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The Texas Main Street Center



NEWSLETTER

Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711 512/475-3092

13 CITIES APPLY FOR SELECTION AS 1983 MAIN STREET CITIES

Belton, Brenham, Carrollton, Denton, Giddings, Harlingen, Lufkin, Paris, Sherman, Stamford, Taylor, Uvalde, and Waxahachie have applied to become 1983 Main Street Project towns.

The governing bodies of these cities have passed resolutions to fund and support a full-time project manager and to work to revitalize their central business districts. Recommendations for the 1983 towns will be made by a panel consisting of representatives from the Texas Industrial Commission, the Governor's Budget and Planning Office, the Texas Department of Community Affairs, and the Texas Historical Commission. Announcement of the new cities will be made by Nov. 15.



PROJECT MANAGER INTERVIEWS UNDER WAY

Interviews are being held in Austin at the Texas Historical Commission for 1983 Main Street Project Managers. These positions pay \$16,000 to \$18,000 annually.

Each of the five 1983 towns, to be announced by Nov. 15, will hire a project manager to direct its downtown rehabilitation efforts. All application resumes received in Austin will be forward to the newly-chosen cities.

The job description for these positions calls for the individual to manage downtown revitalization projects, to coordinate downtown organization and promotion, and to develop economic analysis and monitoring systems. The job also requires giving assistance to tenants and property owners on physical improvement projects, development of funding support, administration of grants, and interaction with local organizations to focus on downtown improvements. In addition to coordinating all downtown revitalization projects with local governments, the manager must also administer all aspects of the project office, including purchasing, bookkeeping, budget de-

velopment, and accounting, and must oversee construction projects. Some design background is necessary, and experience is desirable in organizational development, small business management, marketing and merchandising, and historic preservation.

In addition to these background and experience requirements, the following personal attributes are sought:

- visually-oriented
- sense of entrepreneurship
- self-starter
- successful communicator
- success-oriented
- motivated
- successful in working with city governments
- appreciation and understanding of small town life
- smart and humble, able to accept and overcome areas of weakness.

For more information on the 1983 Main Street Project Manager positions, contact the Texas Main Street Center at 512/475-3092.

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HISTORIC PHOTOS REVEAL CANVAS AWNINGS

Exhibits of historic photographs in Georgetown and Hillsboro have given insight into the earlier interior and exterior appearance of downtown buildings.

These photographs reveal that awnings have always played an important visual and functional role. During the latter half of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, canvas awnings were used for commercial storefront protection, replacing wooden two-story porches that had extended over the sidewalks and into the streets. These wooden porches were seen as fire hazards.

The earliest buildings had canvas awnings mounted above the storefront panel and below the sign panel. In the early 20th century, with the widespread use of transom or clerestory windows in the storefronts, the awning was mounted between the show window and the clerestory window allowing filtered light into the shop.

The later 20th century sees the common use of flat wood and aluminum awnings. Although functional, these awnings often detract from the character of the building because of the inappropriateness of their material, size, and placement on the building. By careful examination of the storefront, the placement of the original awning can be determined by locating old mounting holes and brackets.

Fabric awnings historically appropriate to the building can add color and design to the downtown area, creating a more inviting and lively atmosphere.



NAVASOTA'S NEW BANK LOCATES IN HISTORIC BUILDING

The newly-organized Bank of Navasota has selected the old First National Bank Building for its home. The beautiful Italianate Renaissance Revival-style structure has been in disrepair for many years.

'We want people to take pride in Navasota's history and preserve that unique past for our children,' said Mike Harris, president of The Bank of

Navasota. 'The best way to show this is by action. By renovating the old bank building, we hope to enhance a downtown revitalization program which is already showing success.

Work on the building, parking area, and drive-through window has already begun. The interior restoration will give careful attention to the duplication of existing woodwork and beautiful brass fixtures.

