

Main Street Matters

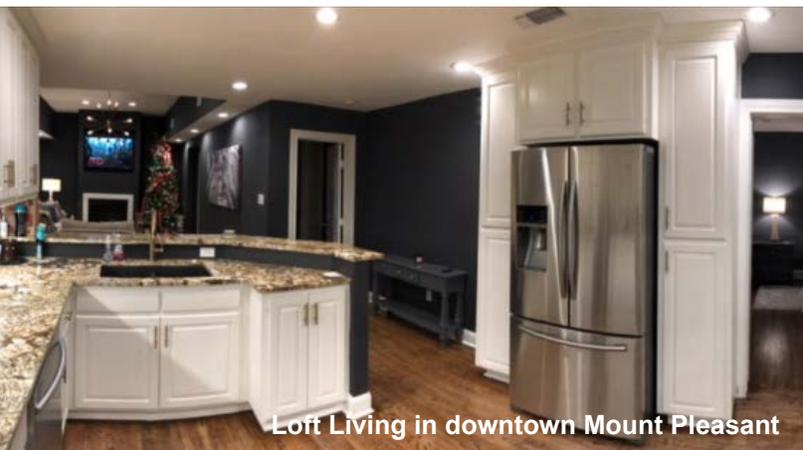
JUNE 2019 • A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

HOT NIGHTS AND COOL MUSIC AT SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNT PLEASANT

Come be a part of the first wall mural created and painted during a Main Street Summer Professional Development Training – by YOU! We will be led by award-winning muralist David Freeman in painting an interactive mural on the side of an existing downtown building on the square during the breakfast session on Thursday morning. We each will paint a small portion of the mural. You will experience this type of unique and interactive art project firsthand and be able to take some public art knowledge back to your Main Street. There will be paparazzi, paint, and pastries—all the components of a great work of downtown art you get to create.

This idea started with doing something inspired to bring all of our Main Street managers and attendees together during this training and provide something new and innovative to both take home and leave in Mount Pleasant. Come experience a first and be a part of this collective Main Street artistic adventure!

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HOT NIGHTS AND COOL MUSIC AT SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOUNT PLEASANT



By Amy Hinton, Assistant Main Street Manager, Mount Pleasant

Experience Mount Pleasant loft living by joining us on a downtown tour. Let us show you upper-floor lofts that are the ultimate in loft-living anywhere in the state. In these downtown residences, the finishes on everything give the space a luxury feel. Granite countertops, stainless steel finishes on all appliances, walk-in closets complete with storage, detailed painting, and wood-stained finishes give each living space that luxurious appearance. Each have an open floor plan and the fact that they are one block off the square makes the location ideal. This upper-floor residential development is exactly what downtown Mount Pleasant staff have been working

to bring to our area. It makes Mount Pleasant look and feel progressive and adds to the vibrant appeal of downtown. We will explain the investment, the renovation, and the spark these lofts have given to other investors creating their own living spaces downtown. You will get an up-close tour complete with a wine and cheese reception in these modern, luxury lofts.

Finally, The Alley on Third is a Texas Downtown President's award-winning venue that is one of the hot spots of Mount Pleasant. The urban feel of this revitalized alley will be worth the trip. We will give a step-by-step of how the space was found, revitalized through buy-ins from city officials, county and community, and how it is now used to draw activity downtown by hosting local events, live music performances, gatherings, and pedestrian-friendly access. We will show you how it has positively impacted the attitude of different age groups (including Millennials) toward downtown, not just for special events but for the day-to-day activities like eating, shopping, and coming downtown to be with friends, and, of course, take selfies. The unique opportunity for ownership in different areas of our downtown by this multi-generational collaboration was an enormous success. You will see it and experience it when you are hosted to some of the best live music in the state of Texas. Join us for the best Main Street celebration in Texas on a Thursday night at The Alley on Third in Mount Pleasant.



IT'S MORE THAN JUST CAKE...TEXAS MAIN STREET TRADITIONS



*By Debra Drescher, State Coordinator,
Texas Main Street Program*

Traditions are important not only for families, but also for organizations. In both, they reinforce values and principles, and they connect us to one another.

