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**Downtown Revitalization in Texas:
The intersection of the Main Street and
Historic Courthouse Preservation Programs**

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**Downtown Revitalization in Texas:
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by

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Thesis

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Dedication

To Eric Oehlerking, Lauri Oehlerking, and Cord Read - You believed in me when I had no faith in myself, picked me up when I was down, and encouraged me to always follow my dreams. This project is as much yours as it is mine. Thank you.

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Abstract

Downtown Revitalization in Texas: The intersection of the Main Street and Historic Courthouse Preservation Programs

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

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The two most successful preservation initiatives in Texas are the Main Street Program (TMSP) and the Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP). A downtown revitalization strategy and grant fund program respectively, the initiatives are structurally different. However, they inevitably affect the same communities. The two organizations have never combined forces to achieve their goals, but the potential to integrate efforts could lead to reviving many more Texas communities. This study investigates the question: how can the TMSP and THCPP coordinate to create stronger preservation efforts in counties across the state?

The program processes were analyzed to better understand the mechanisms used to carry out each initiative at the state and local level. Then, twelve case study cities were evaluated in order to understand the interactions at the local level. Interviews with

program professionals, occupancy surveys, and reinvestment statistics were used to discern these effects.

Through the interventions of both programs, all twelve cities have seen a decrease in vacancy ratings and an increase in rehabilitation projects. However, no Main Street program had any input into their local courthouse restoration. Alternatively, the courthouse restoration boosts local pride and ownership in the surrounding community, but these results are just “snow ball” effects; the restoration does not consider its impact on the greater community. The investigation also shows that rural communities rely more on the courthouse square to function as a traditional county seat, while suburban communities are transitioning their courthouses into new uses. Coordinating the TMSP and THCPP initiatives and creating preservation efforts at the county level could result in the successful revitalization of more rural communities across Texas, who could not achieve it on their own.

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Introduction

Downtown. Main Street. The Square. No matter what the name, the central Business District of a community is an important hub for local commerce and culture. Today, many downtowns struggle to compete with the fast-paced, technology-based, automobile-centric nature of society. However, the condition of a downtown is a direct reflection of its community identity and social health. A thriving downtown helps the entire community. Downtown revitalization is crucial to the future of small town America.

The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) and Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) are two of the most successful preservation initiatives supported by the Texas Historical Commission (THC). From the corner store to the iconic courthouse square, both programs have assisted in restoring numerous buildings in historic downtown districts across the state. The TMSP and THCPP are in separate THC divisions, Community Heritage Development and Architecture respectively. Their applications, procedures, and regulations are structurally different. However, the communities they help and the goals they achieve converge on numerous levels. This study will explore the impacts that the TMSP and THCPP have on several Texas communities in order to answer the question - how can the TMSP and THCPP coordinate to create stronger preservation efforts in counties across the state?

Before World War II, Main Street was the center of most American communities no matter the shape or size. Retail stores and businesses offices drew people downtown for shopping and work. The presence of the post office, library, banks and local government offices added to the steady flow of people. Downtown was an important part of a community's social life as well. Local cinemas, restaurants, public meetings, formal gatherings, parades, and festivals kept people downtown after hours and on weekends. However, in only a few short decades, downtown would take a turn for the worse.

Between the mid-1950s and early 1970s, downtowns across the nation experienced a rapid decline due to a perfect storm of events that altered the importance of Main Street in American communities. Following World War II, there was a significant deficit between the American housing stock and the need for new homes through out the country. The federal government responded to this issue by creating the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the G.I. Bill, which made low-cost mortgages and low interest loans available to all military veterans increasing residential growth beyond downtown. This act insured high-risk development investments that lead to the creation of suburbs like Levittown and also supported new construction rather than the improvement of existing buildings.¹ In 1956, the Interstate Highway System began to construct a network of freeways across the nation. Unlike early highways, interstate highways were planned around city centers to move people more quickly and opened up

¹ Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 190.

millions of acres of cheaper land for residential and commercial development.² The evolution of manufacturing processes, easier access for large trucks, and the increasing popularity of constructing one major complex for all of a company's offices, manufacturing plants, and warehouses lead to the exodus of many businesses from urban central business districts to suburban green field sites.³ Changes in zoning also separated residences from industry and manufacturing further "eliminating the mixed used character of the typical main street pushing people outside downtown to live."⁴ Major changes in the agricultural industries severely reduced income and population in small market center towns as well.

Grocery stores and department stores quickly left downtown for a new space near the highways. The advancement of air conditioning made it possible to regulate the temperature of large spaces, which resulted in the first enclosed shopping malls. These structures were placed on cheap land near highways and in suburbs and became prime real estate for which downtown businesses fled.⁵ Meanwhile Main Street did not evolve and could not compete with the changing times. "City center businesses were closing. Buildings were falling into disrepair. Rent levels and property values were dropping.

² Smith, "You Say You Want a Devolution? Lessons from the Main Street Program."

³ Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 184.

⁴ Moe, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*.

⁵ Moe, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*.

Crime was increasing. It seemed as if main streets were slowly being abandoned altogether.”⁶

NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER (NMSC)

Concerned about the loss of the traditional commercial architecture at the heart of declining downtowns, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) decided to conduct a three-year experiment designed to identify the factors behind this decline. Their goal was to develop a “comprehensive revitalization strategy” that would not only save historic structures, but would revive the local economy and community consciousness connected to downtown.⁷ At the time, many preservationists “viewed downtown revitalization as a problem for others because it involved issues of marketing, economic development, and urban infrastructure, not necessarily within their realm.”⁸ The Main Street Project challenged those assumptions, because many historic downtown commercial buildings were also being destroyed in the process.

NTHP held a regional competition among seventy towns in the midwestern portion of the country. Three pilot communities, ranging in size from 5,000 to 38,000 people, were chosen for the three-year experiment including: Galesburg, Illinois, Madison, Indiana, and Hot Springs, South Dakota. NTHP hired consultants to analyze each downtown’s assets and needs. The consultants produced architectural and economic

⁶ Smith, “You Say You Want a Devolution? Lessons from the Main Street Program.”

⁷ National Main Street Center, “The Main Street Project.”

⁸ Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice*, 279.

profiles to serve as the foundation for the “design improvements and economic revitalization strategies that would make it feasible to rehabilitate and reuse historic downtown buildings” and a full -time Main Street program manager for each community was hired.⁹

What the National Trust found “was that preservation is inextricably linked to economic development and promotion, and the goals for downtown business owners and local preservations were closely aligned.”¹⁰ By the end of the experiment, business improved in all three communities by almost any standard or measure. According to the current NMSC website, seven new businesses opened in Hot Springs, six in Madison, and thirty in Galesburg over the three year period. Sales tax revenues increased by 25 percent in Hot Springs, while the downtown occupancy rate in Galesburg rose to 95 percent. The biggest success of the project was that numerous buildings were rehabilitated and reactivated with a productive use “preserving important symbols of each community's unique heritage for future generations.”¹¹ The Main Street Project laid the groundwork for what would eventually become the National Main Street Program and Center.

In 1980, the National Main Street Center was established by the National Trust. Their first project created a second demonstration program with assistance from the

⁹ National Main Street Center, “The Main Street Project.”

¹⁰ Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice*, 280.

¹¹ National Main Street Center, “The Main Street Project.”

International Downtown Executives' Association (IDEA).¹² For this project, six states were selected to participate including Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Many components of the original pilot project in the Midwestern communities remained the same, however, the relationship between the Trust and communities was altered in an effort to help communities network with other towns in their state. A state coordinating office spearheaded the Main Street program and appointed a statewide director in order to develop networks through which resources could be mobilized more effectively and lessons could be transfer to other communities. Each state then chose five towns to serve as their initial network. Yet again, the project was huge success. NMSC states that,

“The state demonstration program concluded in late 1983 with impressive results. Twenty of the communities formed new downtown organizations, while eight towns substantially strengthened existing groups. Twenty-eight of the towns established low-interest loan pools or other incentive programs to stimulate facade renovation and building rehabilitation projects, resulting in more than 650 new facades and nearly 600 rehabilitations — with a total investment of more than \$64 million.”¹³

Today, forty-four states have a statewide Main Street Program, while the Main Street Approach has been adopted over 2,000 communities.¹⁴ The National Main Street Center functions as a support network for Main Street communities across the nation by offering technical assistance, holding conferences and workshops, advocating for critical revitalization issues, and conducting research.

¹² National Main Street Center, “History of the National Main Street Center.”

¹³ National Main Street Center, “History of the National Main Street Center.”

¹⁴ National Main Street Center, “History of the National Main Street Center.”

MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH®

The most successful tool created by the NMSC has been the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, an economic development strategy that initiates revitalization in downtown districts by leveraging local assets.¹⁵ Developed from the findings of both demonstration projects, the Approach focuses revitalization strategies into four points: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.

Organization unites all downtown stakeholders and groups under the same mission. Main Street functions as a forum to collaborate on downtown issues across multiple levels and creates consensus. Promotion helps individual business and the district as a whole develop its brand and market itself with an attractive new image. Design encompasses all physical elements of a Main Street district. From the streetscape to public space, to the building itself, the design point seeks to create an appealing atmosphere and safe environment. Economic restructuring strengthens the existing economic assets while diversifying the community's economic base through retaining and expanding existing businesses and attracting new businesses that fit the local market. Over the past 30 years, the Main Street Approach has become “the most cost effective economic development program in America.”¹⁶

¹⁵ National Main Street Center, “The Main Street Four-Point Approach.”

¹⁶ Rypkema, *Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*, 27.

WHY COORDINATE?

“The critical question is not whether the small town can be rehabilitated in the image of its earlier strength and growth – for clearly it cannot – but whether American life will be able to evolve any other integral community to replace it... Ironically people are attracted to Main Streets by the ideal of small town stability, but the most visited and prosperous Main Streets are actually ones that have undergone enormous change. They are not the Main Streets of yesterday, but the Main Streets of tomorrow.”¹⁷

The TMSP and THCPP are individually successful in their own right. Both programs have encouraged preservation, revived communities in need, and saved historic places throughout the state. Why, then, should either program change the processes that have already been working for many years? The answer is simple: overlap is already occurring. By purposefully coordinating efforts, the TMSP and THCPP can perpetuate their accomplishments across the state.

Anatomically, TMSP and THCPP are different. The Main Street program is a long-term commitment that demands the support of many volunteers at the local level. At the state level, THCPP provides funds and advises courthouse renovation programs. Locally, renovation projects involve county officials and the project architect with limited community input. However, both programs work with similar communities. Currently, there are eighty-seven certified Main Street cities in the state. Of these, twenty Main Street cities also have THCPP restored courthouses, while another seven have been approved and are awaiting funds. Twenty-two more Main Street cities have the potential

¹⁷Moe, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*, 172.

to receive THCPP funds. Sixty-three courthouse restorations have been completed using THCPP funding. Thirty-six of these county seats could qualify to become a Main Street community. 172 other counties have unrestored historic courthouses that have yet to apply for THCPP funding or Main Street certification.

Courthouse restorations inherently affect the surrounding properties and businesses without physically interacting with other structures. The visual improvements of a courthouse renovation act as a catalyst for their community and inspire other building owners to update their structures as well. These effects assist in achieving similar goals to that of the Main Street program. However, the two programs have never intentionally worked together. The lack of coordination results in major missed opportunities to further revitalization in the downtown area as a whole. By coordinating at the state and local level, the TMSP and THCPP can bolster preservation and increase the impact of both programs.

Existing Literature

The economic benefit and success of the historic preservation field has been a widely studied topic. Several major reports by outside consultants and analysts have been conducted to research the impact of preservation. Typically, the success of preservation projects has been measured through factors such as: increase in property value, number of jobs created, and amount of reinvestment dollars.

“The Contributions of Historic Preservation to Housing and Economic Development” study completed in 1998 by Rutgers University professors, David Listokin, Barbara Listokin, and Michael Lahr investigated the effects of preservation programs and incentives on the housing stock and vitality of communities across the United States. They note that the National Main Street program “has played an important role in older regions and sunbelt locations” in addition to “generating significant economic activity” in over 1,000 communities since its inception.¹⁸ They conclude that preservation in general and Main Street in particular achieve greater success than urban renewal strategies because of their “positive incremental ‘urban husbandry’ approach to revitalizing areas...by capitalizing on the unique physical and social identities of each place.”¹⁹

In 2005, Randall Mason, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, completed a report entitled “Economics and Historic Preservation: A Guide and Review of the

¹⁸ Listokin, “The Contributions of Historic Preservation to Housing and Economic Development,” 454.

¹⁹ Listokin, “The Contributions of Historic Preservation to Housing and Economic Development,” 455.

Literature” for The Brookings Institute that gave a completed overview of all the types of studies that have been carried out across the nation to analyze the economic impacts of preservation. In essence, the report is a massive annotated bibliography with analysis that discusses the success of each type of study. Mason states that the Main Street Program “is perhaps the most successful program in recent memory to join historic preservation,” however the analysis of the programs success through concrete means is lacking.²⁰ He concludes, “While detailed statistics are kept to track the activity of Main Street related investments, the reporting is based on descriptive statistics and economic impact results only...there is a dearth of serious study of this widely renown and successful program.”²¹

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation commissioned a study in 2011 to identify “indicators that can be used to measure the economic impact of preservation over time.”²² The authors, Don Rypkema and Caroline Cheong of Place Economics and Randall Mason, identified Main Street /downtown revitalization as one of their nine methodologies and programs analyzed in the final report, “Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation.” The report acknowledges that by “almost any measure” the Main Street program “has been an extraordinary success and the Main Street Approach has been adopted as the set of organizing principle for downtown revitalization even by communities that are not formally participants.”²³ However, the authors concede that,

²⁰ Mason, *Economics and Historic Preservation a Guide and Review of the Literature*, 43.

²¹ Mason, *Economics and Historic Preservation a Guide and Review of the Literature*, 43.

²² Rypkema, *Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*, 3.

²³ Rypkema, *Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*, 37.

although useful, the current mode of collecting reinvestment data does not meet defensible research standards. The report concludes with strategies that could strengthen the NMSC database:

1. Gather data strictly from public record or by a third party
2. Compare Main Street communities to other similar communities who have not used historic preservation as a reinvestment strategy
3. Complete catalytic measurement of individual projects on the surrounding areas economy by considering property values, retail sales, investment, net new jobs, net new businesses, and commercial occupancy rates before and after project completion²⁴

In 2012, the NMSC reported that \$2.1 billion was reinvested through physical improvements from public and private sources in Main Street districts across the United States.²⁵ Over 4,700 new businesses opened, 24,700 jobs were created, and 7,254 buildings were rehabilitated in one year alone. Over the past thirty-two years, the NMSC states that a total \$55.7 billion has been reinvested in Main Street communities through physical improvements.

Each of these influential reports identifies Main Street as a successful preservation program that has helped to revitalize communities all over the nation. Although their data collection is not the most accurate and reliable method, their strategy is a solid foundation for communities to develop their own initiatives. None of the reports, however, discuss the effects of the THCPP. This is not due to the lack of success of the program, but could represent the difficulty in quantifying indirect impacts.

²⁴ Rypkema, *Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation*, 37.

²⁵ National Main Street Center, "Main Street Reinvestment Statistics."

