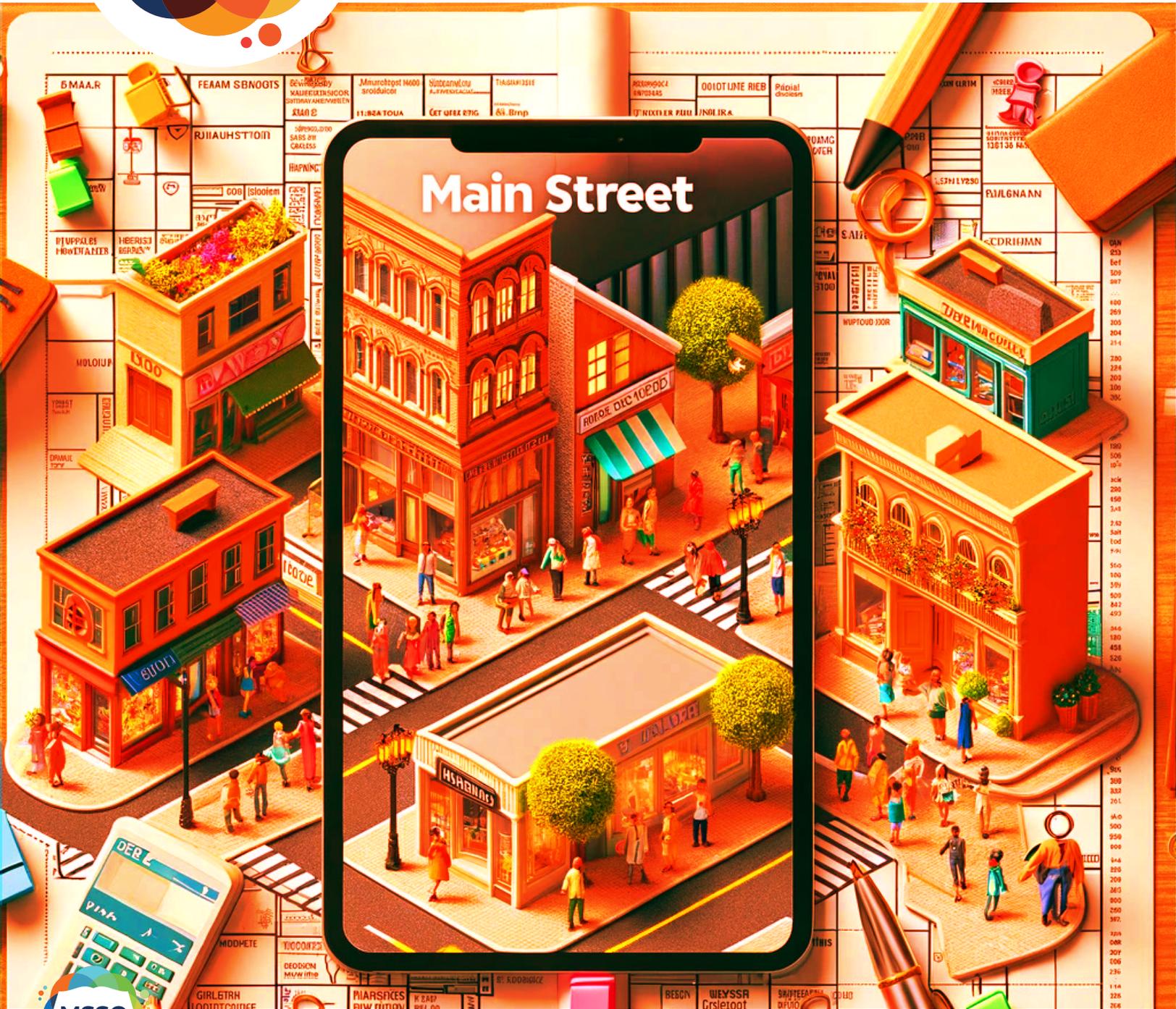




DOWNTOWN & DISTRICT ITINERARIES



ABOUT THE SOLUTION CENTER

The Main Street Solution Center is a free access portal to resources for communities and organizations working to revitalize and strengthen their local economies. The Solution Center's curated resources are designed to help guide and inspire local leaders and advocates as they navigate the complexities of downtown and neighborhood business district revitalization and economic growth.