Having gone from a pilot project in the 1970s, to a program in the 1980s, and now to a nationwide movement, Main Street is grounded in a foundation of creating preservation-based economic impact through passionate community engagement, much of which comes from celebrating local traditions and stories that make your historic downtowns come alive for today's audiences. It's an important part of who we are, and being part of a nationwide movement lets us know that our work is not done in isolation.

The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP)—along with several other states—and our national partner Main Street America™ will all celebrate our 40th anniversaries next year. In 1980, following the pilot program, the Main Street Four Point Approach™ began rolling out through states that had competed for the opportunity to create coordinating programs to serve local programs. Texas formally took in its first local programs in early 1981—Eagle Pass, Hillsboro, Navasota, Seguin, and Plainview.

Since then, the Approach has guided the revitalization work of thousands of communities across the country. The celebration of our anniversaries and the grand traditions of our organizations will culminate May 18-20, 2020 as Texas Main Street partners with the National Main Street Center/Main Street America™ to host the national Main Street Now conference in Dallas that brings together close to 2,000 practitioners and volunteers of local programs, along with industry experts from across the country. It's an honor big



enough that Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott filmed a spot for Texas Main Street welcoming our soon-to-be guests. You can see the video on the [TMSP](#) page of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) website.

With almost 40 years under our belt, Texas Main Street has several of our own traditions. We are guided by our [Vision, Mission, and Core Values](#) that define us both as a team and as individual professionals assisting our 90 local programs. But we have some notable traditions as well. One is a cake, and one is an event. No one, not even our founder Anice Read, probably realized that 40 years later we'd still be honoring these traditions that started with the program, or that something so simple as a cake could become so iconic and powerful! If you would like to read more about the TMSP founder Anice Read, you can find several articles in our monthly newsletter [Main Street Matters](#). One was just published in [March](#), and the other in [October 2016](#) to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the entrance of our first programs.

In Texas Main Street, whether at the local program level or in the state office, if you have someone to thank or something to celebrate, you bake a Main Street cake. In the 1980s when the program was just starting, TMSP founder Read, who had also been a THC Commissioner, knew that it was important to lay a strong foundation for this new program that would enable it to be successful long into the future. The vision to make it recognizable included making sure every person and every entity that could help in building the future of the TMSP knew about it and believed in its value. To make sure you didn't forget

Texas Main Street when Anice came to visit to garner your support, she always came armed with the chocolate treat that eventually became known as our Texas Main Street cake.

Recent sightings (and eating) of the cake occurred during the just-ended First Lady Main Street Tour to two of our 2019 designated Main Street communities—Houston Emancipation Avenue and Mesquite. In Main Street, since we still always say thank you with cake, state staff followed up on the May 16 events by delivering Texas Main Street cakes to the First Lady’s office; the Independent Bankers Association of Texas that has sponsored the event for 25 years; and to various THC departments that supported and helped us plan them.

These annual visits to celebrate the entrance of a community into the Texas Main Street network are another of the recognizable and important traditions of our program. Every First Lady of Texas since 1981—beginning with Rita Clements, wife of Gov. Bill Clements—has visited new Main Street communities with commissioners, management, and staff of the THC to celebrate each community’s commitment to their historic downtowns and the Main Street Approach. (During the term of Gov. Ann Richards, the wife of Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock took on the duties.) And one of those First Ladies—Laura Bush—took her understanding of Main Street and its impact on local communities from the Texas Governor’s Mansion to the White House! Since 2015 when Gov. Greg Abbott was elected, the current First Lady has so far undertaken these visits to 10 newly designated Main Street communities, where she has gotten to see first hand the excitement that can happen when a community comes together around a common goal. She has been heard to say in her speeches at the events that “Main Streets represent the best of what Texas has to offer.”