TEXAS MAIN STREET IMPACT STUDIES

Main Street Success Stories, a 1997 publication of the NMSC written by Suzanne Dane, studied forty-four certified cities across the United States in order to understand the challenges they faced and how they overcame those obstacles. Programs were selected based on their well-rounded, volunteer-driven initiatives that employed the Main Street Four-Point Approach and achieved long-term success and stability.²⁶

Three Texas cities were studied: Denton, San Marcos, and San Antonio. Denton's success was attributed to courthouse restoration completed in the mid-1980s that spurred the creation of the Main Street program. Local incentives including low interest loans from local banks and a 50% tax abatement from the city created the foundation for numerous rehabilitation projects.²⁷ San Marcos was identified due to its economic renewal plan, Texas Natural, which supports the production and solicitation of products made in Texas including clothing, food, art, wine, etc. The study also investigated vacancy rates in all case studies. Dane concluded, "these programs typically saw their vacancy rates for first floor retail plummet from an average of 21% at the start of the efforts to less than 5% today – a 61% percent drop in vacancies."²⁸

In 1999, before the creation of THCPP, the THC in conjunction with Rutgers University and LBJ School of Public Affairs conducted a study on the specific economic

²⁶ Dane, *Main Street Success Stories*, 4.

²⁷ Dane, *Main Street Success Stories*, 52.

²⁸ Dane, *Main Street Success Stories*, 52.

impacts of preservation in Texas. The study looked specifically at nine case study cities across the state. Three important conclusions pertain to this study. First, incentives for historic properties attract reinvestment. Local financial incentives provide the stimulus to get property owners to reinvest. It was noted both in Abilene and Dallas, two cities with local tax abatements, that the amount of money reinvested was more than thirteen times the forgone tax revenue.²⁹ Second, historic building rehabilitation rebuilds Texas communities. “Dollar for dollar historic building rehabilitation creates the same number of jobs and generates the same amount of tax revenue as new building construction,” while saving the amount of money that would be spent on new infrastructure and adding waste to landfills.³⁰ Third, revitalization of Texas main street cities makes good business sense.³¹ The study concluded that for every \$1 million investment into Texas Main Street cities, twenty-four jobs are created, \$50,000 in local taxes are generated and the GSP increases by \$900,000.³²

THCPP IMPACT STUDIES

Very little research has been conducted on the success of the THCPP, beyond reports published by the state office. On an annual basis, the THCPP publishes

²⁹ Texas Historical Commission and Rutgers University, *Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy: a Report*, 7.

³⁰ Texas Historical Commission and Rutgers University, *Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy: a Report*, 9.

³¹ Texas Historical Commission and Rutgers University, *Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy: a Report*, 6.

³² Texas Historical Commission and Rutgers University, *Historic Preservation at Work for the Texas Economy: a Report*, 18.

“Courthouse Cornerstone,” which updates the status of the program. The most recent issue discussed the history of the program and listed the funded projects to date. The report also included praise from the chairman of the THC, Matthew Kriesle III, who acknowledged that the program has helped to boost the Texas economy by creating over 10,000 jobs and over \$269 million in income.³³ Kriesle noted that the program has also generated more than \$21 million in local taxes and an additional \$22 million in state taxes.³⁴

In 2010, Students from the Texas A&M Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning department developed the only study of the THCPP by an organization other than the THC.³⁵ The students conducted a program evaluation for two courthouses restored as part of the grant program in Lampasas and Wharton counties. Students were supervised by Associate Professor Geoffrey Booth and used evaluation metrics from Dennis Jerke’s book, *Urban Design and the Bottom Line*. Students evaluated the renovations’ impacts on the greater community through tangible economic, environmental, social, and visual dividends. Students interviewed civic, community, and business leaders and collected statistical data including property values, crime rates, and other publicly accessible sources. Courthouse designs were also evaluated through the success of all buildings and site elements.

³³ Kriesle, “Courthouse Cornerstones Introduction.”

³⁴ Kriesle, “Courthouse Cornerstones Introduction.”

³⁵ Booth, *Texas Town’s Profit from THC’s Texas Historic Courthouse Restoration Program*.

In Lampasas, it was found that surrounding property values increased nearly 21% on average after the completion of the courthouse restoration six years earlier in 2004.³⁶ Two businesses that existed before renovation saw a 36% - 40% increase in property value after the project was complete. Ten businesses existed before the renovation and three were opened within the few years after. Lampasas also saw an increase in tourists because of events around the courthouse square.

Wharton County courthouse was completed in 2007 and by 2010 surrounding properties saw a 280% average increase in land value.³⁷ Students noted that a significant portion of neighboring properties had undergone improvements as well, which contributed to the enormous increase in value. Occupancy increased to 70% from 30% before renovation.

Students conceded that the data they collected could not be directly linked to the courthouse renovation projects, but concluded that both communities were significantly better off because of the courthouse restoration. Although limited in purview, the Texas A&M study highlights important statistics about impacts of the THCPP. The grant funds are applied to the structure alone, however, the effects on the surrounding community are great.

The existing literature reveals that the Main Street program has been widely studied by both professionals associated with the program and third party consultants,

³⁶ Booth, *Texas Town's Profit from THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Restoration Program*.

³⁷ Booth, *Texas Town's Profit from THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Restoration Program*.

whereas the THCPP has not. Neither program has a bullet proof way of tracking impacts, however, this is a common problem through the preservation field due to the qualitative nature of the work. This study does not aim to remedy this issue. Based on reinvestment and grant fund data collected by the THC programs, it is evident that each program has had a fair amount of success with their main purpose. However, the literature and preliminary interviews with program staff indicate that no one has considered the reality of coordinating the TMSP and THCPP with any seriousness. This study focuses on the gap between the initiatives by analyzing the programmatic strength and weaknesses of each program to understand how they can work together in the future.

Program Mechanisms

In order to coordinate the programs in the future, the tools and procedures used to carry out each program must first be understood. This chapter will individually analyze the TMSP and THCPP programs at the state and local levels to understand the formal certification process, procedures and day-to-day operations.

TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Texas was one of the first six states to launch the Main Street program in 1981 as a part of the National Trust's three-year demonstration project.³⁸ Spearheaded by Anice Read, Texas certified five communities in the first year.³⁹ Extensive training and handbook created the foundation for the success of the program. Of the first five original communities, four remain designated today.⁴⁰ Overall, Texas has eighty-seven designated communities that range in size from 2,000 to more than 200,000 people and is considered one of the most successful state programs in the nation.

The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) is a part of the Texas Historical Commission under the Community Heritage Development division. It operates in affiliation with the National Main Street Center in order "to provide technical expertise, resources and support for Texas communities in the preservation and revitalization of

³⁸ McKnight, "Texas Main Street Program."

³⁹ Hodges, "Memory Lane: Anice Read Remembered by Terry Colley and Janie Headrick."

⁴⁰ Texas Historical Commission, "About the Texas Main Street Program."

historic downtowns and commercial neighborhood districts.”⁴¹ Their basic purpose is to keep the network thriving and productive and to facilitate the goals of the local programs wherever possible. The TMSP is authorized by the NMSC to use its brand and approach; however, the TMSP is enabled through the Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Ch. 19, §19.3, which defines the programs duties and outlines rules that it must follow.⁴² Like the rest of the THC, the TMSP is funded through the Texas Legislature.

The TMSP office consists of five to eight staff members all committed to assisting the eighty-seven communities certified in Texas. There is at least one staff member for each of the four points, so that Main Street communities have well-rounded support. The TMSP offers a wide range of services including but not limited to strategic planning, annual trainings for volunteers, professional development workshops for staff, and technical assistance in researching potential funding for projects. Free design assistance is also offered to Main Street communities by a licensed architect and two design professionals, who assist with all projects from a full building rehabilitation down to a business’ brand and logo. The TMSP office also assists communities in interviewing and hiring program managers. As the State Coordinator, Debra Drescher, puts it, the TMSP helps communities with “whatever they want, whenever they need it.”⁴³

The major annual function of the TMSP is the review and certification of new Main Street cities. The Main Street Interagency Council, with representatives from

⁴¹ Texas Historical Commission, “About the Texas Main Street Program.”

⁴² Texas Administrative Code. “Texas Main Street Program.”

⁴³ Drescher, In-person Interview.

Governor's Office Economic Development and Tourism Division, Governor's Office Budget and Planning Division, Office of Rural Community Affairs, and Texas Main Street staff, rank the applications and make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners of the Texas Historical Commission who then makes the final selection.⁴⁴ Up to five new or recertified cities may be selected per year. Cities are scored based on five categories demonstrated in their application. These include historic commercial fabric/identity, private sector support and organizational capacity, public commitment, physical layout allowing the creation of a Main Street district, and need. The application questions the prospective community on everything from population size and demographic makeup to zoning regulations.

Cities of all shapes and sizes are eligible for the Main Street Program. To become a certified, cities must submit an application to the THC by the end of July each year. A community must demonstrate that they can afford hire a full-time Main Street director and adequately budget for the local program. Cities must also indicate the historic significance of the proposed area, local support for the program by the community and private sector, variety of business activity, in addition to demonstrating need.⁴⁵ Towns of 50,000 people or less apply as a small-city program through city government. A community with more than 50,000 people qualifies as an urban city and may choose to apply under state government or through a stand alone non-profit. Small-city programs

⁴⁴ Drescher, In-person Interview.

⁴⁵ Texas Historical Commission, "About the Texas Main Street Program."

may also choose to create a supporting non-profit organization in addition. Cities of any population that are not accepted upon the first application may be invited by the THC to participate in the program as a Provisional City. Former participants in the program may also reapply as a Recertified City.

All certified Main Street communities are required to hire a full-time manager. Within the first year, the new manager attends several professional development workshops to better understand the program. A volunteer board and committees for each point of the Approach are also assembled and can participate in the workshops. The first big event is the First Lady's visits where the First Lady of Texas visits the community and welcomes them into the program. Several buildings to a complete block in the district are selected to receive the First Lady's Rendering, a complete façade restoration plan designed by the Main Street architect. Within the first couple of months, a resource team of six to eight staff members from the state office visits the community to develop the downtown strategic plan, where they lay out their goals for the first year. There is no requirement to have a plan before certification, however, if the community has an existing plan the resource team works with them to mold it in the Main Street image.

Local Main Streets pay an annual fee for participation in the program. In order to remain certified, a community must verify that they meet the requirements and submit a report to the state office on a yearly basis. Monitoring the success of each community is also a significant aspect of the TMSP's job. On a quarterly basis, managers must submit their reinvestment numbers via a prescribed spreadsheet to the state coordinator. Statistics

include net new jobs (new jobs less loss of jobs), net new businesses (businesses opening less businesses closings), amount of public and private investment in physical improvements, and number of building rehabs. Rehabs are defined as a range of improvements, including: full building rehabilitation, new paint, signs, roof, awning/canopy, interior remodeling, and utility units.

The TMSP has spurred more than \$2.8 billion in downtown reinvestment since its inception.⁴⁶ In addition, 7,796 businesses and 30,208 jobs have been created.⁴⁷ For every public dollar invested in the program, eight dollars were reinvested by private funds. As the TMSP staff pointed out in their annual report, “by focusing community efforts on revitalizing the downtown, Main Street effort plays a critical role in helping physical and business climate improvements take place.”⁴⁸

TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Out of 254 counties in Texas, 235 have courthouses that are fifty years or older, more than any other state in the nation.⁴⁹ Eighty of these structures were built before the turn of the 20th century. In the 1990s, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) surveyed fifty of the oldest courthouses and realized that most were significantly deteriorated due

⁴⁶ Texas Historical Commission. “Main Street Annual Report: January 2014.” Main Street Matters.

⁴⁷ Texas Historical Commission. “Main Street Annual Report: January 2014.” Main Street Matters.

⁴⁸ Texas Historical Commission. “Main Street Annual Report: January 2013.” Main Street Matters.

⁴⁹ Texas Historical Commission. “About the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.”

to inadequate maintenance, natural weathering, lack of funds, and inappropriate modifications.⁵⁰

By 1998, the Texas county courthouses were added to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Properties list, to rally support and secure the fate of these important Texas landmarks.⁵¹ The 1999 Texas Legislature established the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) via House Bill 1341, which appropriated \$50 million in grant funds for courthouse restorations to be awarded between 2000 and 2001. Every legislative session since has continued to devote money to support of the THCPP program.⁵²

The main goal of the THCPP is simple: to preserve and maintain the iconic courthouses of Texas counties for future generations.⁵³ They accomplish this goal by awarding grant funds to counties who demonstrate architectural and historical significance or urgent need. The THCPP supports this goal by regulating restorations in order to guarantee an accurate and authentic appearance in every project. The elements restored to their original appearance are primarily the exterior of the building and all interior public spaces such as, courtrooms, hallways, and stairways. The projects improve occupant safety by requiring that the counties modernize their courthouse's mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and make the building accessible according to ADA

⁵⁰ Texas Historical Commission, "About the Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

⁵¹ Texas Historical Commission, "About the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

⁵² Texas Historical Commission, "About the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

⁵³ Texas Administrative Code, "Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

compliance. The THCPP also looks to the future by encouraging regular maintenance and stewardship after the completion of the restoration. Today, sixty-three courthouses have been restored and another seventy-eight are eligible for the program.

The THCPP program is part of the THC's architecture division. Currently fourteen people staff the division, four of whom specifically focus on the THCPP. The state statute that created the THCPP also appointed the THC to administer the program and granted them the authority to review and approve changes or alterations made to any courthouse structure that the agency determines to be historic. All buildings that serve or have served as a Texas county courthouse are protected under the "County Courthouse" statute under the Texas Government Code, Title 4, Chapter 442, Section 442.008, which was mandated in 1970.⁵⁴ The rules for reviewing courthouse projects are located in Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 17.2, and strictly adhere to the Secretary of the Interior Standards. The explicit THCPP program rules are found in the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 12.⁵⁵ To date, sixty-three counties have completed courthouse restorations with funding from the THCPP, while several others have received emergency grants, planning grants, or partial construction grants.⁵⁶

The THCPP state office has developed a rigorous evaluation process in order to ensure the financial awards will be used in a proper way. The THC awards planning, construction, and emergency grants depending on the county's need and the score

⁵⁴ Texas Historical Commission, "Texas Historic Courthouse Program."

⁵⁵ Texas Historical Commission, "Texas Historic Courthouse Program."

⁵⁶ Texas Historical Commission, "Texas Historic Courthouse Program."

received by applicants. A planning grant funds the development of architectural drawings and specifications, while a construction grant takes those plans, adds the necessary contractual information, and awards the project to a construction firm who is chosen by the county to who executes the work.⁵⁷ Most projects received a planning grant first to initiate their construction documents, which include architectural plans and specifications, and subsequently receive a construction grant. THCPP grants do not cover the full cost of most restoration projects, therefore, the county must find matching funds to complete the project. All historic county courthouses currently owned by a county or municipality can apply for a THCPP grant; “historic” meaning that the building is at least fifty years old.⁵⁸

The THCPP cycle follows the biennial system of the Texas Legislature, which means projects are reviewed and funded every two years. Once funding is secured, the THC creates a timeline for the grant round and then notifies all counties and municipalities. Counties or cities that wish to apply must first prepare a master plan that assess the condition of the building and provides guidance on how to address the county’s and building’s needs. The THC suggests that the county hire an architect or consultant with experience in historic preservation to develop the master plan. The master plan is completed at the expense of the county, however the THC does credit the county the cost of the plan, which can reduce the county’s cash match upon receiving a grant. The plan

⁵⁷ Texas Historical Commission, “Recommended Outline for Historic Courthouse Master Plan.”

⁵⁸ Texas Administrative Code. “Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.”

format is laid out in a detailed guide. Master plans must include an extensive historical context that documents significant events that have occurred on site in addition to all architectural modifications that the building has undergone. The existing condition of the building must also be thoroughly evaluated including the building's current appearance and the condition of the spaces and materials. The THC notes that all "evaluations should be conducted with a historic preservation emphasis balanced with concern for life-safety, functional and technological needs (both present and anticipated) and accessibility for the disabled."⁵⁹ Finally a courthouse master plan must include prioritized rehabilitation recommendations, cost estimates for the work plan, and a continued maintenance schedule for after construction is completed.

