



MS&RP
NC MAIN STREET & RURAL PLANNING CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ORGANIZATION

Involves Creating a Strong Foundation
For a Sustainable Revitalization Effort,
Including Cultivating Partnerships,
Community Involvement, and
Resources for the District

Writing a News Release

WHAT IS A NEWS RELEASE?

A news release is a communications tool that allows you to create media interest in a story that you want disseminated to a wide audience. The purpose of a news release is to briefly present the key elements of a story in such a way as to “hook” a reporter in to writing an article for publication or broadcast by the news organization for which they work, be it radio, television, newspaper, wire service, internet, etc.

While often referred to as a “press release,” the term “news release” is all-encompassing and actually a more accurate term, since “press” refers to the printed word and much of today’s news is transmitted through multiple forms of electronic media.

WHY SHOULD A MAIN STREET PROGRAM ISSUE NEWS RELEASES?

News releases are an effective means for generating invaluable publicity for your downtown at no cost to your organization.

WHAT DO I DO WITH A NEWS RELEASE?

You should send it to the reporter who will write the story. Find out who covers the downtown beat at your local media outlet. It may be one person for business and another for features, or it could be the same reporter doing it all.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Call and introduce yourself to your downtown beat reporter. (When calling reporters, always ask if they are on deadline before beginning a conversation.) Invite him or her to have coffee and find out what the reporter’s needs and interests are for downtown stories. Reporters’ jobs are hard, and if you can make them a little easier by providing good story ideas, you are much more likely to see those stories published (or broadcast). When a reporter does a positive story on downtown, make a point of saying “thank-you.” Cultivate the relationship. A reporter can be a good friend to your organization. Or not.



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This document was created to assist designated NC Main Street Communities and any other community that would like to develop best practices for downtown economic development.