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NEWSLETTER

TEXAS MAIN STREET PROJECT

VOL. 5, NO. 4

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Main Street Conference Scheduled for October 1-2

'The Action's Back on Main Street' is the theme of the third annual Main Street conference set for October 1-2 at the Driskill Hotel in Austin. Highlighting the event will be a keynote address by Tom Moriarity of Halcyon, Ltd. in Washington, D.C. entitled 'Downtown's Future in a Changing Decade. Also, John C. Williams, a well-known retail consultant from Toronto, Canada, will make a presentation on 'Retailing in Downtown in the 80s.

The remainder of the two days will be filled with mini-training sessions on landscaping, parking, leasing, building restoration, sign or-

dinances, and neighborhood revitalization. Also, a special luncheon activity called 'Conversations at Lunch' will allow participants to visit with Main Street staff and project managers. The conference will conclude with a tour of downtown Brenham, a 1983 Main Street city.

In addition, representatives of downtown organizations will have an opportunity to meet to discuss problems and solutions for revitalizing their central business districts.

Special hotel rates are available for conference participants. Please refer to the registration form on page 2 for more information.

Main Street Handbook To Debut at Conference

The *Texas Main Street Handbook* will be available October 1 during the Texas Historical Commission's Main Street conference in Austin. This long-awaited manual, written by former Georgetown Project Manager Linda Flory, was funded by a grant from the Economic Development Administration and the Texas Department of Community Affairs.

One free copy will be available to any Texas city requesting the book. If the city administrator or mayor will not be present at the conference, a representative may bring a request letter from the city. Request letters may be sent to the Main Street office in advance of the conference, but

should clearly state who is to receive the book in Austin.

Written in an easy-to-read style, the handbook was designed as a cookbook for anyone interested in revitalizing their city's downtown area by using the successful Main Street methodology. Many questions, such as 'How do we solve our parking problems?' are answered with charts showing how other cities have handled similar problems. The book also explains how to organize downtown leaders, how to initiate good promotions that bring shoppers downtown, how to rehabilitate buildings, how to utilize empty storefronts, and how to use successful merchandising techniques.

Additional copies of the *Texas Main Street Handbook* are being printed and will be available for \$25 plus \$1.53 sales tax. A shipping charge is added if the book is mailed.

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Tax Incentives Threatened By President's Plan

Perhaps the greatest incentive to rehabilitating historic buildings is the Investment Tax Credit. Once again, however, this credit is threatened, but with a force much stronger than ever before.

Treasury II, President Reagan's new tax plan, eliminates any incentives for the rehabilitation of downtown buildings. In an effort to defeat the current proposals, preservationists across Texas are contacting their congressmen and senators to encourage them to support the continuation of the tax credits.

In Fort Worth, for example, preservationists provided two congressmen with a tour of all buildings that have been rehabilitated under the tax credit. They report the tour resulted in positive support from the elected officials. Other preservation groups are planning tours during the congressional recess in September.

Congressmen may be contacted by writing to United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510 or U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.

Building Reinvestment Up in Main Street Cities

More than \$96 million has been reinvested in the downtown buildings of 39 small Texas cities since the Main Street Project began in January 1981. This amount represents a \$22 million increase in the past six months, resulting in a net gain of 594 new businesses and 1,562 more jobs.

Texas Main Street Project Newsletter

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The Texas Main Street Project Newsletter is a bimonthly publication of the Texas Historical Commission. Address all correspondence to Texas Main Street Project, Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711 (512/475-4407).

Registration Form Main Street Conference

_____ Enclosed is my check for \$100* to cover conference registration only.

_____ Enclosed is my check for \$113 to cover conference registration and the 'Conversations at Lunch' session on Tuesday.

Make checks payable to the Texas Historical Commission.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Organization represented _____

Please register early. Refunds cannot be made after 12 noon, Monday, September 30. This form should be returned with check to the Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711 512/475-4407

*Conference fee includes \$75 to cover conference registration and \$25 tax deductible donation to the Texas Main Street Project.

Main Street Tips: How To Clean and Paint Strip Historic Buildings

By Dick Ryan
Main Street Architect

Brick and stone buildings occasionally need to be cleaned to remove dirt, stains, and organic growth. Masonry buildings that have been painted can also be stripped of paint and cleaned. The proper procedure for cleaning or paint stripping masonry buildings is using low-pressure water washing combined with chemical cleaners or strippers when necessary.