Typically two to three months after the grant round's timeline is announced, counties who wish to participate must submit a draft master plan to the THC.⁶⁰ The THCPP staff reviews the county submissions and determines if they are eligible for the current grant round. Final applications are due shortly after. The architecture division staff then reviews the applications based on twenty categories (see Appendix D for complete list), including:

- the degree of endangerment to the building or life-safety
- the degree to which the proposal is in conformance with the approved master plan and addresses the work in proper sequence
- the willingness to place a preservation easement on the courthouse as part of the grant process

⁵⁹ Texas Historical Commission, "Recommended Outline for Historic Courthouse Master Plan."

⁶⁰ Texas Historical Commission, "Texas Historic Courthouse Program."

- the history of compliance with the state courthouse law and/or preservation easement
- the existence of a plan for protecting government records during and after the project

Grant funds are then awarded at the next THC quarterly meeting. Restoration projects must be initiated within six months of the award announcement. Grant funds range from \$2,000 to upwards of \$6 million depending on the total available funds and the need of courthouses that apply. Funds are distributed on a cost-reimbursement basis. The county is responsible for paying all project-related expenses as they are due and then requests reimbursements from the THC.

During the restoration, the role of the THCPP staff is strictly advisory although the staff architect and preservation consultant assists with issues that arise. The THC monitors the work of the project architect and consultants to make sure that it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards and Guidelines and a quality preservation project is achieved.⁶¹ Most courthouses are restored based on their appearance during the significant time period in their history. Building systems are also updated to meet contemporary code requirements, modern functional needs, and human comfort levels. The THC ensures that restorations meet the criteria of any prior historic designations such as State Antiquities Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, or National Register of Historic Places. THCPP staff members will visit the site regularly during the

⁶¹ Texas Historical Commission, “Texas Historic Courthouse Program.”

restoration to supervise the progress, perform reviews throughout the project, and maintain close contact with participants, but are not part of the day-to-day procedures.

Preservation easements are a significant component of the THCPP's process. Bond funding for grants provided by the legislature require a minimum twenty-five year easement. A large majority of grant recipients sign an easement in perpetuity. The easement is given to the THC by the county and prevents activities that could harm the integrity of the structure such as demolition or inappropriate alterations.⁶² The county also agrees to main the property in a state of good repair. After project completion, THCPP staff will periodically visit courthouses under easements in their control to make sure the building is being maintained properly.

Once the restoration is complete, the stewardship component of the THCPP steps in. The Texas Courthouse Stewardship Program (TCSP) was created in 2005 to encourage regular maintenance of the restored structures.⁶³ The TCSP provides technical assistance and holds training workshops for courthouse maintenance employees and other interested county representatives. Site visits can also be requested to aid in preventive measures or resolution of problems. TCSP staff does not carry out repairs or conduct maintenance but will suggest qualified professionals.

In the past thirteen years, sixty-three courthouses have been fully restored using THCPP grants. Another twenty have received smaller grants for planning or emergency

⁶² Texas Administrative Code. "Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

⁶³ Texas Historical Commission, "Texas Courthouse Stewardship Program."

work.⁶⁴ When those numbers are compared with the total courthouse building stock, the THCPP has helped over 30% of the eligible counties in the state. Protecting all 235 “historic” courthouses will be an ongoing task, but so far, the THCPP has been very successful in executing its main purpose. The program has received numerous awards including:

- Preserve America Presidential Award – May 2008
- National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers’ Award of Excellence – 2005
- Texas Society of Architects Citation of Honor – 2004
- Association for Preservation Technology International Presidential Citation – November 2004
- National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Preservation Award – September 2004⁶⁵

The THCPP staff recognizes the effects of their program and records the overall impacts through metrics such as job creation, income, gross state product, and taxes, which they document in their annual report, “Courthouse Cornerstones”. The program also helps to boost Texas’ economy. The program has also generated more than \$21 million in local taxes and an additional \$22 million in state taxes.⁶⁶ However, the THCPP does not closely measure economic impacts at the local level. The Texas A&M study has been the only outside study who has ventured to do so.

In the past two legislative sessions, THCPP funding has been cut drastically. Current available funds for grant Round VIII are limited to \$4.2 million, less than 10% of

⁶⁴ Texas Historic Commission, “Restored Courthouses.”

⁶⁵ Texas Historical Commission, *Courthouse Cornerstones: 2009 Update*.

⁶⁶ Texas Historical Commission, *Courthouse Cornerstones: 2013 Update*.

the available funds of past rounds.⁶⁷ For this round, THCPP will only be granting funds to smaller projects with urgent needs rather than full restorations. This reduction severely affects the success of the program by reducing the number of courthouses that can be helped. A major campaign supported by the National Trust and Preservation Texas was carried out across the state during the last legislative session to rally support for the program.⁶⁸ The “I Love Texas Courthouses” campaign encouraged the public to write to their representatives in support of the program and continues to raise funds for matching grants. The THCPP was spared at the chopping block; however, the program might not be so fortunate in the next session. The THCPP needs to prove the value and success of the program to secure its future.

Overall, the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program is successful. Grant funds have allowed high quality restorations, which would not have otherwise been achievable. The THCPP and stewardship program provide consistent and reliable support to counties who could not accomplish courthouse restorations on their own. In order to continue, the THCPP needs to validate their success and monitor local effects to secure funding in the future. The THCPP funding is intentionally directed at the courthouse structure; however, the effects of the restoration on the surrounding community are great. The THCPP staff does not track the snowball effect that the program has on the

⁶⁷ Texas Historical Commission, “THC Accepting Applications for Round VIII of its Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.”

⁶⁸ National Trust for Historic Preservation, “Discover Texas Courthouses.”

surrounding communities in depth or in every community. Recording these impacts would only verify the success of the THCPP even more.

LOCAL MAIN STREET

Main Street at the local level has been compared to the management structure found in modern shopping malls.⁶⁹ William Murtagh explains, “The manager controls activities, public relations, shop types, and other factors in the collective interest of the shoppers on the main street by coordinating their business efforts.”⁷⁰ However, a local Main Street program is more than just a business association. Main Street is a solid foundation that supports small businesses and helps them realize their full potential.

Main Street is also an outlet for programs and events that might not happen otherwise. At the local level, Main Streets are responsible for organizing festivals and events that not only attract locals, but also draw tourists into the community. Main Streets help local businesses market themselves and arrange their stores in a more productive way. Local programs are also a major proponent for area preservation. They monitor the historic resources within their district and assist property owners with rehabilitating their properties. Managers facilitate funding and tax credits. They also connect property owners with professional architects and consultants who know how to properly alter and maintain historic structures.

⁶⁹Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*.

⁷⁰Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*.

At the local level, the Main Street program is all about teamwork. Managers are constantly juggling many numerous projects, while simultaneously inspiring the players to cooperate. Every community is different. Depending on the size of the city's population, a local program can either be a city department or 501(c) non-profit. Under a city government, a Main Street can be its own individual department, but it is often combined with the economic development, tourism, or planning departments. All local Main Street programs are directed by a full-time manager who is advised by a board of volunteers. Some communities also choose to set up volunteer committees for each of the Four Points. In both organizational structures, the city government oversees and approves Main Streets projects and events. For Main Streets incorporated into city government, funding typically comes out of the city budget to pay the manager's salary and operational expenses. Most communities also hold fundraising events to supplement their projects.

The projects and programs that Main Street communities carry out are determined by the need of the community and the capabilities of the volunteers. Most local programs conduct an annual strategic planning meeting where they lay out their goals as an organization for the upcoming year. Each committee typically outlines the specific projects they wish to work on. For example, economic restructuring committees hold small business workshops where they teach local entrepreneurs better businesses strategies. Design committees also initiate programs such as streetscape beautification.

Many Main Streets also set up grant programs to support and encourage façade improvements and rehabilitation projects of the community's historic resources.

The heart and soul of a Main Street community are the dedicated volunteers. The most successful programs are the ones who have a constant roster of willing volunteers who are inspired and determined to make their community better. It also takes the talents of multiple organizations to achieve Main Street's goals. Communities work with other groups including the local economic development corporation, chamber of commerce, tourism bureau, and downtown business association to accomplish downtown revitalization. The work of a Main Street program is never finished. A vibrant downtown takes a constant cycle of inspiration, planning and achievement to maintain its success.

LOCAL THCPP

At the local level, the THCPP is in a league all its own when compared to the programs presented above. In reality, it is not a program at all, but a project that the county government undertakes. The county judge and commissioners are responsible for initiating the restoration project. Some counties pass the responsibility to a facilities manger or other organizations such as the county historical commission. The county must then complete a master plan required by the state office in order to apply for grant funding. Many counties hire a team of consultants and architects to complete the plan. Although the design documents are the county's responsibility, they do not have much input into the final design. The state office requires that the final aesthetic of the building

resemble its original construction or a specific period in the building's history both on the interior public spaces and exterior. Therefore, the restoration design is centered on this time period.

Typically, THCPP grants never fully fund a courthouse restoration. A minimum match of 15% of the total project cost is required in the rules and regulations, therefore, the county must also find matching funds that complement the finance aid given by the THCPP. Counties typically borrow money through issuing bonds, use money set aside in their budget for construction projects, or fundraise to match the THCPP grants.⁷¹ According to Susan Gammage, "several counties have raised 100% of their cash match through fundraising." Private citizens and/or the County Historical Commission have spearheaded these efforts.

Once the restoration is complete, the county is responsible for maintaining their building. As a part of the master plan, a maintenance schedule must be outlined, however, the state office has little oversight into the daily upkeep of the courthouse, although the easement requires that the county maintain the building in its complete state. Every county has the option of participating the THC's Texas Courthouse Stewardship Program although this is not a requirement.

At the local level, restored courthouses inspire their communities to reinvest in their historic downtown districts. In Beeville, the courthouse restoration motivated the community to apply for the Texas Main Street Program and ultimately led to the

⁷¹ Gammage, In-person Interview.

revitalization of the surrounding fourteen-block area.⁷² Across the state in Marshall, the courthouse restoration “instilled confidence in developers who invested in downtown properties after construction began.”⁷³ Most other THCPP communities have similar stories.

⁷² Texas Historical Commission, *Courthouse Cornerstones: 2009 Update*

⁷³ Texas Historical Commission, *Courthouse Cornerstones: 2009 Update*

Case Studies

METHODOLOGY

Twelve case study cities were chosen from a comprehensive list of all communities involved in the TMSP and/or THCPP based on their physical location and population size. First, cities were chosen by their distance from Texas' top five major cities, Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Austin, and Fort Worth. Communities closer to a major city, especially those along primary highways, directly benefit from the larger populations. Therefore, case studies were divided into two groups of six. Group 1 cities are located within sixty miles of one of the major cities and all are located near a significant interstate or state highway. Group 2 case studies are over ninety miles from a major city. Within each group of six, three cities have fully restored, THCPP-funded courthouses and three do not. All communities are Main Street certified. Each set of three was selected on population size: cities under 15,000 people were considered small, medium sized communities are between 20,000-50,000 people, and large communities are over 80,000 people.⁷⁴

The site plan of the courthouse can change the way a community interacts with its built environment; therefore, communities were also selected based on the physical location of their courthouse within the Main Street district. Most case studies have a courthouse situated in the center of a square with four surrounding blocks of commercial

⁷⁴ A "large" city within sixty miles of a major city that fit all other criteria could not be identified. Therefore, two small cities, Canton and Bastrop, were chosen for comparison in that group.

buildings, however, some do not. Other minor selection criteria included: years active in the Main Street program, median income, and unemployment rates. Table 1 outlines the case studies and selection criteria.

<i>City / County</i>	<i>Status of Courthouse / Year</i>	<i>Distance from Metro</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Location of Courthouse</i>	<i>Years Active Main Street</i>	<i>Median Income</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>	<i>CLG</i>
GROUP 1								
<i>La Grange / Fayette</i>	Fully Restored / June 2005	61.3 miles	4,641	Square	1996	\$35,804	5.4%	No
<i>Georgetown / Williamson</i>	Fully Restored / Dec. 2007	27.3 miles	52,303	Square	1982-87, 1991-94, 1998	\$62,977	5.6%	Yes
<i>Denton / Denton</i>	Fully Restored / Nov. 2004	37.2 miles	113,383	Square	1990	\$47,598	4.9%	County Wide
<i>Bastrop / Bastrop</i>	Non-participating	30 miles	7,218	Two blocks off MS	2007	\$51,836	6.9%	No
<i>Canton / Van Zandt</i>	Non-participating	59.2 miles	3,545	Square	2001	\$41,708	4.4%	No
<i>Rockwall / Rockwall</i>	Non-participating	24.8 miles	37,490	Square	2009	\$79,885	5.2%	Yes
GROUP 2								
<i>San Augustine / San Augustine</i>	Fully Restored / Nov. 2010	207 miles	2,108	Square	2013	\$18,894	10.2%	County wide
<i>Paris / Lamar</i>	Fully Restored / Sept. 2005	104 miles	25,171	Block off MS, Square in district	1984-89, 1998	\$32,062	8.5%	Yes
<i>Amarillo / Potter</i>	Fully Restored / Aug. 2012	260 miles	190,695	Square	2002	\$45,659	4.1%	No
<i>Brenham / Washington</i>	Non-participating	73.6 miles	15,716	Square	1983-89, 1999	\$38,728	7.3%	No
<i>Nacogdoches / Nacogdoches</i>	Non-participating	163 miles	32,996	Off MS	1998	\$28,647	7.7%	Yes
<i>Tyler / Smith</i>	Non-participating	97.7 miles	96,900	Square	1990	\$42,729	6.1%	Yes

Table 1: Selection criteria for case studies⁷⁵

⁷⁵ United States Census Bureau, “2010 Census State & County Quick Facts.”

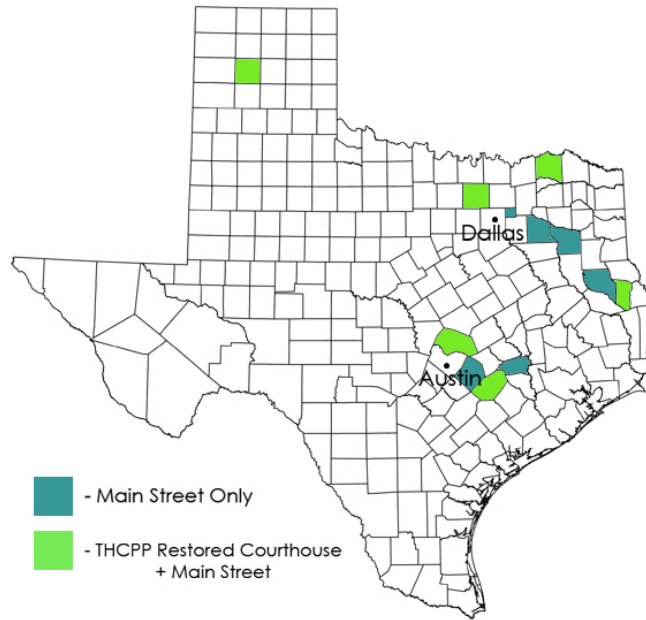


Figure 1: Location of case study counties

The Main Street managers and county officials from each community were contacted to better understand the local program, its effect on the community, and relationship to the each other. Interviews were conducted in person or via email depending on the participants' availability. See Appendix A and B for interview transcriptions. Case studies were also analyzed based on statistical factors including: the change in vacancy rate of the Main Street district, the number of privately funded rehabilitation projects completed before and after the courthouse restoration, and total dollars reinvested in the downtown. Occupied buildings and revived structures are directly related to the success of the downtown district and indicate the effect of each program. Original vacancy rates were taken from the city's TMSP application and

compared to current numbers that were gathered from either the Main Street manager or through a windshield survey conducted by the author. The number of rehabs and dollars reinvested were available through the TMSP office. See Tables 2-4 at the end of this chapter for all case study data.