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

This Main Street Solution Center publication was underwritten by Michigan Main Street and Main Street Iowa. Their generous support demonstrates a shared vision and ongoing commitment to freely share knowledge, experience, tools, and best practices to fuel revitalization and economic growth in their own communities, and in locales spanning the nation.



ABOUT THE CREATORS

Leigh Young, AICP is Senior Main Street Specialist with Michigan Main Street and a driving force behind the creation of the Main Street Solution Center. Her deep passion for planning, placemaking, community engagement, and sustainable urban development is evident in her work to advance the cause for revitalization and economic development in downtown and neighborhood business districts across Michigan.

Jay Schlinsog, CMSM is the owner of Downtown Professionals Network (DPN), a Franklin, TN-based firm specializing in innovative, market-driven downtown and business district revitalization and economic development solutions. He brings more than thirty years of experience gained while serving as chief executive with chamber and district management organizations, and through his work with communities and organizations across the United States.

Ben Muldrow is a partner at Arnett Muldrow & Associates, a consultancy renowned for its creative approach to economic development, branding, and marketing strategies for small towns and cities across the nation. He brings an innovative mindset and a deep understanding of the unique dynamics of community branding to each engagement, blending traditional community values with modern marketing techniques to help communities and districts unlock their potential.

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ITINERARY PLANNING

Themed travel itineraries play a vital role in helping people discover and rediscover our districts, offering numerous benefits:

Enhanced Visitor Experience: Themed itineraries provide a structured yet exciting way for visitors to explore the area. Whether it's focused on history, food, art, or local culture, these themes help travelers delve deeper into specific aspects of the district, making their visit more memorable.

Promotion of Local Businesses: By integrating local businesses into these themes, the itineraries can direct tourists to various shops, restaurants, and cultural sites, aiding in economic growth and promoting local artisans and entrepreneurs.

Cultural Highlighting: These itineraries can showcase the unique history and culture of the Main Street district, celebrating its uniqueness and diversity. This can foster a greater appreciation among visitors for the area's heritage and community.

Repeat Visitation: Offering a variety of themed itineraries encourages visitors to return to experience a different aspect of the district. This repeat visitation is key to sustaining tourism and local business growth.

Community Pride and Participation: Engaging local stakeholders in creating these itineraries can foster a sense of pride and participation in the community. This collaborative approach ensures authenticity and can make the itineraries more appealing to tourists.

Overall, themed travel itineraries are an effective way to attract a diverse group of visitors, boost local economies, and highlight the unique character of Main Street districts.

EXPLORE WATERLOO, IOWA

Holiday Tour

DOWNTOWN WATERLOO

BREAKFAST Garden Café
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

MORNING Discovery
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

LUNCH Garden Café
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

AFTERNOON Garden Café
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

DINNER Garden Café
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

EVENING Garden Café
When going to The Garden Café for breakfast, you're not only indulging in some of the best stuffed French toast around, but you will also discover a place for local artist to display their art, pottery, and so much more! Next door, you will find the Garden Woods Gift Shop featuring unique handmade local art.

POWERED BY COLORADO MAIN STREET

website



GETTING STARTED

Themed travel itineraries are an effective way to create experiences that attract a diverse group of visitors, boost local economies, and highlight the unique character of your district. Here's a simple way to begin crafting your own themed itineraries.

Card Instructions:

Use the sample card to begin identifying your assets and organize them into itineraries.

1. Complete one card for each asset within and surrounding your district.
2. There are eight categories at the bottom of the card to guide you as you to categorize your assets and stack your deck.
3. Create your hand by organizing the cards to develop a variety of itineraries and themed experiences that include cards with assets in multiple categories.. Examples of creative itinerary themes include:

DESTINATION OR EXPERIENCE

WEBSITE

ADDRESS

HOURS

DESCRIPTION

FOOD

LODGING

SELFIE

SHOPPING



CULTURE

OUTDOORS

EVENTS

TRADITIONS

“Quaint Quests: A Journey Through Time”

Immerse yourself in the rich history and timeless charm of small towns, where every cobblestone and corner tells a story.

“Rural Rhapsody: Melodies of the Countryside” Experience the serene beauty and harmonious melodies of rural life, from morning bird songs to the gentle rustle of the fields.

“Hidden Havens: Secrets Beyond the Map”

Discover the secret spots and hidden gems that only locals know about, in a treasure hunt beyond the usual tourist trails.