When having a building cleaned or stripped of paints, always have a test patch done in the area in the worst condition. If stripping paint from a building that has suffered a fire, do the test patch over a window opening (where the fire stain would be the worst). If the size or texture of the brick are different or if the size of the mortar joints vary, do the test patch where the different types meet. If cleaning the building, have the test patch done where the stains are deepest.

When cleaning or stripping paint, use the lowest possible water pressure that will achieve the desired results. Evaluate the test patch to determine the appropriate pressure.

Check the mortar joints in the test patch. When mortar joints are tooled or struck, they leave a slick surface, which repels water better than a rough surface. Check the test patch carefully to make sure the mortar joints are still slick. If the joints have become rougher, the water pressure used to clean or strip was too high.

Next, evaluate the test patch to see if the dirt,

stains, or growth have been removed. If the low-water pressure alone has not adequately cleaned the test patch, a chemical must be applied to help loosen the dirt or stains. This chemical is applied and washed off with low-pressure water.

When stripping paint from a building, first apply a chemical stripper and then wash the stripper off with low-pressure water. If the chemical stripper and low-pressure combination do not remove all the paint from the test patch, a second application of the stripper is required. The test patch should also be checked to determine if removing the paint damaged the brick in any way. If the brick is so soft that the paint cannot be removed without damaging the hard, outer surface of the brick, you should repaint, rather than strip, the building.

By evaluating the test patch, one can determine the proper water pressure and chemicals required to clean or remove paint from a masonry building. If you plan to tackle the job yourself, water pressure rigs can be rented for simple wash downs. If, however, the job requires chemicals for cleaning or stripping, a professional with at least three years' experience in masonry cleaning and paint stripping should be consulted. Project costs can range anywhere from 15 cents a square foot for a simple water wash to \$2.50 a square foot for complicated paint stripping requiring three or four applications of a chemical stripper.

Main Street Memos

Keep an eye on **FORT WORTH** and **CONROE** as they go through the process of setting up tax assessment districts to finance public improvements in the downtown area. This may be a trend of the future for Texas cities. Julie Caddel, former Navasota Main Street manager, has been hired by **WICHITA FALLS** to head

that city's downtown revitalization project. The copper dome of the Williamson County Courthouse in **GEORGETOWN** is undergoing restoration. So many other states are starting Main Street projects that they are raiding Texas for experienced managers. Kevin Walker has moved from **HARLINGEN** to oversee the Main Street Project in Hutchinson, Kansas. **WHARTON** has begun a Main Street Project with Nina Baker as the manager.



This article is the fourth in a series on the 1985 Main Street towns.

CUERO

Cuero, home of the famous Turkeyfest celebration, had its beginnings as a rowdy, lawless town that eventually grew into the traditional, beautiful community it is today.

As terminus for DeWitt County's only railroad in the 1870s, the Cuero population was composed mainly of restless cowboys, gunslingers, and outlaws. When two hurricanes destroyed the nearby seaport community of Old Indianola, however, people of German and Scottish-Irish descent began to make their homes in Cuero, the county seat and the hub of the rich Guadalupe River Valley.

Due to the efforts of these early settlers, Cuero can now look to a rich legacy of beautiful Victorian homes and architecturally superior commercial buildings. Through participation in the Main Street Project, the city hopes to restore these old structures, some of which have stood vacant for years or have undergone poor quality 'modernizations. This work will in turn help boost the economy and enable this agriculturally based community to organize and fund other projects, such as promoting Cuero as a prime industrial site.

Cuero is already off to a good start. The city has agreed to fund a historic survey for possible inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, and banks have pledged \$300,000 in low-interest loans for renovation projects.

Merchants and building owners, interested in the development of marketing strategies and the coordination of downtown commercial activities, have also expressed enthusiasm for the project.

In addition, local organizations and the city itself have proven to be tireless Main Street supporters. The Cuero Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture has organized a number of activities designed to acquaint citizens with Main Street: it sponsored guest speakers at various local club meetings, it organized a downtown merchants' association, and it produced a Main Street videotape. The DeWitt County Historical Commission, which supplied much of the information needed to complete the historical survey grant, supports all efforts to save historic structures throughout the county. The city of Cuero has agreed to financially support the project as well as provide the salary for a project manager. And finally, the *Cuero Record*, the city's newspaper, has continually run articles and editorials in support of the revitalization program.

City officials hope the result of these countless hours of work will achieve two goals: revitalize the downtown commercial business district and preserve as many historic buildings as possible. In this way, both citizens and tourists alike can look to historic Cuero for good shopping, fine restaurants, and interesting sight-seeing.