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

ALICIA NEAL,
EMANCIPATION AVENUE MAIN STREET MANAGER



- 1. What is your hometown?**
New Orleans, Louisiana. But born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee. I am a very proud Southern girl.
- 2. What Main Street city do you represent and how long have you been there?**
Houston. I have been here eight months. My family is here, and I lived here for about six months after Hurricane Katrina.
- 3. What is your favorite spot in your downtown and why?**
My favorite spot in the EAMS district would be Emancipation Park and SHAPE Community Center.
- 4. What do you enjoy the most about the Main Street program?**
I love everything about the program. My favorite part is helping others, promoting their business, and planning events for the community. I am a very creative person. The opportunity to articulate the Main Street vision is a dream come true. I love promoting the businesses and working with new entrepreneurs. I am excited about driving more customers to Emancipation Avenue by designing fun and interesting events.
- 5. What is the best piece of advice you’ve ever received?**
As a new Main Street manager, I have heard several people say that this work takes time. It is not meant to be finished in a day. Take your time and always ask for help.

Mary Moore, Mayor of Pearsall, recalls her community's acceptance into the program and the First Lady's visit in 2018: "Creating community knowledge and focusing on volunteer work has already changed the view of our downtown. Having Mrs. Abbott come to Pearsall was such a privilege and brought the community together in such a positive manner. This ceremony was an excellent way to introduce Pearsall into the Texas Main Street Program!" Main Street Director Leah Carrizales also adds: "We had such a great turn out, everyone in the community came out to join us. Everything we do as a Main Street city is for the future of our community, so getting the kids involved is always a big goal for Pearsall. The dedication ceremony really helps the community understand what an important program this is! It truly does give you a different perspective on the program when you can bring the Texas First Lady Mrs. Abbott to your community. We did a town clean up the weekend before the event and we had over 40 volunteers come out and help. This was my first event, and at the end of it I just sat back and realized that this was such a great experience for my small town."

6. What's your favorite tip for someone in our economic development/downtown revitalization industry?

My favorite tip would be to trust your vision. Everyone doesn't see the beauty in that old building or vacant lot. If you have an idea or a concept of "what can be," speak up and work toward that goal. Trust your vision and know that you can make the community better.

7. If you could plan a vacation to anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?

I would go to the Caribbean and relax by the water. I love being near water. It is extremely relaxing and inspiring.

8. Who has been the most influential person in your career?

My son.

9. What's your favorite inspirational quote?

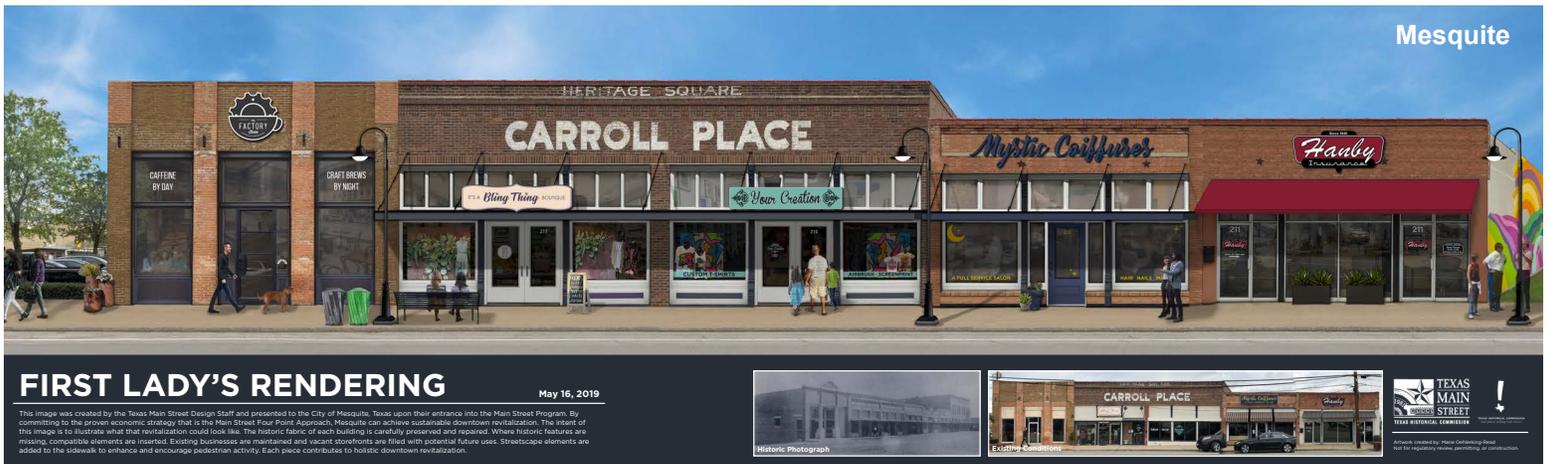
"Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark and professionals built the Titanic!"

10. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Going to the movies with my children. I am a huge movie buff.



(Top) The property featured in the First Lady's rendering for Houston Emancipation Avenue Main Street was constructed in 1942 and has continuously had a housing and retail combination. It shows the significant impact incremental changes can have. (Bottom) These buildings date back to the early days of downtown Mesquite. The rendering shows how certain aspects of the buildings can be restored, while other parts are repaired, all while maintaining the existing businesses.



A TYLER, TEXAS BBQ AND RED DIRT MUSIC DREAM



*By Carleen Dark, Townsquare
Media Market President and
Chase Colton, Townsquare
Media Digital Events Manager*

In the Fall of 2012, a dream was born in a small office in Tyler. The idea: bring together the best in Texas barbecue and Texas/Red Dirt Music to Downtown Tyler. On May 3, 2014, that dream became a reality.

Now headed into its sixth year, the Red Dirt BBQ & Music Festival has proven to be one of the most premier and unique music and food experiences in Texas. Nearly 6,000 people pour onto the brick streets of the historic downtown square in Tyler every May.

The festival features the best in Texas barbecue, with more than 25 of the most celebrated barbecue restaurants in Texas converging on the square to sample smoked meats to festival attendees. Restaurants from as close as Tyler to as far as Amarillo participate every year.

Live music happens for close to 12 hours on two stages, with the main stage highlighting the biggest names in Texas and Red Dirt Music. Festival acts have included Randy Rogers Band, Cody Johnson, The Turnpike Troubadours, Josh Abbott Band, Aaron Watson, Whiskey Myers, Pat Green, Koe Wetzel, and many others.

Red Dirt has also proven to be one of the hottest tickets in the food and music scene in Texas, having sold out six years in a row and in a record 181 minutes in 2019. Ticket prices range from \$30-\$110, and a portion of the proceeds

benefit non-profit partners, The Heart of Tyler, and The Boot Campaign.

What was once a dream to bring something unique and experiential to the heart of Tyler, is now a reality on a daily basis. Downtown Tyler holds a special place in our hearts, and Red Dirt is one of many reasons for that. We get asked all the time when the festival is going to move to a different (bigger) venue, and our answer was, is, and always will be that Downtown Tyler is our home.

There are many catalysts and countless people who have positively impacted Downtown Tyler and we've seen incredible growth downtown even since before Red Dirt started five years ago. But we are honored and humbled that we are able to play a small role in the promotion and revitalization of the most beautiful part of our city. One of the most rewarding parts of this event is not only when people from out of town comment on the beauty and character of our downtown, but also when it's people from Tyler or close by who haven't experienced it until they come to Red Dirt.

When the Texas Downtown Association named Red Dirt BBQ & Music Festival as the Best Promotional Event in Texas in 2018, "honored" really doesn't do it justice. It's a testament to the work that countless people put in every year to make the festival what it has become, and that kind of recognition is something we will remember forever.



MAIN STREET AND CLG CITIES: A TALE OF TWO PROGRAMS



By Lorelei Willett, Certified Local Government Program Coordinator

Currently, there are 75 Certified Local Governments (CLGs) in Texas, 32 of which are also Main Street cities. Several communities have successfully participated in both programs and have received CLG grant money for preservation-related projects. Waxahachie is one of these cities that has thrived in both programs and has been successful in implementing a CLG grant for a section of its city-wide historic resources survey.

What is the CLG program?

The CLG program is a partnership between local, state, and federal government entities. The purpose of the program is to promote preservation activity on the local level relative to the state and national preservation efforts. This partnership allows CLGs the benefits of technical assistance, access to the CLG network, access to training, and of course, funding.

Technical assistance can help with reviewing or revising an ordinance, helping interpret design guidelines, or help with researching issues.