Julie Caddel, Navasota's Main Street Project Manager, takes great pride in bringing new life into one of the most beautiful and historic buildings in town. 'The Bank of Navasota will serve as a model for historic preservation to cities in Texas and other states. Although similar projects are more common in large cities, small cities have recently begun to take advantage of this trend.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Many of the articles in this edition are included at the suggestion of readers' letters and telephone inquiries to the Texas Main Street Center.

PLAINVIEW RECEIVES GRANTS

The City of Plainview has received a \$5,000 grant from the Don and Sybil Harrington Foundation of Amarillo. This gift, along with a \$3,000 grant from the Hale County Historical Commission and \$3,000 from the Plainview Downtown Association, will assist the City of Plainview in funding the third year of their Main Street Project.

TEXAS MAIN STREET CENTER

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Anice Read

PROJECT ARCHITECT

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DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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SIGNS EARN PLACE IN HISTORY AND BUSINESS

by Linda Flory Butler,
Georgetown Main Street Project Manager

Though frequently overlooked as a major element in the overall design of a building, signs, large or small, have a major impact on a building's appearance. Historic photographs show that early signs were often painted directly on buildings.

Another surface commonly used for signs was the front plane of the old canopies that were supported by posts along the street. Other signs were painted independently of the building and mounted on top of the canopies, with smaller versions hung beneath for benefit of pedestrians. While the pedestrian signs remain today, auto transportation and strip shopping centers have radically altered the appearance of major exterior signage.

Signs have been enlarged to be read by motorists speeding by on highways and urban thoroughfares. This development is best exemplified along commercial strips that have grown with suburbs. Envision a major thoroughfare in any large city. Signs are large, mounted high, and vividly colored to attract the motorist approaching at 40 m.p.h. They are lighted, to be visible 24 hours a day and to protect the lighting, designers have produced a fluorescent system encased in plastic.

One sign is big, bright, and eye-catching, but the next business wants its sign to be seen also, so it is bigger, brighter, and more eye-catching—

and so on down the street. After several blocks these signs all begin to look the same.

Although law and traffic conditions rarely permit one to drive through a downtown area at 40 m.p.h. this automobile-oriented sign design has migrated from the highway and commercial strips into downtown. The result has been a profusion of signs that often bear little relationship to the design of the buildings on which they are mounted. Frequently they are much larger than necessary to attract the customers' attention and they block significant architectural details on the buildings near them.

As downtown buildings are restored and painted in color schemes that highlight historic designs and details, their signs will become increasingly important design elements as well as business advertisements. The Georgetown Heritage Society has earmarked \$1,000 for a Sign Grants-in-Aid program to assist business owners with sign improvements. Main Street Project Manager Linda Butler is working with the board of the society to establish guidelines for the program that will give a limited amount of money to business owners who wish to improve their existing signs with respect to the building facades.

READERS MUST REQUEST NEWSLETTER

The Texas Historical Commission is under legislative mandate to send its publications only to those readers who request them in writing. If you wish to continue receiving the Main Street Newsletter, please return the card enclosed in this newsletter as soon as possible.

MAIN STREET PROJECT MANAGERS

1981 Towns

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Eagle Pass, TX 78852
512/773-1111

HILLSBORO
Kent Collins
City Hall
Hillsboro, TX 76645
817/582-3271

NAVASOTA
Julie Caddel
City Hall
Navasota, TX 77868
713/825-6475

PLAINVIEW
Mary Crites
City Hall
Plainview, TX 79072
806/293-4171

SEGUIN
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City Hall
Seguin, TX 78155
512/379-3212

1982 Towns

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101 E. Austin, Rm. 505
Marshall, TX 75670
214/935-1825

DON'T TRY TO SOLVE EVERY PARKING PROBLEM

Both small and large cities are plagued with a shortage of parking spaces to accommodate customers and office workers in downtown areas. In many small county seats this problem is compounded by jury selection days at courthouses, during large public downtown functions, and on specified days when governmental service offices are especially busy.

