteau OKLAHOMA
above the ordinary



From Data to Lived Experience

How We Listen

- **Broad Input** – Community Survey
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Field Observation

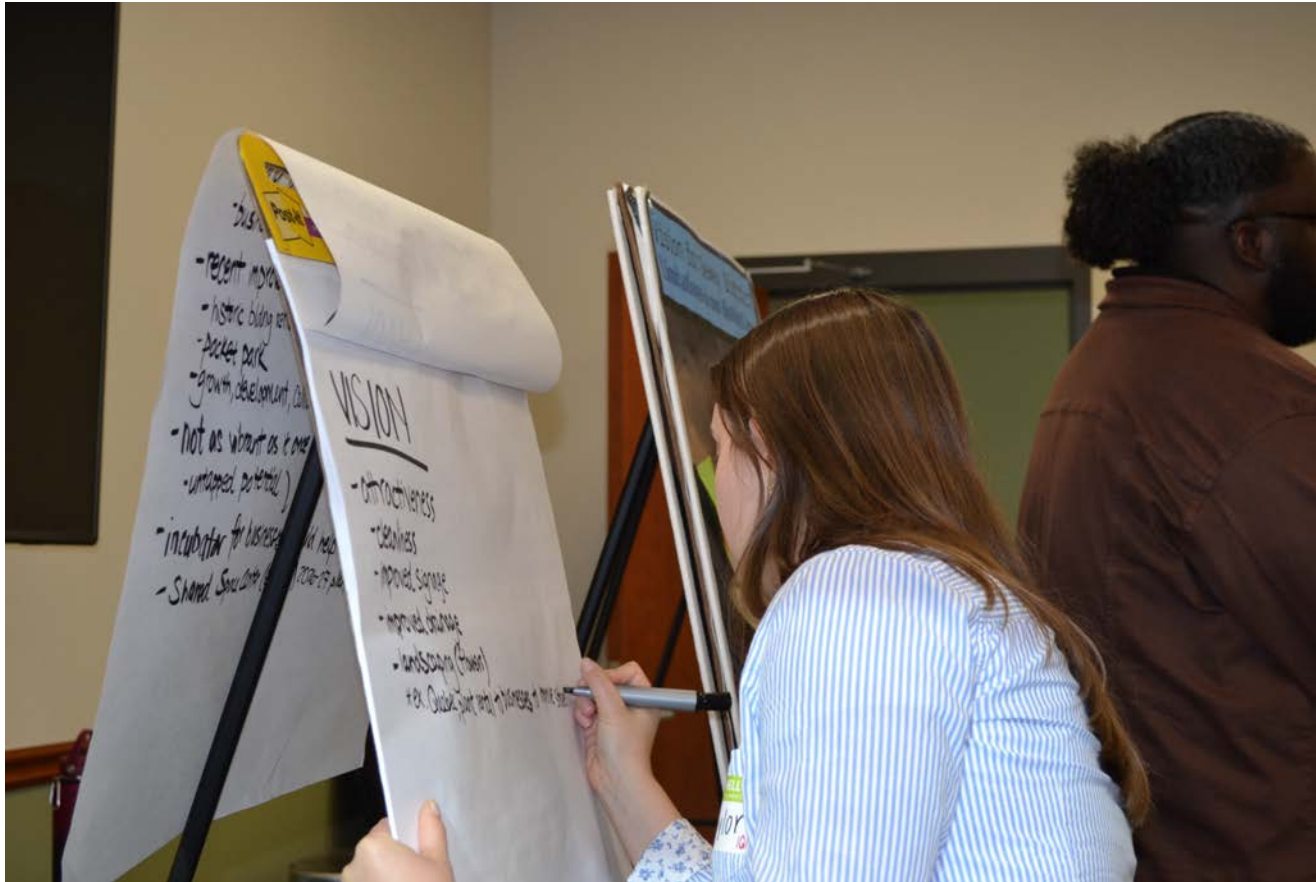


From Data to Lived Experience

How We Listen

- **Broad Input** – Community Survey
- **Field Observation** – Walking Tour
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Deep Qualitative Insight



From Data to Lived Experience

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- **Field Observation** – Walking Tour
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Visual Preference Testing