At the state level, it is fair to say that both the TMSP and THCPP are successful in their own right. It is also fair to say that all of the all twelve of the Main Street communities studied below are successful as well. However, at the local level, success is a relative term. No community is “failing,” but some may be doing better than others. Success in this case is a *broad spectrum*. Each city has a unique set of factors that influence the success of downtown revitalization. The number of dedicated volunteers, the input of other community organizations, the cooperation of property owners, and the length of time that the community has been in the Main Street program are just a few factors that determine the success of the downtown area. A courthouse restoration undeniably helps the surrounding community, but in many cases it has the potential to do more. The following case study narratives highlight the unique initiatives carried out by each local Main Street program and also discuss the relationship of the downtown district with the courthouse. All information was attained from the interviews unless otherwise noted. For more background information on each city, see Appendix A and B.

Group 1 Cities with Restored Courthouse

La Grange / Fayette County



Figure 2: Location of county, Figure 3: Fayette County Courthouse



Figure 4: East side of La Grange courthouse square

Situated along the Colorado River and State Highway 71, La Grange was first settled by Stephen F. Austin in 1822.⁷⁶ A significant group of Germans and Czech settlers followed, and their culture and traditions still survive today. La Grange is smaller community with the population at around 4,600 people.⁷⁷ La Grange became a certified Main Street in 1996 and functions as part of the city's tourism office. The local program

⁷⁶ Leffler, "La Grange, Tx."

⁷⁷ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

has successfully completed fifteen full building restorations since that time, in addition to other façade and partial rehabilitations.⁷⁸

The organization holds several fundraising events throughout the year to support the grant program, most of which are centered around local food and drink. The biggest crowd pleaser is the Schmeckenfest, the annual wassail, or hot cider, tasting event.⁷⁹ Local shop owners make their own version of the traditional drink and provide it in their shops during the event. Patrons can vote for their favorite and the winner is deemed Schmeckenmeister of the year. La Grange's events are held around the Fayette County Courthouse, which is the focal point of downtown La Grange. The building was restored using THCPP funds and rededicated in 2005. The project was conducted around the time of several other major restorations, and seems to have been inspired due to Main Street's success. The courthouse is open to the public during the week and on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. La Grange's convenient location along SH 71 and its attractive courthouse square make it a popular tourist destination for people living in the Houston or Austin metro area.

⁷⁸ Norris, "Spotlight on La Grange."

⁷⁹ Norris, "Spotlight on La Grange."

Georgetown / Williamson County



Figure 5: North side of Georgetown courthouse square, Figure 6: Location of county



Figure 7: Williamson County Courthouse

Located thirty miles north of downtown Austin on Interstate 35, Georgetown is a medium-sized, recertified Main Street city with consistent involvement since 1998. Main Street operates as a city department. Today, the downtown is vibrant both physically and culturally. Most buildings on the square have been restored, while only one currently sits vacant. Shelly Hargrove, the local Main Street manager, claims that the change is significant compared with photos of the downtown from the early 1980s where

everything was painted a monochrome white and rundown. She attributes the success to the local banks that offered low interest loans at the beginning of the program. Over the years, the Main Street boundary has been significantly expanded to include all of the Central Business District. Georgetown has an historic preservation office and commission that is extremely involved with Main Street and has documented all historic sites through a GIS-based survey, which is uncommon for a town of this size. The city is also responsible for significant public investment, including a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) that has assisted in funding a sidewalk expansion project and downtown master plan update that is currently underway.

Georgetown's most notable program is their façade and sign reimbursement grant that assists property owners in updating the face of their building. The grant also includes work done to both the roof and foundation, which is unusual for this type of program. It is partially funded by the city council, however, Main Street supplements funding with other events. Georgetown is also a popular film production location, which has helped increase funding in the past. Main Street Georgetown holds numerous events every month, including the Second Saturday Market Days. From March to November, an open-air market of art and other collectables is set up around the Square with live music and activities for all ages. This event draws a significant amount of locals and reinvigorates their interest in the downtown. Georgetown even has a individual website for their Main Street organization that makes accessing information about their programs more

accessible to the public. Hargrove claims that all of Georgetown's success is only due to the persistence and commitment of her volunteers and board members.

The center of Georgetown's downtown is the courthouse of Williamson County, which was restored in 2007 using THCPP funds. Hargrove claims that the courthouse restoration was "the icing on the cake" for the downtown's image. Private property owners had been restoring and updating buildings since Main Street's inception, however, the courthouse restoration had been significantly altered. The now pristine building unifies the downtown district and inspires others to maintain their properties. It is important to note, however, that Main Street did not have direct involvement with the restoration other than supporting the cause. Today, the courthouse is rented out for event space and only contains a few county offices. Commissioners' court is held every Tuesday, but most other county functions have moved out. According to a county representative, the restoration "rendered much of the space non-usable by today's [county] standards. Although the courthouse restoration was a success on the exterior, the interior begs a bigger question, what becomes of a courthouse when the county function moves out?"

Denton / Denton County

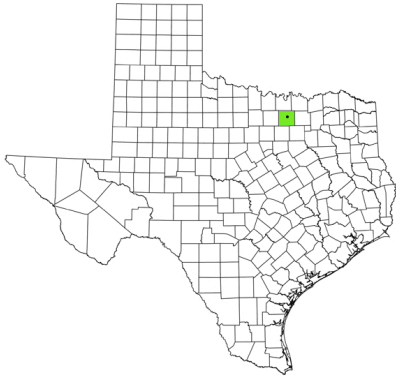


Figure 8: Location of county, Figure 9: Denton County Courthouse (Courtesy of Jordan Miller)

Denton’s road to Main Street started differently than most others. In the late 1980s, before the THCPP was ever created, Denton County carried out a major restoration on the courthouse that sits at the center of Denton’s downtown district. “Standing in brilliant contrast to the worn, tired, covered-up buildings surrounding it, the courthouse gave impetus to change in downtown,” and inevitably inspired the creation of the local Main Street program.⁸⁰ However, because of their population size, Denton could not technically become a certified program at the time. The community took it upon themselves to initiate an organization modeled after Main Street. In 1990, Denton was officially certified and uses a hybrid organizational structure. The non-profit organizes events, while the Main Street manager is a city employee who focuses on economic development and design. The courthouse was restored again using THCPP funds in 2004

⁸⁰ Dane, Main Street Success Stories.

and has remained a pristine example of local preservation due to a dedicated facilities management staff who are actively involved in the THC's courthouse stewardship program.

To date, Denton has reinvested over \$76 million in the downtown district alone. Over 350 rehabilitations have been completed today and over 700 people live within the Main Street boundary. The University of North Texas has a major influence over the success of the downtown, however, Denton has managed to maintain a diverse commercial stock in order to entice more than just the student population including numerous restaurants and bars. Denton Main Street has also sited the recent influx of medium-sized technology companies as contributing to the success of downtown. These companies have started to rent the upper floors of several downtown buildings. Denton has regular concerts on their square and has recently started two new streetscape projects including the installation of rain gardens and solar trash compactors throughout the district. A component of this project includes an arts walk of fame sidewalk that will recognize the many musicians and artists that have gotten their start in the area.

Group 2 Cities with Restored Courthouse

San Augustine / San Augustine County

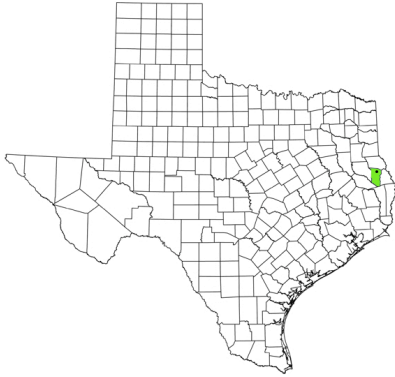


Figure 10: Location of county, Figure 11: San Augustine County Courthouse (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)



Figure 12: North side of San Augustine courthouse square (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)

Local in East Texas, San Augustine is a small, rural Main Street city, with a county courthouse was rededicated in 2010 after a major restoration supported by the THCPP. The successful restoration is attributed to the unwavering perseverance of the San Augustine Garden Club, who encouraged and fundraised for the project beginning in 2000. Several county officials thought that the project would be too much of a hassle, even after receiving both a planning and construction grant from the THCPP. The Garden

Club rallied a courtroom full of supports that evenly got the officials to change their mind. A long list of local donors also made the matching funds possible. Betty Oglesbee, president of the Garden Club, describes the final product as the “People’s Courthouse” due to the enormous support from county citizens who back the courthouse project.

The courthouse restoration was a major catalyst for the entire downtown area of San Augustine. Following completion, the city was certified as a Main Street community in 2013. In one year, ten private rehabilitations have already been completed and the city has initiated a streetscape project around the square. According to the Main Street manager, Tracy Cox, “the courthouse has saved our downtown.”⁸¹

⁸¹ Cox, Email Interview.

Paris / Lamar County

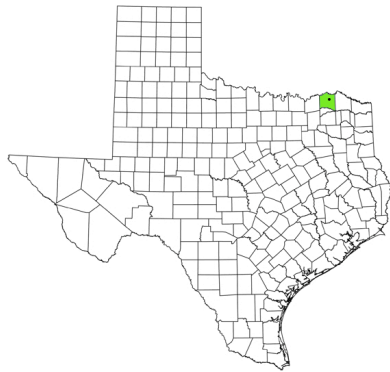


Figure 13: Location of county, Figure 14: Lamar County Courthouse (Courtesy of Marvin Corley)



Figure 15: Southeast corner of Paris downtown square (Courtesy of Marvin Corley)

Paris is a medium-sized, rural Main Street that was recertified in 1998. Main Street functions as a city department, with a manager who is also the historic preservation officer for the city. Paris is known to have the largest collection of historic structures built between 1916 and 1918 in the nation and is a recognized district by the National Register of Historic Places.⁸² In order to preserve these structures, the Paris Main Street has gone

⁸² City of Paris, "Paris Main Street."

beyond the typical façade grant program most communities use and has established a Building Improvement Grant. This 50/50 matching grant awards up to \$5,000 to cover exterior appearance and/or safety and occupancy improvements including but not limited to façade updates, asbestos abatement, fire suppression, and roof replacement. In addition, the city offers a tax exemption for rehabilitations on the improved value of the property for up to seven year.

The courthouse is located one block off the square and was restored using THCPP funds in 2005. At first, the county considered abandoning the courthouse completely to move into a new justice center, arguing that a new building would be significantly cheaper. However, the Lamar County Historical Society, downtown merchants, and other local citizens “fully realized that the courthouse was a piece of living history and a reflection of the character and legacy of the community” and urged the county to restore the structure.⁸³ This encouragement eventually won over the county officials. Today, County Judge Superville says that the courthouse restoration is an acknowledgement of “who we are, where we came from, and where we are headed. [The restoration] was a renouncing of a cheap, pre-fabricated, character-less, structure, and how such a structure reflects the community. It will take a lot of time, money, and effort. There will be good and bad things along the way. But, the outcome, for future generations, makes it all worthwhile.”⁸⁴

⁸³ Superville, Email Interview.

⁸⁴ Superville, Email Interview.

Amarillo / Potter County

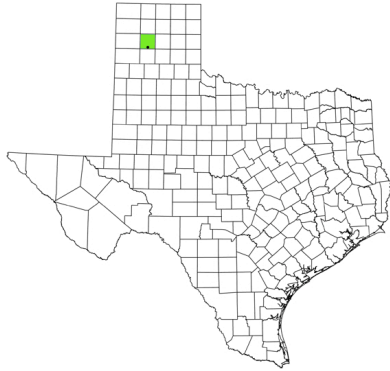


Figure 16: Location of county, Figure 17: Potter County Courthouse (Courtesy of Ralph Duke)



Figure 18: Downtown Amarillo (Courtesy of Ralph Duke)

Amarillo's downtown revitalization efforts started as a non-profit organization, Center City, in 1991 before the state office accepted communities over 50,000 people. In 2002, Center City was officially certified. Since then, the number of unoccupied store fronts has decreased significantly from nearly 40% empty to only 10% today. Besides numerous shops, downtown Amarillo boasts over thirty restaurants. The courthouse was rededicated in 2012 and in the subsequent year alone local property owners have

completed forty-five rehab projects in the district. In addition, City Center’s façade grant program that awards up to \$20,000 per project encourages rehab projects through the district. The city government has also invested over \$55 million dollars, significantly more than any other case study city in this study. The downtown encourages rehabilitation and new construction through a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone that was established in 2007.⁸⁵ Three major projects have received funding from the TIRZ including “a mixed-use building, the renovation of an historic building into a business hotel, and a residential loft warehouse project.”⁸⁶

The Potter County Courthouse is situated at the center of Amarillo’s downtown district and was rededicated in August of 2012 after a THCPP funded restoration. Although Amarillo has numerous other sites and attractions, the courthouse remains “a major focal point for Center City Events.”⁸⁷ Every summer the organization hosts a free concert series on the square, which draws between 600 and 700 people. Even in larger communities, a courthouse remains an important civic icon.

⁸⁵ Texas Cultural Trust, Inc., The Art of Economic Development.

⁸⁶ Texas Cultural Trust, Inc., The Art of Economic Development.

⁸⁷ Duke, Email Interview.

Group 1 Cities without Restored Courthouse

Bastrop / Bastrop County



Figure 19: Location of county, Figure 20: Bastrop County Courthouse (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)



Figure 21: Bastrop Main Street

Main Street Bastrop has done significantly well without the aid of a courthouse restoration. The courthouse sits two blocks off Main Street and has been considered ineligible for THCPP grant funds due irreversible alterations. Bastrop was certified by the TMSP in 2007 and operates as a city department. The city still functions as a commercial center for the entire county, so both locals and people beyond the city limits frequent the downtown. This situation has created a healthy environment for local businesses to

thrive. Local business is also encouraged by Main Street and the local economic development corporation who have partnered to create an entrepreneurship program and competition. Both high school students and adults compete to create business plans. The winners receive money to open their business within the next twelve months.

Recently, Bastrop created a culinary district to support the numerous restaurants, brewery, and wine sellers in the area. Several food themed events are also held annually, which draws many tourists from around the county and Austin area to the district. Most downtown property owners have cleaned up and rehabilitated their buildings due to a mega-grant offered by Main Street with support from the city. This program offers up to \$25,000 for updates that go beyond the building's façade and applies to all fixed elements of the building. In only seven years, over \$23 million has been reinvested in downtown Bastrop, which is major achievement for a town this size.

Canton / Van Zandt County



Figure 22: Location of county, Figure 23: Northwest corner of Canton courthouse square



Figure 24: Van Zandt County Courthouse (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)

Main Street Canton's organizational structure is significantly different from most certified communities. The program started as a city department in 2001; however, it has since been incorporated into the economic development corporation and chamber of commerce under the Canton Alliance. Canton also differs from other towns its size due to the monthly First Monday Trade Days, which originally started in the town square. Today, the iconic market occupies a 100-acre site adjacent to downtown and contains 6,000 vendors. Because of the trade days, Canton operates on a level similar to a town

five times its size. The former Main Street manager, Lynn Kitchens, claims that the trade days act as an incubator for local business. Many businesses that now occupy a permanent spot downtown originally started as one of the trade day vendors.

The courthouse still maintains all government functions, which draws many locals to the square as well. The frequent traffic has encouraged significant reinvestment in the downtown area, however, several storefronts still remain vacant. Main Street is currently supporting the creation of a tax increment financing (TIF) district that will further encourage revitalization.

