



Why are there so many different economic development organizations?

Q: Isn't economic development the Chamber's sole responsibility?

A: The Orrville Area Development Foundation (OADF) and Main Street Orrville (MSO) are both outgrowths of the Chamber. The Chamber's mission is: To identify and address economic development opportunities, to offer services and benefits to help members achieve their business goals, and to provide leadership on key issues that improve the quality of community life.

The OADF was founded in 1985 to serve as a non-profit entity so tax-deductible contributions could be made for specific community projects. As a 501(c)3, a separate governing board is required.

Main Street Orrville, affiliated with the Heritage Ohio program, also requires a Board of Directors and a full time manager. MSO focuses on a specific geographic target area in the central business district. This centralized focus results in a continual renewed vitality for the downtown.

The city has taken a pro-active role in development of the industrial sector, in particular through the creation of the Office of Orrville Industrial Development (OOID) in 2003. The OOID receives support from the Chamber and the OADF for industrial retention, expansion and attraction programs.

Q: With the OOID giving attention to industrial development and MSO focusing on the downtown, what is left for the Chamber to do?

A: The Mission Statement of the Chamber speaks to the overriding picture of pro-business functions in the Orrville area, while the OADF and MSO give their attention to more specific areas. The Chamber has many longstanding and newly developed programs and promotions that will continue to serve its members and the community at large. As a synergistic hub, the Chamber will remain as a catalyst, connector and communicator for industry, business, government, education and non-profit organizations. With an eye toward critical quality of life issues, the Chamber provides a broad base of economic development activities that are vital to the overall vision for our present and our future.

MEMBERSHIP Q&A

Q: My business is not in the Main Street district. Why should I help support that program?

A: Increasingly, firms planning to locate in a community look at the downtown and consider its economic and physical health as a significant factor in their decision making process. Few of these firms will move into the downtown; usually they will be located in the industrial park or elsewhere. However, the economic health of the downtown and, by extension, the physical appearance of its buildings and public spaces, is seen as an indication of the quality of life of the community's institutional leadership. Everyone wants to live and work near a vibrant downtown, not one that is failing.

Q: Are my dues going to specific projects? How will the money be used?

A: Eighty percent of your dues supports the day to day operations of the Chamber, the OADF and limited expenses of the OOID. The other 20% will go toward the operating expenses for MSO. (These dollars will fulfill approximately 1/3 of their total budget. The MSO program receives 1/3 support from the city and the utilities department, and the other 1/3 from grants and other fund raisers.)

Q: If I understand you correctly, you're saying that this is the only time I will be asked for money. Is that correct?

A: You will not receive a request from the OADF, MSO or the OOID for any additional operations support. However, there will be opportunities for such things as supporting events through sponsorships or participation, and to take advantage of special advertising options.

Q: Are my dues considered tax-deductible?

A: In most cases, dues payments are tax-deductible. However, you should discuss your individual case with your tax advisor.