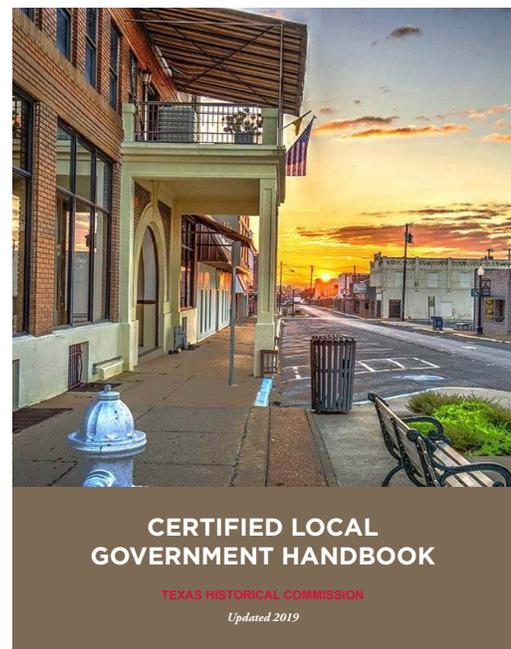
We are also trying to constantly build the CLG network for our communities. It connects historic preservation officers (HPOs), county CLG representatives, and preservation commissioners from across the state. One of the platforms for the network similar to the Main Street program is the email listserv where we share information, announcements, resources, and reminders to CLGs. We also encourage individuals on the listserv to ask each other questions so that we can all learn. Often, we find that several cities have dealt with similar situations and we want to encourage the cross-over of ideas and solutions.

Training through the CLG program is also a sought-after benefit from many of our cities and counties. Not only can Texas Historical Commission (THC) staff organize a tailored approach to your specific commission, but we also organize and offer annual regional trainings either through THC or nationally recognized agencies such as the National Association for Preservation Commissions.

And finally, CLGs have exclusive access to funding which comes from the annual apportionment to the State Historic Preservation Office, also known as the Texas Historical Commission. According to the National Historic Preservation Act, CLGs must receive 10% of that annual amount to go toward local preservation-related activities. This allows us to fund approximately 8-10 projects per year.

How can my city qualify?

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a CLG, check out our new [CLG Handbook](#) available on our website!



Do other Main Street cities benefit from being a CLG?

Yes! As stated, there are 32 Main Street cities that are also CLGs, and many of them have applied for CLG grants since the Texas CLG program started in 1986. Since then, Main Street cities have been awarded approximately \$1,208,000 in CLG grant money for preservation projects. This is approximately 38% of overall funds (approximately \$3 million) distributed to CLGs since 1986. The graph on the next page shows

roughly how much each Main Street/CLG city has been awarded.



CLG Grants can be utilized to fund a variety of projects; however, projects which further the goals of identification, evaluation, nomination, and protection of the community’s historic resources and are complementary to the statewide comprehensive preservation plan are prioritized for funding. Types of projects that qualify for CLG funds include but are not limited to:

- Historic Resources Surveys
- Design Guidelines
- National Register Nominations
- Educational/Training Events
- Preservation Plans
- Rehabilitation
- Pre-development Projects (Architectural/ Engineering Drawings and Specifications)

One of the most beneficial and most popular activities is a historic resources survey, like the one Waxahachie is currently undertaking.

What’s up in Waxahachie?

First certified as a CLG in 2003, Waxahachie received its first CLG grant in 2018 for Phase 2 of its historic resources survey update. Like most cities, Waxahachie had an older survey from 1985 that needed to be updated and expanded. So, together with Historic Waxahachie Inc. (HWI) and the City

Heritage Preservation Department, Waxahachie began with Phase 1, a historic resources survey plan and pilot survey funded by THC through the Texas Preservation Trust Fund in 2016. The plan, completed by Hardy-Heck-Moore, Inc., stated that:

“Current conditions in Waxahachie, such as continued growth, dispersed development patterns along major corridors, growing investment in the downtown area, and threats to historic housing stock in older neighborhoods posed by neglect and demolition, are prompting HWI and the City to ensure that planning for future development is synchronized with and takes into consideration historic preservation and other related issues.”