Carol Walters of DeShazo, Starek, and Tang of Dallas, a traffic and parking consultant firm, addressed this problem before a town meeting in Georgetown. She advised the city to work to provide parking spaces for average day use and to admit that it is not economically possible to provide convenient parking for peak periods.

From the 1982 Resource Team Reports came the following parking suggestions:

- city officials, property owners, and business owners should develop a public-private partnership to provide surface parking lot areas for customers,
- all merchants and business owners should require their employees to park in a designated area away from downtown congestion, and
- cities should strictly enforce two-hour and metered parking areas in front of commercial storefronts. There also should be stiffer penalties for violations.

RETAIL RECRUITMENT TIPS

1. Begin at home. Canvass all businesses in shopping or commercial areas that may be ready to expand and move downtown.
2. Survey all downtown businesses to see if they have expansion needs that could be filled by moving to a larger space in the central business district.
3. Organize a downtown retail recruitment team patterned after your local industrial recruitment team. Possible members are merchants, representatives of a financial institution, and realtors.
4. Visit other cities in your area to find out if successful businesses would consider opening a branch in your downtown.
5. Retail recruitment means knowing your market potential, knowing where there are gaps in goods and services, deciding what businesses you want, and going after them.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES RENOVATES HISTORIC JAIL

It was a coincidence that the Department of Human Resources' Gainesville office was looking for new space at the same time that Cooke County was building a new jail and searching for a use for their old one. A trade-off was made that has provided another stimulus for the Gainesville Main Street Project.

The Department of Human Resources was given the jail for free use for 15 years. The Department did a \$100,000 rehabilitation on the building, and now has a lovely office just off the town square. Cooke County maintains the grounds while DHR maintains the interior.

Thanks to creative development techniques and a spirit of cooperation, another downtown building has avoided neglect and possible demolition and instead faces exciting reuse.

REHAB CONFERENCES SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER

A series of architectural conferences, emphasizing how commercial rehabilitation projects can qualify building owners for up to a 25% tax credit, will be held in four Texas cities in November. The conferences, sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission and Texas Society of Architects, are made possible by a grant from the Don and Sybil Harrington Foundation.

'Rehab 82: New Economic Opportunities' will bring together nationally-known experts in the restoration field to present case studies and discussions.

Conference sessions will be directed toward architects, architects-in-training, architectural students, building industry professionals, urban planners, and members of the financial community.

Pre-registration fee is \$50 (\$20 for students). Conferences will be held in the following locations: **Nov. 9, Amarillo**, Hilton Inn, I-40 at Lakeside; **Nov. 10, Dallas**, Plaza de Americas, 650 N. Pearl St. **Nov. 11, San Antonio**, Marriott Hotel, 711 E. Riverwalk, and **Nov. 12, Houston**, Shamrock Hotel, 6900 Main at Holcomb. For further information contact the Texas Main Street Center Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711, 512/475-3092.

Marshall

A history deep-rooted in the Old South permeates the 1982 Main Street town of Marshall. Settled in 1839 and named for U.S. Chief Justice John Marshall, the town was one of the biggest and wealthiest in the state when Texas seceded from the Union in 1861.

During the Civil War, Marshall was a production center for saddles, harnesses, clothing, powder and ammunition for the Confederacy. The town became the seat of Confederate government west of the Mississippi River after Vicksburg fell, and also served as the wartime capitol of Missouri's exiled government.

Visitors to this East Texas town today, located only 15 miles from the Texas-Louisiana border easily recognize Marshall's southern heritage. Historic southern homes, over 50 of which have received state historical markers, are picturesque reminders of the town's Confederate ties. The town also has a designated National Register Historic District which includes the Texas and Pacific Railroad depots and buildings, the renovated Ginocchio Hotel complex, a number of Victorian homes built during post-war days, and the Marshall Cemetery.