From Data to Lived Experience

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Hands-On Design



From Data to Lived Experience

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From Input to Direction

How We Translate

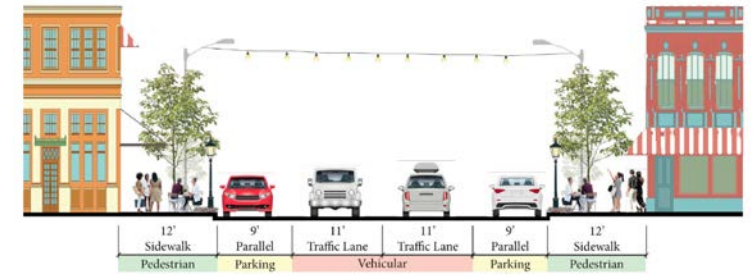
WHAT WE HEARD

- Fragmented Corridor Experience
- Weak Pedestrian Experience
- Desire for a More Social Space
- Parking is a Top Concern

WHAT WE DO

- Introduce Corridor Framework
- Reallocate Right-of-Way
- Strengthen Active Street Edge
- Introduce Efficient Configurations

From Strategy to Design Before & After



Dewey Avenue – CBD Area



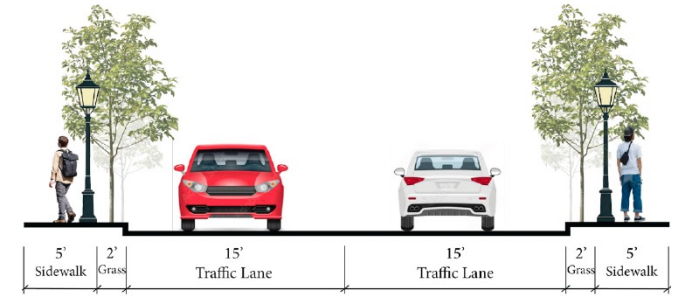


MUSEUM

STEAK HOUSE

DEWEY DISTRICT

From Strategy to Design Before & After

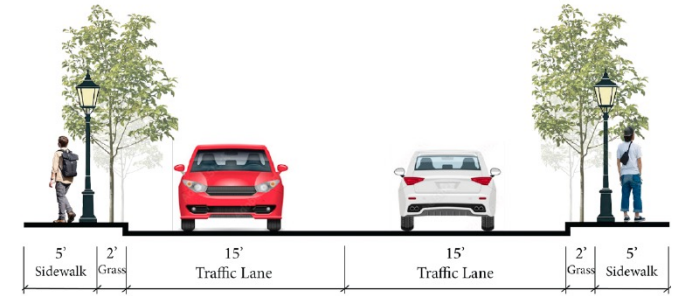


Dewey Avenue – Residential Area





From Strategy to Design Before & After

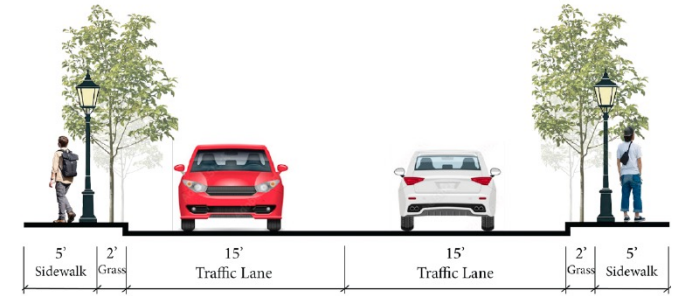


Dewey Avenue – Medical Area





From Strategy to Design Before & After



Dewey Avenue – Railway Crossing Area





From Practice to Tool



8-Point Visual Check for a Better Main Street Full Set

1. **Continuity**
2. **Activation**
3. **Sidewalk Quality**
4. **Shade**
5. **Parking Balance**
6. **Lighting**
7. **Crossing**
8. **Identity**





Continuity

Definition:

Continuity refers to how well buildings, screening elements, or landscape treatments form a consistent and defined street edge.

Look for a continuous edge along the sidewalk, rate it weak if gaps such as exposed parking lots or vacant parcels interrupt the street.

Activation

Definition:

Activation refers to the extent to which building frontages engage the street through visible uses, transparent storefronts, and ongoing activity.

Look for active businesses, displays, and visual engagement at eye level, rate it weak if storefronts are vacant, inactive, or lack visible interaction with the street.



Sidewalk Quality

Definition:

Sidewalk quality refers to how well sidewalk support continuous, comfortable pedestrian movement for people of all ages and abilities.

Check whether sidewalks are continuous, wide enough for comfortable walking, and in good condition, rate it weak if there are gaps, narrow sections, or deteriorated surfaces.





Shade

Definition:

Shade refers to the extent to which tree canopy, awnings, or other structures provide protection from sun and improve pedestrian comfort along the street.

Look for continuous canopy or shading elements along the sidewalk, rate it weak if the street feels exposed with little protection from sun.

Parking Balance

Definition:

Parking balance refers to how well parking supports the street without dominating space, functioning as a buffer between traffic and pedestrians while remaining proportionate to other uses.