Rockwall / Rockwall County

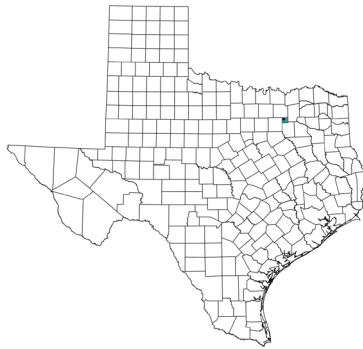


Figure 25: Location of county, Figure 26: Rockwall County Courthouse



Figure 27: East side of Rockwall courthouse square

Located just east of Dallas, Rockwall is a medium-sized, wealthy community with an unexpected historic courthouse square nested in the center of suburbia. The courthouse square is small, most buildings are architecturally insignificant, and the city is not particularly known for its history, however, the downtown district has not been overshadowed by these challenges. In fact, Rockwall has seen a recent renaissance. Rockwall has few major privately funded building rehabilitations, but most property owners have carried out small updates. Rockwall became a certified Main Street in 2009 and its success is due to businesses owners who have endured the district's highs and

lows. Currently only one storefront is vacant on the square and the Main Street manager, Bethany Browning, predicts that it will be occupied quickly. Unlike other Main Street cities, Rockwall is in constant competition with similar districts in Dallas proper like Bishop Arts District. Low rents have enticed a wide variety of businesses that have contributed to the district's success. The city has also invested over \$8 million in the district through a new master plan that started this year. The project includes sidewalks updates, a public plaza, and additional parking.

The county courthouse has been well maintained and still contains government functions, however, the county has recently constructed a large new facility near the main highway. For now, the building will continue to house several county offices that draw people to the square on a daily basis. However, abandonment could pose significant threat to the district in the future.

Group 2 Cities without Restored Courthouse

Brenham / Washington County



Figure 28: Location of county, Figure 29: Washington County Courthouse



Figure 30: North side of West Alamo Street

Located between Austin and Houston along US 290, Brenham is home to Blue Bell Creameries, Texas' favorite ice cream company. Brenham was recertified as a Main Street community in 1999 and is one of the few small communities to have a downtown master plan. The plan was backed by Main Street's economic restructuring committee,

who convinced the city council to undertake the project. The plan was implemented in 2012.⁸⁸ Seven districts in addition to the courthouse square are identified. For these districts, the plan suggests improvements such as landscaping, addition parking, and raising the level of the street directly around the courthouse.⁸⁹ The authors of the plan also suggest that the county create a restoration plan for the county courthouse itself and apply to the THCPP.

Brenham also has a complete GIS-based survey undertaken by the city's development services department and is the only small town out of the case study communities that has undertaken a federal tax credit project.⁹⁰ The Jane and John Barnhill Conference Center at the Historic Simon Theater is owned by a local non-profit and was restored using funds donated by a local family. The owners worked with Brenham Main Street and the THC to complete the project.

⁸⁸ Eckermann, "Spotlight on Brenham."

⁸⁹ The MESA Team, "Brenham Downtown Master Plan."

⁹⁰ Eckermann, "Spotlight on Brenham."

Nacogdoches / Nacogdoches County



Figure 31: Location of County, Figure 32: Hoya Building on Pecan Street, Figure 33: Pecan Street pocket park

The oldest town in Texas, Nacogdoches has a lot of history to work with. Tourists are easy to attract and in 2012 alone, 42,000 tourists signed the visitor's center logbook. Compare that number to the city's population size of 33,000 people that is a significant number of out of town guests.

Nacogdoches became a certified Main Street city in 1998 and functions as a city department. About half of the city's population is made up of college students attending Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA). Therefore, the Main Street program has made significant efforts to work with and for the university population. Every year Main Street Nacogdoches sponsors the new student orientation and holds special events for both the students and their families that bring them into the downtown. Main Street also enlists the expertise of certain classes and professors, which has resulted in a complete GIS-based survey of the entire downtown. Nacogdoches has many events and tours that focus on their deep rooted history, but has also created a wide variety of programs that focus on

the natural landscape including the Azalea Trail Festival, creation of a downtown pocket park, and a planter box program for district store fronts.

Main Street Nacogdoches also incorporates a strong preservation component to the program. They go beyond the typical façade grant and offer their district a tax abatement based on the property's improved value over a five-year period. They have also organized vacant building showcases, an event for local real estate agents to highlight empty downtown building. This event has helped to significantly decrease the city's vacancy rating.

Nacogdoches County has a relatively new structure that sits a few blocks from the center of the Main Street district. However, Nacogdoches has a central square where the visitors' center is located. Tourists instead of locals are drawn to the central point of the district creating a different dynamic compared to other case study cities.

Tyler / Smith County



Figure 34: Location of county, Figure 35: Smith County Courthouse (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)



Figure 36: South side of courthouse square (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)

One of the first urban cities to be certified by TMSP, Tyler became a Main Street city in 1990. The program started as a 501(c) 3 non-profit called Heart of Tyler (HOT), which still supports Main Street today. However in 2008, the city joined forces with HOT as part of its master plan. Today, the city provides office space, staff, policy, and programming for the program, while HOT supports private sector consensus and recruits volunteers.

HOT's most successful initiative has been the created of Gallery Main Street, an exhibition space for local artists to display and sell their work. The gallery occupies a restored structure that faces the courthouse square along with the city department and HOT offices.⁹¹ The gallery is open six days a week and rotates exhibits on a continuous schedule. Unlike most Main Street offices, HOT's location gives the program a face and invites the public to come inside and learn more.

Over the past twenty-four years, Main Street Tyler has significantly decreased their vacancy rating from 40% to only 10%. Over \$146 million has been reinvested in the private sector alone. Main Street Tyler encourages rehabilitation through a \$10,000 per project façade grant and property tax abatement. The courthouse has not been restored, but has been well maintained. According to the local Main Street manager, Beverly Abell, the courthouse is “a destination point and anchor service provider” for the district.⁹²

⁹¹ City of Tyler, “Gallery Main Street.”

⁹² Abell, Email Interview.

City / County	Program Structure	Free Design Assistance	Fed Tax Credit	Biggest Employer	Tax Abatement or Exemption	TIF/ITRZ/BID	Grant Program	HP Commission / Guidelines / Ordinance	Document Vacancies?	Resource Survey	Master Plan	Other
GROUP 1												
<i>La Grange / Fayette</i>	City department	Yes	0	construction and manufacturing industry	None	No	Facade	No	No	No	No	
<i>Georgetown / Williamson</i>	City department	Yes a lot	0	ISD, County, Army, Archbishop, Southwestern University	Tax abatement	TRZ - updated sidewalk upgrades and master plan	Facade and Sign - includes foundation and roof	Yes all	No	1984 and 2007-done by HP office	2003 - updating currently	City and County own several downtown buildings
<i>Denton / Denton</i>	Non-profit, city advises	Yes a lot	1	UNT and TWU, Sally Beauty, Peterbilt, small tech companies	Tax abatement	TIF	Facade and Sign	Yes all	No	Yes-but outdated	Yes and starting new sidewalk program	
<i>Bastrop / Bastrop</i>	City department	Early on a lot did, now using for branding	0	ISD, County, Hyatt, individual	Tax abatement	No	Facade and Mega-Grant (includes all permanent building elements)	Only Commission	Not officially, no what is vacant and why	No	Part of city's comprehensive plan	Culinary district
<i>Canton / Van Zandt</i>	Part of EDC	Yes	0	First Monday, County	None	Approval in progress	Building Improvement	MS guidelines	Yes for EDC	Paper files for each bldg	Yes	First Monday Trade Days
<i>Rockwall / Rockwall</i>	City department	A couple	0	Most commute to Dallas	T, A for lot, landmarks properties only, one in district	No	Facade	Yes all	Yes, spreadsheet	Partial	Starting \$8.6 million master plan; includes sidewalk updates, more parking, and creation of plaza, etc.	Rehabs have not been major; starting major master plan
GROUP 2												
<i>San Augustine / San Augustine</i>	City department with supporting non-profit	Yes	0	Deep East Texas Electric Coop, ISD, Memorial Medical Center	None	No	No	Yes all	Informally	Yes	No	MS office in courthouse
<i>Parks / Lamar</i>	City department	Yes	0	Southern Kimberly Clark, and J Skinner Bakery, Harrison Walker and Harper construction	Tax abatement	No	Facade and Building Improvement	Yes all	No, but next project to tackle	Yes	No	
<i>Amarillo / Potter</i>	Non-profit	Several have completed, several others 2 have completed	5	ISD, Bell Helicopter, Parkland hospital, Texas Tech	None	TRZ	Facade	Commission Guidelines	Estimate at 89% occupied	No	2006	City owns a couple historic properties being restored including a theatre and a depot
<i>Brenham / Washington</i>	City department	Yes	1	Brenham State Supported Living Center, Blue Bell Creameries, ISD	None	No	No	No	No	Yes, GIS based	2012	
<i>Nacogdoches / Nacogdoches</i>	City department	Yes	Tried but no	SFA, pilgrims pride, ISD, city	Tax abatement	No	Facade and Sign	Yes all	Yes	Yes, GIS based	Not current	Vacant bldg, show-case
<i>Tyler / Smith</i>	City and supporting non-profit; started as the later	Yes	1+	medical, education, oil, service	Tax abatement	TRZ	Facade	Commission and Ordinance	Informal	Yes	Currently updating	Arts program - more than just events

Table 2: Case study information gathered from interviews with Main Street managers

City / County	Years Active MS	Vacancy at time of MS application	Current Vacancy	Cumulative Total # of Rehab	Date of CH Restoration	# of Rehab Buildings Before CH	# of Rehab Buildings After CH	Reinvestment Total	Private	Public	Notes
GROUP 1											
<i>La Grange / Fayette</i>	1996	7%	-	127	June 2005	31 (9 years)	96 (8 years)	\$14,654,266	\$8,487,407	\$5,916,214	
<i>Georgetown / Williamson</i>	1982-87, 1991-94, 1998	7%	8%	86	Dec. 2007	26 (17 years)	60 (6 years)	\$62,679,380	\$38,451,915	\$20,870,042	Only 1 vacant building on square
<i>Denton / Denton</i>	1990	13%	7%	357	Nov. 2004	207 (14 years)	150 (9 years)	\$76,080,918	\$63,123,918	\$10,800,000	3 vacant buildings on square
GROUP 2											
<i>Bastrop / Bastrop</i>	2007	18%	4%	49	Non-participating	-	-	\$23,192,041	\$12,571,466	\$9,535,875	7 on Main Street; even rehabbed buildings vacant
<i>Canton / Van Zandt</i>	2001	1%	11%;	57	Non-participating	-	-	\$4,505,126	\$2,698,727	\$314,287	5 vacancies on square
<i>Rockwall / Rockwall</i>	2009	0%	2.6%	32	Non-participating	-	-	\$2,820,779	\$1,503,950	\$1,220,125; about to spend a lot more	Only 1 vacant building on square
GROUP 2											
<i>San Augustine / San Augustine</i>	2013	47%	40%	10	Nov. 2010	n/a	10 (1 st year of MS)	\$219,000	\$219,000	0	MS started because of courthouse restoration!
<i>Paris / Lamar</i>	1984-89, 1998	5%	-	279	Sept. 2005	180 (12 years)	99 (8 years)	\$29,698,019	\$18,140,881	\$11,026,355	
<i>Anarillo / Potter</i>	2002	40%	10%	350	Aug. 2012	305 (10 years)	45 (1 year)	\$205,690,320	\$131,440,508	\$55,041,641	
GROUP 2											
<i>Brenham / Washington</i>	1983-89, 1999	9%	-	204	Non-participating	-	-	\$24,604,500	\$16,094,324	\$5,622,165	
<i>Nacogdoches / Nacogdoches</i>	1998	10%	6%	144	Non-participating	-	-	\$13,064,934	\$12,547,302	\$37,700	
<i>Tyler / Smith</i>	1990	42%	10%	184	Non-participating	-	-	\$146,764,651	\$115,162,782	\$18,982,169	

Table 3: TMSP Reinvestment Data, Note: Original vacancy rate is taken from the first application to the Main Street program including recertified cities.

City / County	Original Date / Style	Date of Restoration	Location	Architect	Amount of Grant Fund	Current Function	Notes
GROUP 1							
<i>La Grange / Fayette</i>	1891 / Romanesque Revival	June 2005	Square	Volz O'Connell Hutson	\$3,999,989; construction; Round III	CH	
<i>Georgetown / Williamson</i>	1912 / Beaux Arts	Dec. 2007	Square	1113 Architects	243,492; planning; Round II \$3,755,000; construction; Round IV	Co Judge's office and partial other CH functions; Event space	
<i>Denton / Denton</i>	1896 / Second Empire and Romanesque Revival	Nov. 2004	Square	Architexas	\$462,034,97; planning; Round II \$2,645,435.31; construction; Round III	Museum and County History and Culture offices	
GROUP 2							
<i>Bastrop / Bastrop</i>	1883/ Renaissance Revival – many ornaments removed	n/a	Two blocks off MS	n/a	n/a	CH	Noted that they did not qualify for grant due to altered condition of the CH
<i>Canton / Van Zandt</i>	1937 / Moderne	n/a	Square	n/a	n/a	CH	
<i>Rockwall / Rockwall</i>	1940 / Moderne	n/a	Square	n/a	n/a	Partial CH offices	Small renovation with county funds; opened huge new building in 2011
GROUP 2							
<i>San Augustine / San Augustine</i>	1927 / Classical Revival	Nov. 2010	Square	Scott and Strong	\$83,482; planning; Round IV; \$3,727,131; construction; Round V	CH	Main Street certified after restoration
<i>Paris / Lamar</i>	1917 / Classical Revival	Sept. 2005	Block off MS, Square in district	Architexas	\$464,500; planning/ Round II \$3,535,500; construction; Round III	CH	
<i>Amarillo / Potter</i>	1932 / Moderne	Aug. 2012	Square	Architexas	\$5,000,000; construction; Round V	CH	
GROUP 2							
<i>Brenham / Washington</i>	1939 / Moderne	n/a	Square	n/a	n/a	CH	
<i>Nacogdoches / Nacogdoches</i>	1958 / Modern	n/a	Off MS	n/a	n/a	CH	Significantly altered
<i>Tyler / Smith</i>	1955 / Modern	n/a	Square	n/a	n/a	CH	

Table 4: Courthouse restoration details

Conclusions

The case study investigations yielded several important conclusions that illustrate the gap between the TMSP and THCPP. The findings also focus on several problems that every downtown faces no matter the size or scale. These conclusions begin to frame several important questions about the future of the two programs and suggest ways in which they can coordinate to create a stronger revitalization effort in county seats across the state.

1. The local Main Street Program had little to no involvement in the courthouse restoration.

All managers claimed to have fully support the courthouse project and believed that it was a significant boost in pride for the surrounding district and community. However, not a single Main Street manager or advisory board had any input during any phase of the restoration. When asked about the concept of coordinating Main Street and THCPP, most managers claimed that they had never pondered that question before, because it seemed like a project that was beyond their reach and expertise. Several thought that it would be a good idea, but did not suggest ways in which to achieve the coordination. Others believed that it would be difficult to synchronize two levels of local government.

At the state level, the two program offices do not coordinate on projects either, although the same commission governs them. The program directors acknowledged

this gap, but did not suggest ways in which to bridge it at the time of the original interview. They did suggest that plans were being created for a new courthouse square initiative, see page 95 for more details. Two professionals who use to work for the THC in the past were interviewed to gain their reflective perspectives on the programs. Leslie Wolfenden, a prior Main Street design assistant, suggested that Main Street could learn from the courthouse program for bricks and mortar preservation. She claims that although the program incorporates design into their Approach[®] the program lacked emphasis on physical building preservation. Stanley Graves, former director of the THC's architecture division, suggested that by expanding the courthouse program to incorporate the surrounding community, that the original intent of the program could be lost and the integrity of the restoration would be compromised. Both perspectives highlight important aspects to consider when coordinating the TMSP and THCPP.