Today's tourists to Marshall also quickly become aware of the town's progressive industrial and cultural growth in the twentieth century. The Marshall Pottery Company, Inc. is one of the largest manufacturers of glazed pottery in the country. Other industries which now flourish in Marshall include tile, steel, and lumber production. Texas Eastman and Alcoa both house large plants in Marshall. Two private colleges, East Texas Baptist College and Wiley College, are located in Marshall, and a new civic center has been built.

Even though the general economic activity in this Harrison County seat has improved in recent years, the downtown area of Marshall has lost several businesses, creating a general sense of instability in the central business district. Determined to build on its potential for retail growth and on the historic aura of downtown Marshall—one of the state's largest concentrations of historically significant buildings—civic leaders applied for Marshall to become a 1982 Main Street city.

As Marshall began its participation as a Main Street city, it worked first to recreate a positive image for its central business district. Major growth in Marshall has taken place on State Highway 59, where the civic center, a new shopping mall, and a new high school are located. However, town leaders point to evidence of a central business district renaissance: all of the town's financial institutions are downtown, and several new businesses have already chosen to locate in historic downtown buildings. Other positive signs downtown include a high demand for the historic homes which surround the central business district, and the city's decision to keep city hall downtown—either through renovation or new construction.

The efforts to revitalize downtown Marshall are supported widely in this town of 25,000. A key group backing the Main Street project is the Marshall Business Association, a newly formed organization of local businesses which is eager to see the goals of the Main Street program reached. Other groups offering their support to the program are the Harrison County Historical Society, Harrison County Historical Commission, and the Harrison County Conservation Society.

Sixty-two blocks with 192 businesses comprise Marshall's downtown area. Leaders in the town's Main Street Project want not only to increase the number of businesses and decrease building vacancies in the area, but they also want to convince businesses of the benefits of locating downtown permanently. To attain this goal, city leaders will work to identify what commercial enterprises are needed—and would therefore succeed—in downtown and will then seek to actively draw these businesses into the central business district.

The goals of the Main Street Project for downtown Marshall are clear, broad, and attainable: to unite the town behind careful planning and historic restoration of the central business district; to present a unified image; and to improve the strength of the downtown area to insure that the entire community remains strong. These goals, combined with the town's fine appreciation of its past, give downtown revitalization and reuse positive beginnings in Marshall.

TEXAS MAIN STREET PROJECT
REINVESTMENT IN MAIN STREET DOWNTOWNS

August 31, 1982

City	New Con- struction & Bldg. Rehab. Projects	Number of Bldg.	Additional Planned Rehab. Projects	Buildings Sold	No. of Bldg. Sold	New Businesses	New Jobs	Lost Businesses	Lost Jobs	Total Re- investment (new, rehab & acquisition costs)
Hillsboro	\$1,372,800	38	14	\$ 272,000	15	31	85	16	34	\$1,644,800
Eagle Pass	171,000	5	1	240,000	1	1	0	1	100	411,000
Navasota	205,500	18	17	220,000	3	10	35	6	23	425,500
Plainview	171,800	15	9	1,040,500	11	12	24	6	23	1,812,300
Seguin	1,714,750	15	11	194,000	4	26	98	10	30	1,908,750
Subtotal 1981 Cities	3,635,850	91	52	1,966,500	34	80	242	39	210	6,202,350
Gainesville	238,300	9	13	119,000	1	10	55	4	14	357,300
Georgetown	621,000	12	12	582,000	8	5	13	2	6	1,203,000
Kingsville	0	0	4	0	0	3	8	0	0	0
Marshall	1,405,600	16	10	0	0	1	3	3	15	1,405,600
McKinney	167,850	9	7	0	0	17	36	4	10	167,850
Subtotal 1982 Cities	2,432,750	46	46	701,000	9	36	115	13	45	3,133,750
TOTAL	\$6,068,600	137	98	\$2,667,500	43	116	357	52	255	\$8,736,100

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