“Culinary Corners: Flavors of the Forgotten”

Savor the unique and traditional flavors of small-town cuisine, where every dish tells a tale of heritage and heart.

“Artisanal Adventures: Crafts and Creations”

Explore the creativity and craftsmanship of small towns, where artisans keep ancient techniques alive in their modern creations.

“Festival Fervor: Celebrations of the Small”

Join in the vibrant and intimate festivals that bring small towns to life, celebrating everything from the harvest to historical events.

“Stargazers’ Sanctuary: Nights Under the Nebula”

Escape the city lights and gaze upon the stars as you’ve never seen them before, in towns where the night sky tells a thousand stories.

“Pastoral Pilgrimage: The Soul of Solitude”

Embark on a journey of self-discovery and tranquility in the untouched landscapes and peaceful solitude of rural retreats.

“Vintage Voyages: A Trip Down Memory Lane”

Travel back in time through antique shops, vintage diners, and classic theaters, reliving the golden days of yesteryear.

“Eco-Excursions: Green Getaways” - Connect with nature and learn about sustainable living in small towns that are pioneers in environmental conservation and eco-tourism.



MARKETING YOUR ITINERARY

For a volunteer-driven organization looking to market and promote themed itineraries, the approach should leverage the power of community engagement, resourcefulness, and partnerships to maximize impact while minimizing costs. Here are adjusted strategies that are more appropriate for such organizations:

Leverage Volunteer Skills and Networks:

Mobilize volunteers who have skills in photography, writing, or social media to create and share content about the itineraries. Encourage all volunteers to share the information within their personal networks to broaden reach.

Utilize Free Social Media Platforms:

Focus on creating engaging posts and stories on free platforms like Instagram, Facebook, X(Twitter), and TikTok. Utilize features like Instagram Stories or Facebook Live to showcase real-time experiences of the itineraries.

Create a hashtag specific to your themed itineraries campaign to track engagement and encourage sharing.

Maximize Community Bulletin Boards and Local Media:

Use community bulletin boards, both physical and online, to post information about the itineraries.

Reach out to local newspapers, radio stations, and TV channels that might be interested in featuring a community-driven initiative at no cost.

Form Strategic Partnerships:

Collaborate with local businesses and attractions featured in the itineraries for mutual promotion.

They might be willing to offer special deals or discounts for participants, in exchange for the increased visibility and foot traffic.

Partner with local schools, community centers, and libraries to distribute information about the itineraries and engage with a broader segment of the community.

Implement Word-of-Mouth Marketing:

Encourage those who have experienced the itineraries to share their stories and

recommendations through word-of-mouth, the most trusted form of advertising. Create simple referral cards or flyers that people can hand out to friends and family.

Host Community Events or Walks:

Organize free or donation-based community events, walks, or tours based on the itineraries to get people interested and talking about them. These can be great opportunities for local press coverage as well.

Use Email Marketing Wisely:

Compile an email list through community events, website sign-ups, and partnerships, and send out regular updates or features on different itineraries, leveraging free or low-cost email marketing tools designed for non-profits.

Engage with Local Officials and Tourist Boards:

Get support from local government officials, tourist boards, or chambers of commerce, who might be able to provide resources, endorsements, or platforms for promotion.

Create DIY Promotion Materials:

Volunteers can create DIY promotional materials like flyers, posters, and brochures using free design software. Distribute these in community gathering spots, participating businesses, and at local events.

Feedback and Adaptation:

Encourage feedback through informal channels or simple online surveys. Use this feedback to make adjustments and improve the itineraries over time. Celebrate volunteers and community members who contribute significantly to the initiative.

By focusing on strategies that harness the power of community, volunteer-driven organizations can effectively market and promote their themed itineraries, creating meaningful and sustainable impact with limited resources.



SAMPLES

Shopping Therapy

Coon Rapids, Iowa



BREAKFAST
Jenna's Tattooed Confections



T-F 6:30am - 2pm; Sat. 7:30am-2pm | 523 Main St. Delicious coffees, smoothies, frappes and tea. Enjoy breakfast, lunch and a variety of mouthwatering sweet treats and hand-dipped ice cream.

MORNING
Coon Rapids Hardware Hank



M-F 7:30am-5pm; Sat. 8am-3pm | 615 Main St. Home décor, appliances, furniture, toys, Coon Rapids apparel, sporting goods, farm and ranch, home goods, paint, hardware and more.