It is also important to note that County Historical Commissions (CHC) also are rarely involved in a courthouse restoration. CHCs were authorized by the Texas Legislature in order to the history and cultural resources of each county.⁹³ Members are appointed by the local Commissioners Court to assist in the preservation of county history. However, their efforts are focused more on the intangible history rather than bricks and mortar artifacts. Susan Gammage, the assistant director of the THCPP, noted that CHCs are “rarely involved in the actual construction project and

⁹³ Texas Historical Commission, “County Historical Commission Outreach.”

only occasionally involved up front during the Master Plan creation or the Grant Application submittal.”⁹⁴

2. The function of courthouse structure varies by physical location.

Nine of the twelve courthouses still maintain all or most of the original courthouse functions, including offices and courtrooms. In the rural communities, like Canton or La Grange, the courthouse square is an important commercial center for the entire county much as it once was at the time the area was platted. The courthouse still serves its original purpose and draws numerous people from around the county because of the offices it contains.

However, three of the larger suburban communities have started to transition their courthouses into new uses. Today, the first floor of the Denton County Courthouse serves as a county history museum. After their restoration was complete, Williamson County started to rent out portions of their building as event space. According to a county representative, the restoration project rendered the building unusable for the most of the county’s purposes. Rockwall has also initiated talks to move all departments to a new facility near the major highway. This transition away from the courthouse function begs the question, what will become of the structure when its original purpose moves out and will the new internal program be able to maintain it?

⁹⁴Gammage, In-person Interview.

3. **A courthouse restoration can act as a catalyst to initiate local Main Street program.**

Most case studies commented on the number of private property owners that updated their own structure after the courthouse was complete. However, two communities pursued Main Street certification due to the county's restoration project. In the late 1980s, Denton County funded their first restoration and by 1990 became a Main Street city. San Augustine also completed a THCPP funded restoration in 2010 and was certified by 2013. This step to revive the entire downtown following a courthouse restoration illustrates the civic pride and community engagement after a large publicly funded project. It also highlights the inherent potential to coordinate the two programs.



Figure 37: Denton County Courthouse Tower (Courtesy of Leonard G. Lane, Jr.)

4. In some cases, a courthouse restoration can increase the number of privately funded rehabilitations, however, there is not a strict correlation.

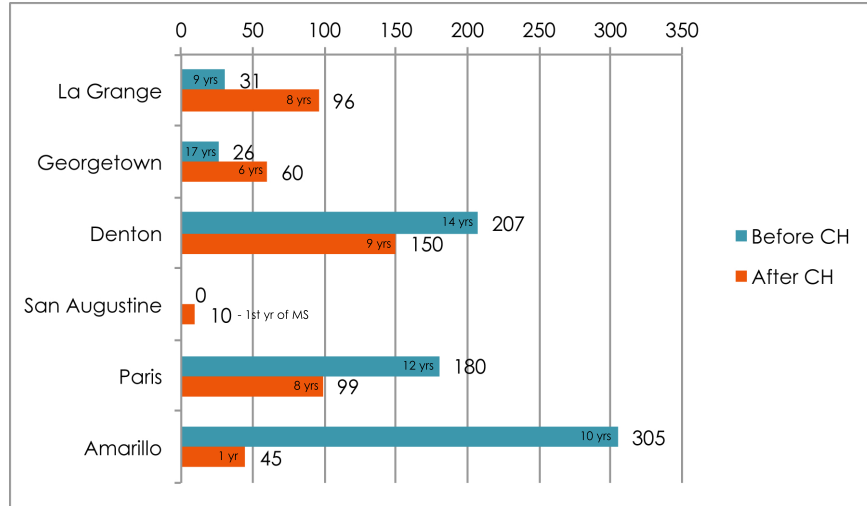


Table 5: Total number of rehab projects before and after courthouse restoration

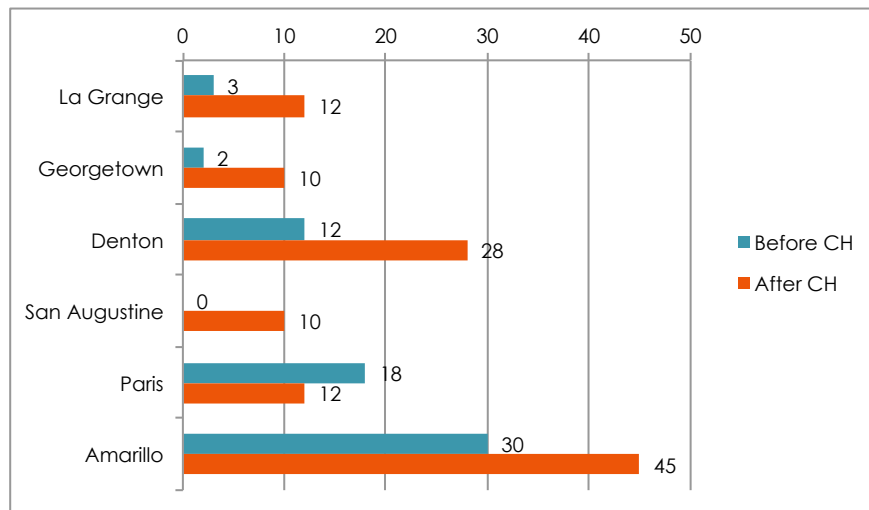


Table 6: Average number of rehab projects per year before and after courthouse restoration

The charts above depict the number of privately funded rehabilitations that were completed before and after a courthouse restoration. Data was taken from the TMSP’s reinvestment database. Main Street includes all types of work from a new coat of paint to a complete façade restoration in their rehab numbers.

Table 5 depicts the total number of rehabs before and after the restoration. The total number of years is incorporated into the bar. Table 6 shows the average number of rehabs completed in a single year. All case studies except Paris saw a major increase. According to the data, La Grange completed four times as many rehabs after the courthouse restoration, while Georgetown completed five times than in the years before. San Augustine's Main Street program was created following the courthouse restoration, so rehab data is not available for the years before. However, ten projects were carried out in the few short months following Main Street's inception. In Amarillo, over forty projects were completed in the one-year following the completion of their courthouse alone. This data clearly shows that although the courthouse restoration does not purposefully impact surrounding structures, it inspires property owners to enhance their own buildings.

5. Local incentives are more effective than outside funding.

Nine of the twelve communities have created a form of façade grant program, while three of the smaller cities have started building improvement grants, which help to update both the exterior and interior. Several communities claimed that low interest loans supported by local banks helped fund rehabilitations projects at the beginning of the Main Street program. Today, only larger cities including, Denton, Georgetown, Amarillo, and Tyler have created TIF/TIRZ zones, which have helped to fund public

projects. However, on the day of the interview the Canton City Council was considering implementing a TIF of their own.

The larger communities and Brenham have also been successful in utilizing the federal rehabilitation tax credit. Other cities claimed that they have tried to use the federal tax credit, however, the requirements would have greatly hindered the final outcome of the projects, and therefore, building owners did not complete the process. For example, in Nacogdoches a local developer was transforming a historic theatre into apartments near the edge of the downtown district. The community had long since stopped using the theatre and greatly needed housing downtown. The owner maintained the original façade and key elements of the lobby space, however, the ceiling above the main stair case had to be altered to fit the new use. Because of this, the project did not qualify for the federal tax credit even though the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Far more projects are accomplished in downtown districts using local funds. The county has the potential to aid in this process.

6. Vacancy rate has drastically decreased in most communities.

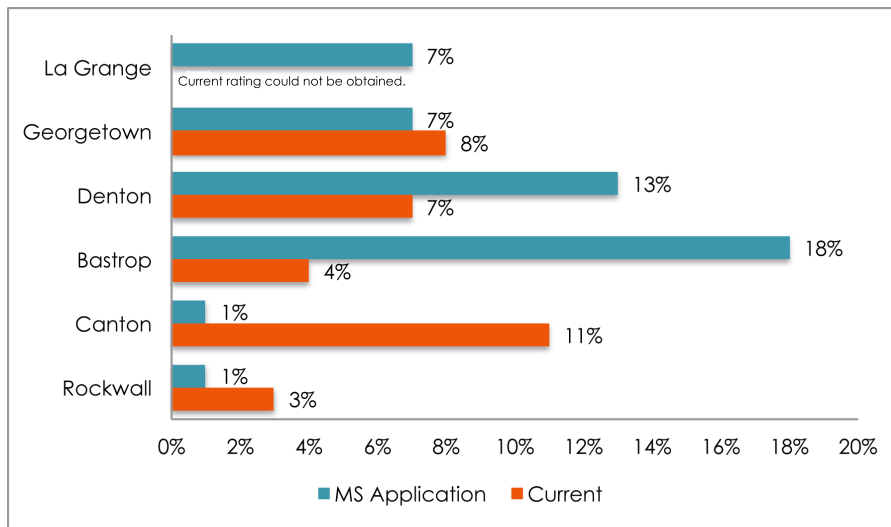


Table 7: Group 1 vacancy ratings

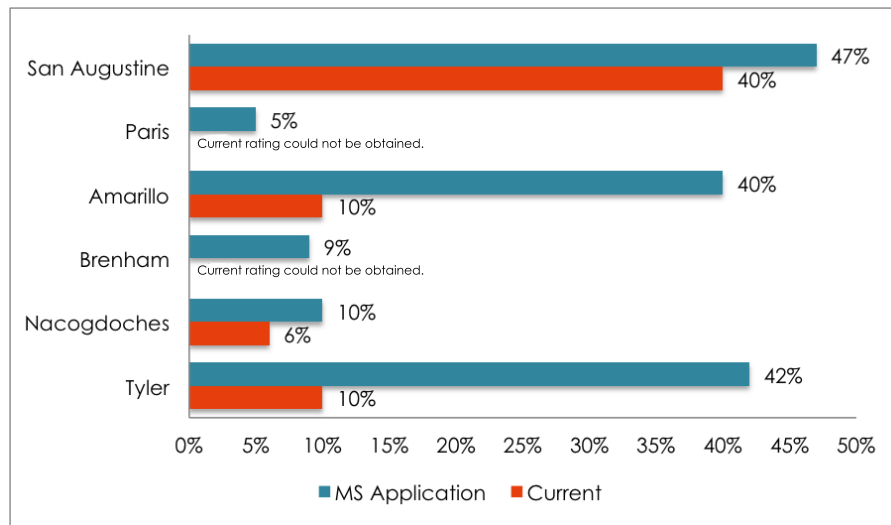


Table 8: Group 2 vacancy ratings

The vacancy rate of a downtown is constantly changing. However, current surveys show that most cities have significantly reduced the number of vacant storefronts in their district. Rockwall, Nacogdoches, and Canton were the only communities that monitored vacancy in a formal manner, however, Rockwall and

Canton’s vacancy rate has actually increased. Nacogdoches and Georgetown both claimed that holding a vacancy showcase event has helped to fill buildings, especially the large “white elephant” projects. For these events, Main Street tours large vacant properties with local real estate agents, who then help to sell the property. Both cities claim to have over ten empty building at the time of the showcase. Subsequently, this number has significantly decreased. Some cities also promote vacant buildings on their website to create interest in the downtown properties. Other cities, like Bastrop, Georgetown, and Denton, claimed they have potential business owners call on a weekly basis inquiring about available sites. These cities also said that most vacancies are filled within a few weeks.

7. Every community, no matter the size or status, cited the constant issue of major “white elephant” buildings.



Figure 38: Restored white elephant building in Bastrop, Figure 39: White elephant building in Georgetown currently undergoing restoration

A “white elephant” building is a large structure, typically a previous department store or other entity that required a significant number of square feet, which now sit

vacant due to its immense size. Some “white elephants” have been restored, but in many cases the building is deteriorated and is too much of an undertaking for one property owner. Local Main Street programs try to assist the owners with the sale, lease, or restoration of the building through grants and free design assistance, but even then the project can be too large. Some towns have tried to buy these types of properties for their own use or to lease out to other businesses, but only the larger communities have been successful.

8. Restored courthouse communities have seen more money reinvested overall than cities with unrestored courthouses.

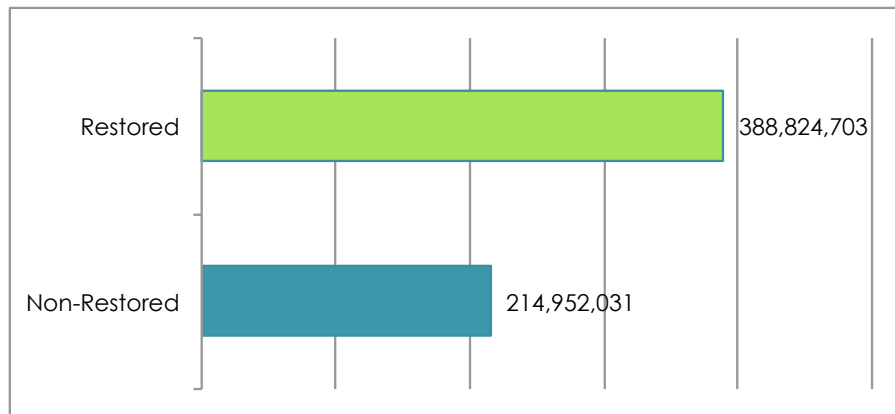


Table 9: Total dollars reinvested in case study cities

When the totals are tallied for the total number of dollars reinvested both publicly and privately, restored courthouse communities have surpassed their non-restored counterparts by over \$170 million. Looking at public reinvestment alone, restored communities have seen over \$103 million invested by their local governments, while non-restored have only seen \$35 million. Considering these cities and counties have

invested a significant amount of money into their courthouses, this is an obvious fact. However, restored communities have still invested more private money in the downtown than non-restored communities. These statistics cannot be directly linked to the courthouse restoration itself, however, these numbers do show that where there is higher public investment, the private investment follows.

9. Certified Local Government (CLG) communities have achieved a higher number of rehab projects overall.

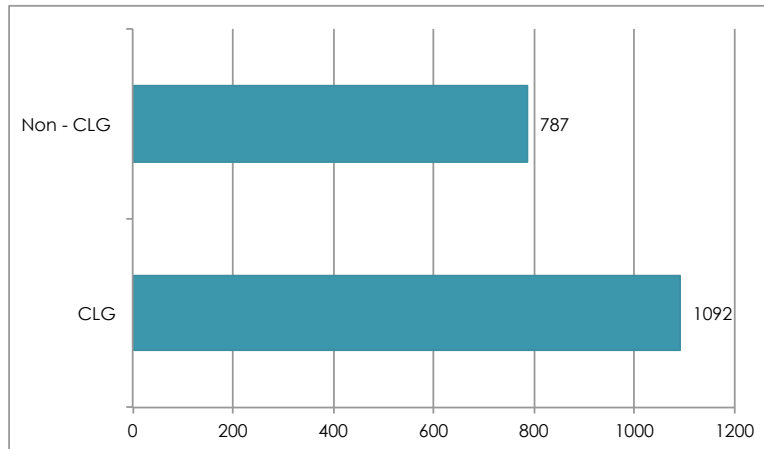


Table 10: Total number of rehab projects in CLG and Non-CLG communities

CLG is another designation given to communities by the THC. The purpose of this program is to develop “a high standard of preservation to protect a wide range of important historic properties – from ornate courthouse to working class neighborhoods.”⁹⁵ (see Table 1 for complete list of CLG communities) CLG communities are eligible for grant funds every year to help them complete

⁹⁵ Texas Historical Commission, “Certified Local Government.”

preservation plans and initiatives. Currently, the CLG program gives priority to projects such as, the creation of local surveys, ordinances, local incentive programs, design guidelines, and National Register nominations. The program does not grant money to physically restore buildings, however, it has funded the preparation of façade studies and architectural drawings in the past. Contrary to Main Street, CLGs are strictly preservation focused, which helps increase the number of brick and mortar rehabs without directly funding the projects. CLG certified case studies have completed significantly more rehabilitation projects than non-certified cities.