Observe how much space parking occupies and its role, rate it weak if parking takes up most of the street or limits space for sidewalks, landscaping, or other modes.





Image Source: pnwits

Lighting

Definition:

Lighting refers to the extent to which lighting is scaled and positioned to support pedestrian visibility and comfort after dark.

Look for evenly spaced, pedestrian-scale lighting that illuminates sidewalks and faces, rate it weak if lighting is too sparse, too high, or primarily focused on the roadway.

Crossing

Definition:

Crossing refers to how well the street enables safe and comfortable pedestrian across it.

Look for visible, frequent, and well-designed crossings, rate it weak if crossings are missing, unclear, or feel unsafe to use.





Image Source: Main Street DeLand Association

Identity

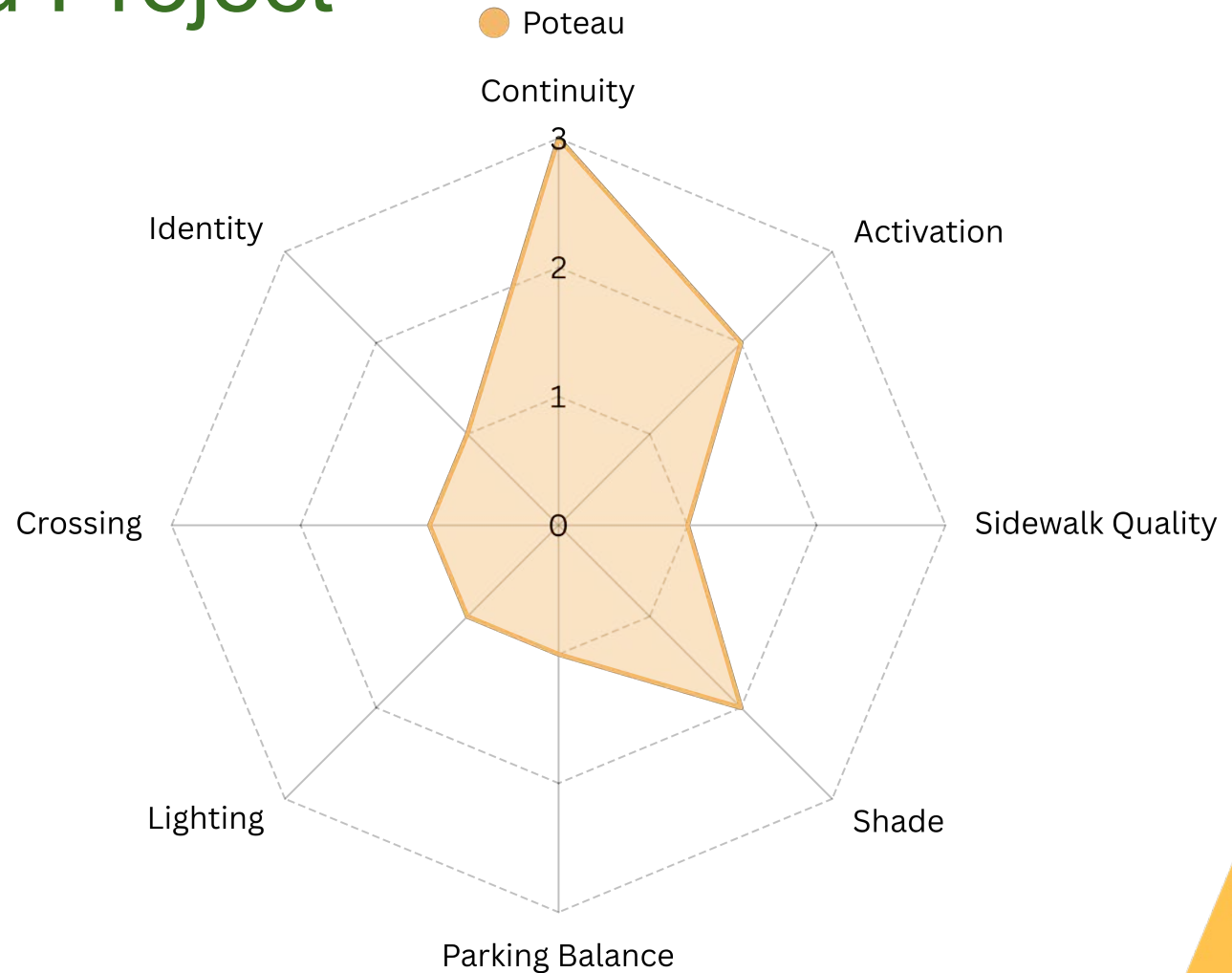
Definition:

Identity refers to the presence of consistent visual elements that create a recognizable and cohesive sense of place along the street.