MORNING
Nature Ammil



W-F 10:30am - 5pm, Sat. 11am - 4pm | 408 Main St. Antique mall, handmade artisan items, vintage ice cream soda shop.

LUNCH
Chuck's Bar & Grill
Coon Bowl III



Chuck's Bar & Grill M-TH 10am - 9pm, F-Sat. 10am-close, Sun. 10am - 7 pm | 512 Main St.
Coon Bowl III M-TH 11am-8pm; F-Sat. 11am-9pm | 223 6th Ave.

AFTERNOON
New Hope Bargain Shoppe



M-F 10am - 5pm Sat. 10am - 4pm | 501 Main St. Quality thrift store

AFTERNOON
Style on Main



W 1-7pm; F 1-6pm; SAT 10am-3pm | 521 Main St. Fashionable tops and bottoms, shoes and accessories

AFTERNOON
Brown Bag & Co.



W 3-7pm; Sat. 10am-3pm | 500 Main Chic home décor, candles, and trendy graphic t-shirts

DINER
La Terraza



Sun.-TH 11am-9pm; F-Sat. 11am-10pm | 501 S 5th Ave. Quality Mexican Dining

AFTERNOON
Village Hobby House & Flowers



508 Main St. Fresh floral arrangements

Coon Rapids Naturally Iowa
www.coonrapidsiowa.com/mainstreet

Art on the Go

Coon Rapids, Iowa



BREAKFAST AND/OR COFFEE
Jenna's Tattooed Confections



T-F 6:30am - 2pm; Sat. 7:30am-2pm | 523 Main St. Grab a delicious coffee, smoothie or tasty treats to start the day.

MORNING
Chad Elliot Mural



5th Ave. and Main Street This landscape mural on the east side of the Mohr Lumber building depicts the Middle Racoon River flowing through the rolling hills of Coon Rapids.

MORNING
Veterans Memorial Park



404 Main Street Veterans Memorial Park honors all Coon Rapids area veterans beginning with World War One who made the ultimate sacrifice.

MORNING
Main Street Boulevard



East end of business district on Main Street Native plantings surround permanent shadow casters and seasonal displays.

MORNING
Hybrid Icons



5th Ave. and Hwy 141 The hybrid icon installment by David Dahlquist consists of three lighted beacons resembling silo bins. Contained in the lanterns are symbols of hybrid corn scientific research.

LUNCH
Chuck's Bar & Grill
Coon Bowl III



While in town, grab lunch at Chuck's Bar & Grill or Coon Bowl III. Dine-in or take it to-go and eat at the Sculpture Park.

AFTERNOON
Sculpture Park



Hwy 141 east of Coon Rapids Stroll through the Roadside Sculpture Park and enjoy numerous unique sculptures. Some pieces, like this silhouette of a woman's face are interactive.

AFTERNOON
International installment



1390 Hwy 141 Whiterock Conservancy Historic Garst Farmstead A replica of Yevgeny Vuchetich's statue at the United Nations, Let Us Beat Swords into Ploughshares.

AFTERNOON
Rotating Ear of Corn



Hwy 141 west of Coon Rapids At the west entrance to town, you'll find a historic rotating ear of corn that has been a mainstay in the community dating back to the Garst Seed corn company era.

Coon Rapids Naturally Iowa
www.coonrapidsiowa.com/mainstreet



ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

EXPLORE CHEBOYGAN, MICHIGAN

Labor Day Weekend



Friday

Fridays are perfect days to spend time downtown Cheboygan. Lunch at one of our unique eateries, shop to your hearts content in our one of a kind boutiques, gift shops and more. Top off your shopping adventure with dinner and then take in some live music! Don't forget to grab desert at one of our 3 ice cream parlors! Scoops, Dairy Queen and The Dipper -

Saturday

No Saturday is complete in downtown Cheboygan without a visit to the Cheboygan Farmers Market. This market is full of seasonal fruits and vegetables, unique crafts, arts, and delicious ready to eat treats. Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8am to 1pm June through October located in Festival Square in the heart of downtown Cheboygan!

Sunday

Sundays are meant for being lazy and relaxing. How about try relaxing downtown in one of our charming parks. Ottawa Art Park is located on the corner of State and Main Streets and is full of one of a kind artwork. Washington Park is home to a beautiful double sided mural and "Urn -E" a huge metal sculpture. The Cheboygan Children's Trail is located just over the pedestrian bridge on the East side of the Cheboygan River and is full of creative and interactive displays.