Recommendations

“Preservation is the business of saving special places and the quality of life they support. It has to do with more than bricks, balustrades, columns, and cobblestones. It has to do with the way individuals, families, and communities come together in good environments.”⁹⁶

Many factors contribute to a downtown’s success. Main Street, city and county officials, dedicated volunteers, preservationists, and County Historical Commissions are just the tip of the iceberg of the people it takes to achieve revitalization goals. Local Main Streets do an outstanding job of organization all stakeholders at the city level. However, the city and county do not converge. Beyond a courthouse restoration, the county is not concerned with bricks and mortar preservation. Their jurisdiction is too broad and their resources are spread too thin. A courthouse restoration inevitably benefits the surrounding community, but can it do more? Could the effort and money that go into the project go even further than they already do? However, the TMSP and THCPP are consistently achieving their goals to protect and revive historic places across the state. Why, then, should they be altered?

By coordinating or combining efforts, the programs can achieve greater success in more communities. According to Robert Veselka,

“The county seat exemplifies one of the more self-conscious expressions of American urban design, both spatially and symbolically. The courthouse square was designed explicitly to express community values and to serve as a focal point

⁹⁶ Moe, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*, 240.

of community life. Through time, the square often assumed even greater importance as a symbol of a town's social, political, and economic prosperity...Texas, perhaps more than any other state, offers unparalleled opportunities for considering these relationships."⁹⁷

The county seat was the original center of Texas society, but its importance has been overshadowed in contemporary culture. Together, the TMSP and THCPP can undertake projects of a greater scale, whose benefits could be spread beyond the downtown district.

Combine vs. Coordinate

The TMSP and THCPP cannot and should not be combined completely. The courthouse program's purview is limited to the number of county seat communities with eligible historic courthouses, while the TMSP has the opportunity to assist as many Texas communities that meet the requirements. For the benefit of communities that are not county seats, each program should remain autonomous. However, coordinating efforts could substantially influence and boost the effects in the cities in which they do intersect.

In many communities, Main Street concentrates on events and initiatives that will garner local business. Bricks and mortar preservation is an important component, and in most cases Main Street supports rehabilitations through local grants and tax incentives. However, physical preservation is not always the main focus. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the courthouse program is strictly physical preservation. The project does not

⁹⁷ Veselka, *The Courthouse Square in Texas*, 1.

consider the surrounding community; it limits its focus to the landmark structure. The programs can learn from each other to make their own processes stronger.

The meaning of the courthouse needs to be considered. Should the result of the restoration only reach to the exterior walls, or to the lawn on which the building sits or extend beyond to the surrounding community? Much like Main Street, if the courthouse restoration project looked outward to the community that relies upon its functions, the end result could be much more. The courthouse restoration should go beyond the typical snowball effects that occur after completion and should take the opportunity to encourage private property holders to reinvest and maintain their own structures and sites.

The THCPP should also consider the effect of the courthouse restoration on the internal county administrative function. Several counties claimed that by restoring the building to an accurate historical date, many spaces were rendered unusable by the county government itself. Although, the end result was a beautiful and authentic landmark, county offices were eventually moved out. Broadening the program's preservation ideals to include rehabilitation as defined by the Secretary of the Interior could effectively restore the exterior of the building while allowing for alterations on the interior to fit the county's needs. The THCPP also needs to consider what becomes of a courthouse when the county moves. Museums alone are not a strong enough purpose to support the maintenance of a massive building. Adapting the use of a courthouse is an issue that the THCPP needs to tackle.

The effects of the project should also be monitored in greater detail to gain concrete proof of its success and how it affects of entire community. The courthouse project should coordinate the numerous players involved at not only the county level, but also all downtown stakeholders. Currently, a courthouse restoration only includes minimal amounts of community input, although most people consider courthouses to be “temples for the people.” THCPP could benefit from meaningful public engagement to build enthusiasm and support for the program. Public involvement could also be a source to gain useful input on how the courthouse should be used when the county function moves out or how to use it to represents the heritage of the locale.

Courthouse as Preservation Education

A courthouse restoration is the largest example of public investment in most downtowns. Millions of dollars from the state and the county funnel into one structure that is the embodiment of community pride. On its own, a courthouse restoration can inspire private property owners to reinvest into their buildings and sites. However, if used as a teaching tool, the restoration could accomplish much more.

The actual construction site could be used as a classroom to hold workshops. Preservation experts could educate the public on how to conduct simple evaluations and complete simple repairs on materials, so that other historic building owners are better equipped to preserve their own properties. The restoration is also an opportunity to educate property owners on building maintenance and how small measures taken on a

regular basis can prolong the life of the structure. Simple projects, like turning the construction fence into an exhibition of the history of the county, would further educate the public on the importance of courthouse preservation.

A downtown preservation plan or streetscape project is another potential initiative that could be organized around the courthouse restoration to link city and county cooperation. These large examples of public investment would create more opportunity for community input and further garner support. Like Denton and San Augustine, the courthouse restoration can function as a catalyst for downtown revitalization. Organizing TMSP and THCPP efforts at the same time, especially in the county seats that have yet to be assisted by either program, could aid in reviving suffering downtowns across the state.

County Preservation

Beyond a courthouse restoration, county governments do not typically direct their resources on bricks and mortar preservation. The county focuses on roads, public infrastructure, and law enforcement with a limited budget to complete these tasks. County commissioners appoint County Historical Commission officers whose job is to document and preserve the history of the county, however, their efforts are often focused on the intangible side of history.

The THCPP was created because counties could not fund a complete courthouse restoration. Communities, especially in rural Texas, cannot often financially support a local Main Street program and manager. For example, Bastrop County has three

incorporated towns, Bastrop, Elgin, and Smithville, which range in size from 3,000 to 8,000 people. Downtown Bastrop and Elgin have thrived due to their local Main Street programs. However, Smithville struggles to maintain its downtown and cannot currently support their own program. Creating an umbrella organization at the county level could benefit many towns that could not otherwise fund preservation individually.

There are already several programs beside the TMSP and THCPP that have county interest at the THC. Counties can become Certified Local Governments, however, only twelve counties out of 254 in the state have taken advantage of the program.⁹⁸ The THC also has the County Historical Commission Outreach program that trains and assists County Historical Commissions across the state in order to create a sustainable organization.⁹⁹ Similar to Main Street at the local level, the umbrella county program can unite all organizations under common goals. A county level program could potentially accomplish larger preservation oriented initiatives that a city department or non-profit organization could not.

Incentives like revolving loans and building improvement grants that go beyond the typical façade restorations supported by Main Street programs could be created by the county to encourage full building restoration or rehabilitation. Counties could also tackle the issues of “white elephant” buildings as discussed on page 84. With more resources

⁹⁸ Texas Historical Commission, “Certified Local Government.”

⁹⁹ Texas Historical Commission, “County Historical Commission Outreach.”

and broader purview, the county is more able to assist property owners in filling these massive, vacant structures.

Programs like land banking or lease-to-sell contracts could be established at the county level. Land banks are quasi-governmental entities that can be created by the county to effectively manage and repurpose underused, abandoned, or foreclosed property.¹⁰⁰ Land banks are often given the power to accomplish these goals in ways that existing government agencies cannot. Several case study cities, specifically Georgetown, claimed that currently the county owned several historic properties, but had not developed a plan to reuse them. The county could potentially lease their properties to businesses, which would enhance the downtown instead of leaving another void and dilapidated building.

Without purposely combining efforts, the Texas Main Street Program and Historic Courthouse Preservation Program have facilitated the revitalization of numerous cities and towns across the state. Both programs have individually succeeded in achieving their goals and continue to create strong preservation practices. Together, however, these programs could be even more beneficial for Texas communities. Many communities, especially in rural areas, struggle to keep their economy and built environment vibrant, but cling to their local history and tradition. By encouraging preservation at the

¹⁰⁰ Alexander, Frank S., *Land Banks and Land Banking*.

county level, more communities will learn how to take this passion and focus it into preservation efforts that can help the entire community.

During the development of this thesis project, the THC created a new program, the Courthouse Square Initiative, proposed by the THC's chairman, Matthew Kreisle III. The program is not a combination of the TMSP and THCPP, but is a refinement on how they approach the process. It will be incorporated under Main Street's umbrella. Recently, a planner and economic/community development specialist were hired to develop the program and create a new way in which to revitalize county seats across the state.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: MAIN STREET INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Original Questionnaire

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
2. What is the structure of your program? (Is it a non-profit or city department? Is your board advisory or not? What committees do you have? Etc.)
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
11. What types of rehab projects have been done? (i.e. façade improvements, minor interior repairs, major renovations?)
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
17. Do you have a current survey of your district?
18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
24. Has your courthouse has participated in the THC's preservation grant program?
25. If so, did Main Street have any involvement?
26. What else should I know about your district?

LA GRANGE

No questionnaire completed by Main Street Manager. Information gathered from other sources. See References.

La Grange, the county seat of Fayette County, is on the Colorado River and State Highways 71 and 159, U.S. Highway 77, southeast of Austin. Moore's Fort was first established on the site in 1826.¹⁰¹ The town was officially platted in 1837 and became the county seat when the Congress of the Republic of Texas established Fayette County later that year.¹⁰² La Grange was officially incorporated in 1850 and grew as a trade center for the surrounding plantation economy. The extant Fayette County Courthouse was constructed in 1891 in the Romanesque Revival style by J. Riely Gordon.¹⁰³ The building was restored in 2005 using over \$3 million of THCPP funds. According to the 2010 U.S. Census the population was 4,641¹⁰⁴

GEORGETOWN (in-person interview)

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Georgetown is located in Central Texas near Interstate Highway 35 and the San Gabriel River. The town was founded in 1848 and is the county seat of Williamson County.¹⁰⁵ Southwestern University was established in 1873 and a major railroad was constructed five years later contributing to the growth and importance of the area. The local economy was based largely on agriculture and near by cattle trails. Cotton production became dominant in Georgetown in the late 1800s.¹⁰⁶ The Williamson County Courthouse was designed by Charles H. Page in 1909.¹⁰⁷ The exterior of the Beaux Arts style building was substantially altered in 1965 after significant damage. Restorations plans started in early 2001 and the \$9 million project was funded in 2004. The courthouse was officially rededicated in October 2006. Today, the population is estimated at 52,303 people based on the 2010 U.S. Census, while the median household income equals \$62,977.¹⁰⁸

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
1982 - second year of the State Main Street program. Everything was white and rundown.

¹⁰¹ Leffler, "La Grange, Tx."

¹⁰² Leffler, "La Grange, Tx."

¹⁰³ Texas Historical Commission, "Restored Courthouses."

¹⁰⁴ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

¹⁰⁵ Scarbrough, "Georgetown, Tx."

¹⁰⁶ Scarbrough, "Georgetown, Tx."

¹⁰⁷ Texas Historical Commission, "Restored Courthouses."

¹⁰⁸ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

Courthouse was in bad shape. What you see right now was not the way it was in 1982.

2. What is the structure of your program?
City department and 7 member board. Anice Read was adamant about the program being in the city department so they wouldn't have to spend a ton of their time fundraising. We have dedicated members. Previous manager is on board and people who have been here for years and know what works and what doesn't. Also have several professional members, architects, planners, etc.
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
10 years in Georgetown (2003); 3rd main street city
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Started as courthouse square, now downtown boundary; 45 - 50 blocks; Historic district is also that boundary; Expanded because of growth and most of courthouse square was rehabbed early on
5. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Many – website has most up to date projects
6. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Façade and sign grant program, \$10,000; 50/50 matching façade grant; \$15,000 a year from City Council. MS fundraises to supplement it.
\$500 matching for signs; use to be more but was depleting funding base and we want grants to be more about holistic preservation. Façade grant includes foundation and roof because without those two the building isn't going to work. We don't want to just put a band aid on it. We want it to be maintained not just pretty.
7. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
Lots and lots. Constantly growing and changing. Look at reinvestment numbers.
8. What types of rehab projects have been done?
All the above. 7 on going right now
9. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes a lot; Sarah Blankenship (Main Street Project Design Assistant) lives in Georgetown. She knows design guidelines. A lot of projects get done based on service.
10. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
Civic pride, vibrant downtown, etc.
11. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes for the THC.
12. Do you have a current survey of your district?
A citywide survey was completed by the HP office in 1984 and 2007. GIS based and paper format.
13. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
No, but we really need to do that.
14. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.

Downtown was very empty in 1982. Not very full in 2003. It changes literally weekly. A lot of property owners are changing hands. California based owners have bought 4 buildings and are looking for more. One constant vacant on west side (4,000 sq. ft.) but have put a lot of money into it. We have worked with realtors to have a downtown property tour. Presentation in a vacant property and showed other properties. 15 properties at the time. Around 6 vacant now (estimate).

15. How does the courthouse affect your district?

I think it has. Georgetown was already redoing buildings before that, but it is definitely was the icing on the cake. Private investments follows public, makes private investors feel more secure when public dollars are invested downtown.

16. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?

Partial courthouse function - judges office; county commissioners court; partial event space - one courtroom. County has talked about moving out completely and just turning into museum. Restoration was completed in 2008. Main street was not involved directly. Involved in decorating wooden construction wall that was up forever - "Great Wall of Georgetown."
\$14 million project – huge project - mostly funded by THC.

17. What else should I know about your district?

Great resources, close to Austin, accessible - Lucky to have this combination
High growth area makes a huge difference. If you don't get downtown, its not the place for you. You have to want to be here and have to understand the lack of parking and the walkability. Have to understand the importance of place. Recruit businesses; try to get people to expand, but they have to get downtown.

CLG – guarantee grant funds every year. Have used a lot and has helped preservation. City ordinance, guidelines and 7-member commission. HP office and MS are tight and that makes a difference.

First three to four years was very successful. Only square but most were updated then and/or restored. Supported by local banks and low interest loan fund under prime. New construction boutique hotel that is a block off the square.

2003 Master Plan by Norie Winter from Boulder Colorado. Very knowledgeable. Created design guidelines and master plan. Just hired to update. Will be completed in 2014.

Repurpose city buildings on the square. Got them to move and opened up more retail. "Lease to own" from old city buildings. I.e. - old fire station. Gets them back on the tax rolls. Also owns power plant and post office. Keep the unique and repurpose. Gives them more leverage when they go to sell the property. County is buying up property but just sitting on it.

TIRZ – redid side walks, paid for master plan. It helps it definitely helps

Multiple streetscape projects, mostly in the 1980s. One block on the west side was done recently, Removed parking on Austin Ave. Main to University was another major landscape project. University – trying to encourage more students downtown. Only 1400 students. Some live on second stories. Don't want to be college town, but want students to be more active downtown
Very contained, do everything on campus. A lot don't have cars; have to live on campus first year
Just started up football, so have pep rallies on the square.

First Friday events are a big deal. Main street is a long term commitment. It didn't go downhill over night its not going to comeback overnight.

Its not a project – it’s a program! Persistence through the decades creates success. People in Georgetown stuck with it. Longevity of the leadership.