Waxahachie Train Depot from Downtown Historic Resource Survey, 2016

The plan then recommended a phased approach with three zones, which led to HWI* and the city to apply for a CLG grant to survey Zone 1, a total area of approximately 3,472 acres and a mix of resources.

They were awarded \$20,000 to complete this section of the survey which included hiring a consultant and is due to be completed in late 2019. When completed, HWI and the City of Waxahachie hope that the results will guide future preservation planning and meet the city’s goals of protecting historic resources, promoting heritage tourism, encouraging ongoing preservation efforts, and educating the public about Waxahachie’s rich history and irreplaceable historic properties.

*Non-profits cannot become CLGs; however, they can apply for grants on behalf of a CLG community.

DENISON, A 147-YEAR-OLD TOWN TURNS 30!



By Donna Dow, Main Street Manager, Denison

"The story of the last 30 years is one of perseverance and how our Main Street program has been a driver in our viability as a downtown. We see so many great things happening and clearly our future years will be some of our brightest and best! If you haven't experienced Denison Main Street lately, you are missing the energy that keeps us all engaged!" ~ Denison Mayor Janet Gott

Denison celebrated 30 Years in the Texas Main Street Program on Tuesday, May 14, 2019. The City of Denison set aside a full day of activities to commemorate the 30th anniversary. The festivities began with photos and videos and ended with the annual downtown awards celebration. Mayor Janet Gott was there from beginning to end and led in the fun. To kick off the morning, the Main Street Advisory Board and committee members (both past and present) met at the giant Texas star at the Travel Information Center on the Texas/Oklahoma border. An hour later everyone gathered downtown at Heritage Park. All business and building owners, employees, family, and friends (past and present) blocked traffic in the mid-400 block at the piano key crosswalks to take a group photograph using both a camera and a drone.

A video was also shot of business owners and employees out on the Main Street sidewalk later in the morning. Various shots were taken from both a drone and a street-level camera from a golf cart to capture the moment in time. It was during this effort that we determined we must be the Longest Main Street in Texas! So many small business owners used creativity to showcase their businesses including a hairdresser giving a haircut on the street, a flower shop from a side street setting up on a corner on Main St. to decorate the area with life-size flowers, an auto

dealer spending hours positioning cars outside to create a pop-up car show, and a ballet dance troupe coming together to separate as the camera went through them. We even caught a postal employee in action, as they are an important hub of our downtown.

Later that afternoon, friends from the past joined in as we hosted a book signing and took time to reminisce about all the success that has occurred over the years. Denison has one of the most unique and historic downtowns of any city in Texas. For over a century, Main Street and the downtown core have been the civic and commercial center for the city. The book traces the history of Denison's downtown structures and chronicles different efforts and improvements that have been made to downtown. The book features memories from the mayor of Denison, local citizens and business owners, and excerpts from all of Denison's former and current Main Street directors (including Sharon Foster, Melissa Woodall, Kathy Hendrick, Amy Lay, Donna Dow, and Melanie Truxal). The book shows how Main Street and Downtown Denison are the pride of North Texas. All proceeds from this project will go toward improvements in the downtown core.

We talked about roads traveled (literally) as we went from a serpentine street to a straight path. Denison has overcome many obstacles during the years, including a highway bypass, a loss of employees due to railroad headquarters being relocated, and the loss of a major business. Hometown service in the heart of downtown was always present. The evening culminated with the annual awards program during Preservation Month in which the Texas Historical Commission Vice-Chair John Crain offered comments from the Texas Main Street office. Mayor Janet Gott expressed her enthusiasm over past accomplishments as well as the future of Downtown Denison. Mayors from the past 30 years were recognized as were former Main Street directors. It was a great day in Denison and a perfect way to celebrate what has occurred and the great things ahead of us.



(Left) Denison Main Street Managers - Sharon Foster, Kathy Hendrick, Donna Dow, Melanie Truxal, and Texas Main Street Asst. Coordinator Shelly Hargrove; (Middle) Star at Travel Information Center in Denison; (Right) Denison Mayors-Janet Gott, current mayor; Robert Brady,Bill Lindsey,Ben Munson, Ronnie Cole.



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