Monday

Labor Day in Cheboygan is a true testament of our community spirit! There are many amazing communities in Northern Michigan, but none with as much heart and welcoming spirit as Cheboygan. You are invited to join us and experience our community spirit at our annual Downtown Cheboygan Labor Day Bridge Walk. Line up at the East side of the State Street bridge at 11:45am and walk with family, friends and neighbors down to Washington Park for a FREE picnic. This walk is just a few blocks long, but the memories (and bragging rights) will last a lifetime! The walk begins at noon, and the picnic wraps up around 2pm.

Don't forget about all our great restaurants! Breakfast, lunch & dinner - Downtown Cheboygan has you covered! Make plans to explore the downtown nightlife too - Friday and Saturday evenings you will find live music in nearly all of our establishments!

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ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES



Tap Into The Trails

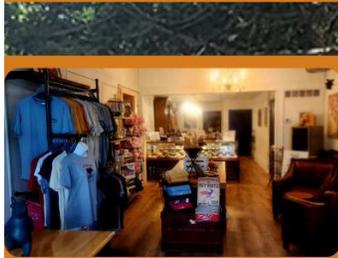


Tap Into The Trails is an all day collaborative celebration of Cheboygan's trails, nature preserves and the closeness of these incredible natural assets to Downtown Cheboygan.

Trails



Run the Top of Michigan Trails Council Tap Into The Trails 5k/ 10k beginning at 8am on Huron Street behind Festival Square, join the trail ride to the Hoffius Nature Preserve which departs from Festival Square at 8:30 am, get colorful during the Bishop Baraga Color Run at the Children's Trail of Cheboygan at 10am (check in at 9am) or do the Little Traverse Conservancy Trail Challenge anytime throughout the month of September!



Downtown Cheboygan

Downtown Cheboygan is the perfect spot to begin, end or stop along your trail adventure. Located just a couple of blocks off the North Central trail, we've got a lot to explore and experience! Unique shopping, destination worthy dining, Northern Michigan's hottest live music scene, the amazing Cheboygan Farmers Market, lighthouses, incredible public art & so much more! Downtown Cheboygan offers bike racks throughout and a bike repair station at Festival Square (on the Huron St side).



Oktoberfest Craft Beer Tasting

Featuring 8 Michigan Craft Breweries, this beer tasting event will be a great celebration of your trail adventures! 2 live bands, Cellar Door & Serita's Black Rose Duo will keep you entertained as you sample pours from some of Michigan's best craft breweries. Admission to this 21 and over event is \$30 and includes 8 pours and a souvenir Tap Into The Trails mug. Oktoberfest is from 12pm - 6pm at Washington Park (124 N Main St, Downtown Cheboygan).



Cheboygan State Park Lantern Walk

Top off your day with a great Lantern Walk at Cheboygan State Park. Take a evening walk through the beautiful trails at the Cheboygan State Park by lantern light. Parking is available on site and the walk begins around dusk (sunset is at 7:48pm on Saturday September 16th).



ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

EXPLORE CHEBOYGAN, MICHIGAN Father's Day Weekend!



Dining

From breakfast right through to dinner, there is something for everyone in Downtown Cheboygan. Hearty breakfasts before adventures, quick lunches before heading to the golf course for the afternoon, great charcuterie with a bourbon flight or incredible entre options with delectable deserts! Explore your dining options and find your favorite, right here in Downtown Cheboygan!



Adventure

Did you know that the North Central Trail runs parallel to Downtown Cheboygan and is only 3 blocks away? Start and end your trail adventure in Downtown Cheboygan and enjoy the amenities offered - bike racks, bike repair station (at Festival Square), restrooms, amazing atmosphere and more! Not into biking? How about visiting us by water? Downtown Cheboygan is the gateway to the famous Inland Waterway, and free day dockage is available at the City Marina!



Music on Main

Does Dad enjoy live music? We've got it! Concerts in Washington Park on Thursday evenings all summer long, a wide variety of bands and solo acts at venues throughout Downtown evenings throughout the week. Ticketed theatre shows, open mic nights and more!