Look for repeated signage, colors, materials, or branding elements, rate it weak if the street feels generic, uncoordinated, or lacks a clear identity.

8-Point Visual Check for a Better Main Street Re-Examine Poteau Project

1. **Continuity**
2. **Activation**
3. **Sidewalk Quality**
4. **Shade**
5. **Parking Balance**
6. **Lighting**
7. **Crossing**
8. **Identity**



8-POINT VISUAL CHECK

For A Better Main Street

CONTINUITY

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

ACTIVATION

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

SIDEWALK QUALITY

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

SHADE

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

PARKING BALANCE

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

LIGHTING

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

CROSSING

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

IDENTITY

- Strong
- Needs Improvement
- Weak

For definitions and instructions, see back.
Developed by: Dr. Wei Liu, AICP, CNU-A
Questions? Please contact: wliu@ou.edu



DEFINITIONS & INSTRUCTIONS

CONTINUITY

Continuity refers to how well buildings, screening elements, or landscape treatments form a consistent and defined street edge.

Look for a continuous edge along the sidewalk, rate it Strong if the street edge is consistent with few or no gaps; Needs Improvement if there are occasional interruptions or partially screened gaps; Weak if gaps such as exposed parking lots or vacant parcels frequently interrupt the street.

ACTIVATION

Activation refers to the extent to which building frontages engage the street through visible uses, transparent storefronts, and ongoing activity.

Look for active businesses, displays, and visual engagement at eye level, rate it Strong if most storefronts are active and engaging; Needs Improvement if activity is present but inconsistent; Weak if storefronts are largely vacant, inactive, or lack visible interaction with the street.

SIDEWALK QUALITY

Sidewalk Quality refers to how well sidewalks support continuous, comfortable pedestrian movement for people of all ages and abilities.

Check whether sidewalks are continuous, wide enough, and in good condition, rate it Strong if sidewalks are continuous, comfortable, and well-maintained; Needs Improvement if there are some narrow, missing, or deteriorated sections; Weak if there are major gaps, narrow paths, or poor conditions that limit use.

SHADE

Shade refers to the extent to which tree canopy, awnings, or other structures provide protection from sun and improve pedestrian comfort along the street.

Look for continuous canopy or shading elements along the sidewalk, rate it Strong if shade is consistent and comfortable along most of the street; Needs Improvement if shade is present but limited or inconsistent; Weak if the street feels exposed with little protection from the sun.

PARKING BALANCE

Parking Balance refers to how well parking supports the street without dominating space, functioning as a buffer between traffic and pedestrians while remaining proportionate to other uses.

Observe how much space parking occupies and its role, rate it Strong if parking is well-integrated and proportionate; Needs Improvement if parking takes up noticeable space but still allows room for other uses; Weak if parking dominates the street or limits space for sidewalks, landscaping, or other modes.

LIGHTING

Lighting refers to the extent to which lighting is scaled and positioned to support pedestrian visibility and comfort after dark.

Look for evenly spaced, pedestrian-scale lighting that illuminates sidewalks and faces, rate it Strong if lighting is well-distributed and pedestrian-focused; Needs Improvement if lighting is present but uneven or not well-scaled; Weak if lighting is sparse, too high, or primarily focused on the roadway.

CROSSING

Crossing refers to how well the street enables safe and comfortable pedestrian movement cross it.

Look for visible, frequent, and well-designed crossings, rate it Strong if crossings are easy to find, safe, and comfortable; Needs Improvement if crossings exist but are limited or unclear; Weak if crossings are missing, difficult to use, or feel unsafe.

IDENTITY

Identity refers to the presence of consistent visual elements that create a recognizable and cohesive sense of place along the street.

Look for repeated signage, colors, materials, or branding elements, rate it Strong if identity is clear and consistent throughout the street; Needs Improvement if identity is present but fragmented or uneven; Weak if the street feels generic, uncoordinated, or lacks a clear identity.

For checklist, see front.

Developed by: Dr. Wei Liu, AICP, CNU-A
Questions? Please contact: wliu@ou.edu



TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Design Recommendation for a Currently Inactive Main Street Community**
- 2. Concepts of the 8-Point Visual Check for a Better Main Street**



MAIN
STREET
Now
2026

Dr. Wei Liu
University of Oklahoma
Institute for Quality Communities

Acknowledgement

*Dr. Amber Wiley, Molly O'Connor, Sanjita Basnet, Dez Harris,
David McPherson, Taylor Fleming, and Afrah Faheem*

THANK YOU!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK!

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