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Texas Main Street Project

Private Reinvestment in Main Street Downtowns

June 30, 1985

City	Rehabilitation Projects	No. of Buildings	New Construction	No. of Buildings	Buildings Sold	No. of Buildings	Net Gain in Bus. Starts, Relocations, & Expansions	Net Gain in Jobs Created	Total Reinvestment
1981 Cities									
Hillsboro	\$1,389,047	68	\$1,920,000	3	\$738,500	32	40	84	\$4,047,547
Navasota	704,800	34	1,600,000	1	310,000	7	19	25	2,614,800
Plainview	644,500	22	200,000	1	1,116,500	17	18	19	1,961,000
Seguin	2,851,800	39	1,986,000	3	924,000	11	23	76	5,761,800
1982 Cities									
Gainesville	352,774	31	607,450	2	780,200	12	24	63	1,740,424
Georgetown	3,874,500	58	1,500,000	1	2,424,500	28	50	297	7,799,000
Kingsville	16,575	11	0	0	283,000	6	16	9	299,575
McKinney	2,315,973	34	0	0	1,110,000	14	36	88	3,425,973
Marshall	36,334	8	0	0	333,000	3	7	13	369,334
1983 Cities									
Brenham	2,723,029	56	2,156,400	5	1,139,100	30	32	112	6,018,529
Harlingen	948,410	56	791,955	18	1,676,500	20	7	38	3,416,865
Lufkin	1,078,300	28	5,284,000	3	922,000	15	25	40	7,284,300
Stamford	433,605	62	1,751,500	6	904,500	9	14	23	3,089,605
Waxahachie	2,583,492	59	0	0	2,971,500	38	48	74	5,554,992
1984 Cities									
Belton	640,100	14	0	0	373,500	10	6	61	1,013,600
Brownwood	338,041	36	321,000	2	494,000	4	10	-91	1,153,041
Ennis	468,930	36	82,000	3	905,000	19	27	45	1,455,930
Goliad	286,862	27	430,000	4	209,500	7	19	31	926,362
Paris	2,326,490	64	250,000	1	1,701,100	18	17	10	4,277,590
1985 Cities									
Corsicana	202,200	20	45,000	1	255,000	5	2	12	502,200
Cuero	177,876	21	0	0	166,500	5	2	2	344,376
Lampasas	271,550	11	0	0	459,500	10	11	13	731,050
Mineral Wells	532,925	17	350,000	1	160,000	3	8	15	1,042,925
Sweetwater	244,500	10	0	0	113,600	6	2	-11	358,100
Subtotal—Official Cities									
	25,442,613	822	19,275,305	55	20,471,000	329	463	1,048	65,188,918

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City	Rehabilitation Projects	No. of Buildings	New Construction	No. of Buildings	Buildings Sold	No. of Buildings	Net Gain in Bus. Starts, Relocations, & Expansions	Net Gain in Jobs Created	Total Reinvestment
Self-Initiated Cities									
Alvin	30,000	1	0	0	200,000	3	-1	0	230,000
Athens	207,570	15	90,000	3	80,000	2	4	48	377,570
Big Spring	22,500	3	0	0	125,000	5	0	0	147,500
Conroe	95,000	5	2,700,000	3	760,000	5	9	12	3,555,000
Edinburg	105,000	2	2,975,000	2	0	0	1	5	3,080,000
Grapevine	211,000	13	163,200	1	696,000	4	3	5	1,070,200
Greenville	588,865	13	0	0	636,986	12	-2	-6	1,225,851
Pittsburg	27,400	7	21,486	1	17,000	1	5	6	65,886
San Marcos	1,114,944	30	2,454,400	7	2,565,000	11	7	-23	6,134,344
Sherman	2,129,925	37	0	0	1,905,000	22	33	97	4,034,925
Sinton	12,500	5	10,000	1	0	0	6	4	22,500
Taylor	2,436,975	28	20,000	2	1,238,150	22	19	156	3,695,125
Terrell	100,457	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	100,457
Tomball	246,960	6	5,078,363	18	137,300	2	11	123	5,462,623
Uvalde	927,030	32	430,000	4	691,000	8	34	87	2,048,030
Subtotal—Self-Initiated Cities									
	8,256,126	201	13,942,449	42	9,051,436	97	131	514	31,250,011
Grand Total After 4½ Years of the Texas Main Street Project									
	33,698,739	1,020	33,217,754	97	29,522,436	426	594	1,562	96,438,929