A Night on the Town

Start with dinner, end with Dad's favorite bourbon or beer. Or start with a show at one of Downtown Cheboygan's three theaters and end with an ice cream. You could go fishing on the Cheboygan River have a bite after and end with live entertainment. There are a lot of options for a great night on the town!



Thoughtful Gifts

Downtown Cheboygan has options for Father's Day gifts. Everything from brand new vehicles to fudge and popcorn! Fishing shirts, hunting hats and vests, great vinegars, bbq sauces and snacks, beer, books and more! Let us help you find the perfect gift for Father's Day!



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www.cheboyganmainstreet.org



ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

EXPLORE CHEBOYGAN, MICHIGAN



Music DOWNTOWN CHEBOYGAN on Main

Downtown Cheboygan has become a hot spot for live music. Ranging from solo acoustic performers, local bands and regional acts to world renowned artists, the diversity of entertainment offers something for everyone.

The Opera House

The Jewell of the North, the center for performing arts at the Tip of Mitt. This historic Opera House hosts performances ranging from International Classical musicians to up and coming regional acts. Schedule is available at theoperahouse.org and tickets can be purchased online or at the box office.

Monday - Wednesday

You'll find a wide variety of musical entertainment while spending time in Downtown Cheboygan. Wednesday evenings have become famous for great food and live music at both The Nauti Inn and The Queen's Head Wine Pub. Both venues offer shareable plates and entrees, along with outdoor seating. Check their Facebook pages for details.

Thursday

Start your weekend off early with the Music on Main concert series, then take a stroll down Main Street to enjoy more live music at Pub 27 on their outdoor patio (weather permitting). Every other Thursday, you can show off your own talent at Beau Est Beau during their Open Mic Nights, just bring your own cords and instrument(s), plug in and play solo - or join in with other musicians for a jam session!

Friday & Saturday

Our music scene is in full swing on the weekends. Check each of these venues on Facebook for full schedule.

- Cheboygan Brewing Company (outdoor seating, outside food welcome)*
- Hive North (outdoor seating, outside food welcome)*
- Downtown Johnnies Tavern (dining)*
- The Queens Head Wine Pub (outdoor seating, dining)*
- The Lark Theatre (ticketed events)*
- The Nauti Inn (outdoor seating, dining)*
- Beau Est Beau (outdoor seating, dining)*
- Pub 27 (outdoor seating, dining)*

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www.cheboyganmainstreet.org

ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

EXPLORE CHEBOYGAN, MICHIGAN Mother's Day Weekend!



Breakfast

Either a light bite or a full on "rib-sticking" breakfast can be found in Downtown Cheboygan. State Street Coffee Company, Cheboygan Coffee Roasters, Libby's Downtown, Alice's and the Step Inn are all amazing options for a meal to start your day on Main Street!



Shopping

After breakfast stroll up and down Main Street and the adjacent corridors checking out all of our unique shopping. From jewelry to trinkets, you'll find it all Downtown Cheboygan. Maybe have Mom pick out a new outfit to wear to dinner this evening, or something more sporty for when you take her for a cruise on the Yankee Sunshine, Cheboygan's Glass Bottom Boat - docked at Cheboygan Village Marina - visit www.nauticalnorthfamilyadventures.com for pricing and schedule.



Lunch

Shopping can really work up your appetite, and we've got options to satisfy. Classic soups and sandwiches, Mexican, quick grab and go's and everything in between. Be sure to check out Downtown Johnnie's for a great "bar burger", Mulligan's and Libby's for delicious salads, Alice's for traditional sandwiches, Step Inn for San Diego style Mexican fare, Scoops for their famous lunch buffet and State Street Coffee or Cheboygan Coffee Roasters for great quick bites.



A Night on the Town Saturday May 13th

Dinner & handcrafted cocktails at The Nauti Inn, charcuterie and french wine at Beau Est Beau with live music featuring Billy P, how about Libby's Downtown for their casual take on fine dining and then stroll down to the Carnegie Library for Art @ The Carnegie featuring Kati Rosenbaugh from 6pm to 8pm. Downtown Cheboygan boasts several different options for an evening on the town.



Thoughtful Gifts

If Mom can't spend the day with you, downtown has many ideas for you to show her your love and appreciation to be found downtown. Boutiques, gift shops, specialty foods and gift baskets, gift cards for a spa day and much more. Don't forget - a beautiful floral arrangement or bouquet always says, "Thank you for everything Mom, I love you"



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