DENTON (in-person interview)

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Established as the county seat in 1857, Denton was not officially incorporated until 1866.¹⁰⁹ The city is located along Interstate Highway 35 where it forks to into 35E towards Dallas and 35W to Fort Worth. Denton is less than forty miles north of Fort Worth and is considered to be part of the metropolitan area. For many years, Denton functioned as a local agricultural trade center. However, the city was shaped by the establishment of two universities; North Texas Normal College (now the University of North Texas) in 1890 and the Girls’ Industrial College (now Texas Woman’s University) in 1903. The Denton County Courthouse was designed in the Romanesque Revival and Second Empire styles by W.C. Dodson.¹¹⁰ The structure was completed in 1896 and substantially renovated in 1987. The building continued to deteriorated, but was restored to its historic glory in 2004 using THCPP funds. In 2010, the U.S. Census documented Denton’s population at 113,383 and has estimated for it to grow beyond 120,000 in 2012.¹¹¹ The median household income was reported at \$47,598.

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
Early to mid 1980s, downtown was dead. Texas Main Street wouldn’t allow urban cities (over 50,000) at that time. Self-initiated in 1989. 1990 state allowed urban cities.
2. What is the structure of your program?
Non-profit - city does design and advises. Businesses have to be a member of downtown association.
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
Since 1994. Current title - Economic Development Program Administer
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Boundary matches TIFI Carol to Exposition, Parkway to Sycamore; No historic district; National Register around courthouse only.
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
Events, variety of businesses and restaurants

¹⁰⁹ Odom, “Denton, Tx.”

¹¹⁰ Texas Historical Commission, “Restored Courthouses.”

¹¹¹ United States Census Bureau, “2010 Census State & County Quick Facts.”

6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Locals
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
Really important. Structure and proven tactics help a lot. Can learn from other communities and don't have to reinvent the wheel. Good support system for businesses. Political voice. Camaraderie - you need that backbone.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Mostly events right now
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Sign/ façade
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
Numerous. Numbers really help convince city council.
11. What types of rehab projects have been done?
All the above
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Do use a lot, but nobody keeps track.
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
One, because its so rigorous.
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
TIF
15. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes, for THC.
16. Do you have a current survey of your district?
Yes, but outdated.
17. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
No
18. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
Very low, probably under 2%. Even upper story is low.
Probably 1500 people living within ½ mile of courthouse. People are dying to live downtown.
They don't have to recruit businesses.
19. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
UNT and other university, national headquarters for Sally Beauty Supply, Peterbilt, Downtown has tech companies on second floor. Two moved to Denton because of downtown
20. What other organizations work with Main Street?

Chamber of Commerce and Economic development board. Also, top employers, taxpayers, universities, etc.

21. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Made things look better
22. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
Museum on bottom floor. Some courthouse functions; Court on Tuesday. Plan to move offices out.
23. What else should I know about your district?
Students started to come downtown after Fry Street was redeveloped. Do have preservation office, design guidelines (with sustainability focus), and design commission. Downtown master plan and implementation plan. Do have a lot of students, but also have a wide variety of people who visit, depends on time of day. Starting new streetscape program - Arts walk of fame, sidewalk and utilities. Have worked with marketing students to help downtown. Growing fast.

BASTROP (in-person interview)

Nancy Wood
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Bastrop is located southeast of Austin at the intersection of State highways 71, 21, and 95. Downtown is situated near the Colorado River. A fort was established in the area in 1804.¹¹² The land was officially platted by Mexican officials in 1832 with a center square surrounded by blocks of public buildings. Bastrop's importance stretched far beyond the county. It served as a business and political center for the area and was the location where "settlers rallied for retaliation and fortified up for protection when Indian depredations occurred in the vicinity."¹¹³ The town was incorporated as a Texas town in 1837. The timber industry supported the local economy. The Lost Pine Forest near Bastrop was the only timber available in what was then western Texas. Bastrop sent lumber to Austin and San Antonio. Through the late 1800s, the town served as a major industry center for iron and coal. The extant courthouse was built in 1883 in the Renaissance Revival style designed by Jasper N. Preston.¹¹⁴ During World War II, Camp Swift was established nearby. In the 2010 U.S. Census, the population was reported at 7,218, while the median household income was recorded as \$51,836.¹¹⁵

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
2007

¹¹² Marks, "Bastrop, Texas."

¹¹³ Marks, "Bastrop, Texas."

¹¹⁴ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 41.

¹¹⁵ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

2. What is the structure of your program?
City department. Budget comes from 1/3 economic development and hotel occupancy tax Exploring non-profit /friends of main street for funding. Really strong board. President of board is the president of Hyatt Resort.
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
Been in Bastrop since 2002 and owned small business. Manager since 2007 - has seen big change since Main Street started.
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
62 square blocks - includes a lot of residences, not just CBD. Very large National Register area, first multiple property area.
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
LOTS of restaurants, Events / holidays, Car show draws people from 4 states, several shops
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Locals but countywide, closer and more convenient to smaller towns than Austin
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
Questions every day whether it needs to continue because Bastrop is doing so well. Shines a light on a specific area and allows people to gather some energy around that. None of this would have happened if we wouldn't have become a Main Street city. Create a support system for businesses and property owners.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Does a lot of marketing and outreach, raising funds, working with EDC on entrepreneurship (Texas Center for Rural entrepreneurship), Culinary District, swirls/wine and food tasting
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Yes, with economic development corp. Façade grant - \$5000 - 50/50 match. Mega-grant - \$25,000 dropped to 25% match, includes entire building for commercial structures. Gave \$50,000 in 2014. Had one before Main Street. Design committee revamped it. Granted 17 mega-grants total. 18 or 19 façade grants to date. Very successful especially being as small as they are, helped most of buildings
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
A lot of them have used grant program. Mega grant inspires big reinvest upwards of \$100,000 to \$500,000.
11. What types of rehab projects have been done?
All types
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes and first lady render. Early on in the program used a lot. Recently started using for logos.
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
Zero! One tried but didn't get good response from THC.

Only one that would have qualified. Others haven't been as accurate or had to make choices that would make the building work better.

14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Small residential incentive, but none for commercial
15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
Community is thriving because of downtown.
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes for THC - Total of 23 million since 2007.
17. Do you have a current survey of your district?
No
18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
Not officially but she knows which are vacant and why. Very specific reason why buildings are empty. Owner doesn't care about renting it. People are less likely to sit on buildings now because of success of others.
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
Estimate at 92% full
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
Independent school district is the biggest employer, County is second. 65% of residents drive to Austin Hyatt spa and resort, Industrial park are also big employers.
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
Downtown business alliance is #1 partner. They do 4 large events and 1 small one. Anyone can be member including Whataburger and Best Buy
Also, Bastrop Economic Development Corp and Hyatt Resort
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Off of main street by two blocks or so, but in downtown boundary. Apparently doesn't qualify for THCPP, because too much has been done
23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
Still courthouse includes all offices
24. What else should I know about your district?
Major events, have really found stuff that works and just keeps doing it. (i.e. Homecoming - since WWII Trying to get form base code / design guidelines Buildings use to take two years to get a tenant. Today, people line up to get in vacant building.

CANTON (in person interview)

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Canton, the county seat of Van Zandt County, was not settled until 1850, when the town was platted and named by settlers moving from Old Canton in Smith County.¹¹⁶ Iron ore, coal, and oil were discovered in the area in the late 19th century. The courthouse was completed in the 1930s as part of a Public Works Administration project.¹¹⁷ Canton is known for its First Monday trade days that started around the town square on the first Monday of each month when district court meetings were held. People would trade and bargain for animals, antiques, clothing, and other goods. This tradition started before the Civil War and continues today. The extant courthouse was designed by Voelcker and Dixon and built in the Moderne style in 1937.¹¹⁸ The current population is around 3,581 people according to the 2010 U.S. Census.

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
11 years
2. What is the structure of your program?
Under Economic Development Corporation, Canton Alliance. Non-profit, under oversight of City Council but has individual board. Main Street, marketing (hotel occupancy tax), visitor's bureau, and chamber of commerce. Many years MS was part of the city directly.
Different than other towns, we operate as a town of 15 – 20 thousand because of First Monday and county even though smaller in size (3500).
Design committee with guidelines but no commission.
3. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Originally one block around courthouse. After 5 years in program expanded to two blocks around. No other districts
4. Why do people come to your downtown?
Businesses, several restaurants, County offices, First Monday
5. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
First Monday – tourists, Other times local including surrounding county
6. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Don't do a lot of festivals because of First Monday. Formal banquet / fundraiser / fall festival in October for locals to remind people that there is a downtown / marketing.

¹¹⁶ Kleiner, "Canton, Tx."

¹¹⁷ Kleiner, "Canton, Tx."

¹¹⁸ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 264.

Free outdoor movies / get 200 people to come

7. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Small grants that regulate using guidelines, \$1,000 per building per year / exterior only.
Applies to infrastructure – roofs, electrical, plumbing, attached to building
Available for anyone in district. Building owner can apply, so can business owner with letter from owner; usually for signage. 10 a year, 4 year old program
8. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
2001 – 2004 a lot of activity. There was a pool of money to help. Several major renovations.
Buttermilks was one major.
9. What types of rehab projects have been done? (i.e. façade improvements, minor interior repairs, major renovations?)
Small updates and a few major. Removal of slipcovers
10. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Nothing right now. Reinvestment zone hoping to pass at city council that night.
11. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Quarterly for THC
12. Do you have a current survey of your district?
Keeps files on every building, before / after photos
13. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
Does a monthly economic development report and documents this.
The few that are vacant, owners don't care, just sitting on it.
14. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
County is biggest besides First Monday. Generates a lots of activity, but can tie up parking and retail space on square. Lots of attorney offices.
15. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Some minor restoration work. Applied for grant, but didn't get it. County historical commission applied, but couldn't match funds.
16. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
Fully functional, district and county court, 3 judge offices, commissioners, tax office, and county clerks office
17. What else should I know about your district?
First Monday Trade days is a big deal, but helps downtown. Lots of people come to town for the flea market. Entrances are near downtown. Piggy-back on marketing. Many businesses downtown have started at the trade days (5-6). More businesses owner do not live here, but believes it helps the downtown, put money into it and they really care. Everyone comes to town because it's the biggest shopping area in county (only Wal-Mart). Convergence of 4 state highways. No ordinance or commission. No streetscape projects by city or county besides courthouse property
TXDOT grant that funded big project early on Dallas and buffalo Streets.

Department of agriculture / main street improvement grants funds sidewalk updates each year. Have done all around the square. EDC does match and city applies. Only 3 apartments downtown Very few upper stories, but all are full.

ROCKWALL (in person interview)

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Rockwall is located east of Dallas along State Highway 66 and Interstate Highway 30. The city was established in 1854 and served as a business center for Kaufman County farmers.¹¹⁹ The state legislature appropriated a portion of Kaufman County as the new Rockwall County in 1873, naming Rockwall the county seat. The extant courthouse was built in 1940 in the Moderne style.¹²⁰ By the 1970s, the construction of Lake Ray Hubbard and the opportunities in Dallas greatly shaped the city and increased the population size. The population was reported at 37,490 people in the 2010 U.S. Census, while the median household income equaled \$79,885, extremely high for a population that size.

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
5 years
2. What is the structure of your program?
City government
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
9 years
4. Why do people come to your downtown?
Shopping and dining primarily. We have several county offices downtown / vehicle registration and elections that draw regular traffic daily.
5. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
At this time I would be inclined to say locals however we have seen an increase in tourists due in large part to the influx of new businesses/eating establishments and the effects of being a Main Street city
6. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
More than anything it provides a point of contact for all things related to the downtown area. When the community wants to know what is going on downtown, they call the MS manager for a presentation. When any of our downtown merchants need assistance or have questions about issues that arise they

¹¹⁹ Minor, "Rockwall, Tx."

¹²⁰ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 229.

call the MS manager. Its constant hands/eyes on approach that keeps everything in check or at least tries...

7. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Downtown improvements - \$8.62m (sidewalks, streets, fixtures, and equipment, parking, green spaces, performance areas) establishing a communication plan. DT brochures, DT website (with the DTA members), Old town Christmas market, Holiday decorations, Revamping the façade grant application
8. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Yes façade grant
9. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
Multiple businesses have completed projects. Most have facelifts such as awnings and paint. A few have been more in depth: 106 East Rusk, 101 South Fannin, and 105 Olive have been the largest projects.
10. What types of rehab projects have been done?
Our projects have primarily been paint and awnings/facelifts
11. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes, we've received design assistance for the larger project specifically.
12. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
No
13. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Yes, if the property is a designated landmark. We only have on property in the DT area that has been landmarked.
14. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
Yes mainly by stimulating others in the district to update their properties
15. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes, quarterly.
16. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
We keep track of vacancies but have no formal method for doing so. I keep a spreadsheet of what's available.
17. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
Rockwall is located 20 miles east of Dallas on I-30 therefore we get lots of traffic from north and east Texas. Rockwall is the first place you pass through before heading into Dallas and it has many big box retails/auto dealerships/etc. Many people no longer have to drive over the lake into Mesquite to do their shopping. Rockwall only had a population of 10k in 1990 and we are not at 40k.
18. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Draw regular traffic, but no major restoration.
19. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?

We have several county offices downtown / vehicle registration and elections that draw regular traffic daily.

20. Are there strategies or program in place for economic development in your community?

We are a 4A community and most of our efforts have focused on the technology park, which has been great. The city is now looking at increasing our economic development for the DT area but we haven't yet started on those efforts.

SAN AUGUSTINE (email interview)

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San Augustine is located in East Texas at the junction of U.S. Highway 96, State highways 21 and 147. The original inhabitants of the site were of the Hasinai Indians.¹²¹ The first European explorers probably visited the site in the 1500s, however, the mission was established until over 200 years later in 1721.¹²² According to the Handbook of Texas, Thomas S. McFarland was appointed to survey the area and to "plat 356 lots on forty-eight city blocks in a grid pattern, perhaps the first time that such a method was used in Texas" and the town became an official Mexican municipality.¹²³ San Augustine played an active role in the Texas Revolution and was abandoned during the Runaway Scrape. The extant courthouse was built in 1927 in the Classical Revival style.¹²⁴ Today, the population of San Augustine is over 2,000 people.¹²⁵

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?

1 year this month (February 2014)

2. What is the structure of your program?

City department pays my manager salary, and training. We are waiting on IRS approval of a 501C3 status for the Main Street Patrons and Loyal Supporters (non-profit organization established) We practice the National Main Street 4 Point Approach and have an 11 member advisory board and individual committees. The committees consist of Promotion, Organization, Design, and Economic Restructuring.

3. How long have you been Main Street manager?

1 year

¹²¹ McCroskey, "San Augustine, Tx."

¹²² McCroskey, "San Augustine, Tx."

¹²³ McCroskey, "San Augustine, Tx."

¹²⁴ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 233.

¹²⁵ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
The downtown area to include specific businesses. Yes we have set up the area around the downtown square as the main street district and it was approved by the state main street office. The San Augustine County Courthouse is in the center of the district. It is a Texas Historic Landmark. The Main Street district includes parts of the San Augustine Commercial Historic District. The streets are: Main, Montgomery, Congress, Broadway, and Columbia.
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
Eat, we have 3 restaurants, shop, we have 6 retail stores, and the county courthouse is in the middle of our district. There are many business and professional people in and out of our downtown that would otherwise not come. The courthouse has saved our downtown.
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Locals, tourists, and business people.
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
Economic development and revitalization, community involvement.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Businesses are requesting designs from the state office for various updates. The committees are meeting and considering what the next projects should be: lamps, planter, benches, banners, and more trashcans. We are all looking into grants.
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Not yet
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
Yes, see reinvestment stats
11. What types of rehab projects have been done? (i.e. façade improvements, minor interior repairs, major renovations?)
All the above
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
Not that I know of
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
None that I know of.
15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
a. It gives the community hope for a better tomorrow, economically and socially.
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes quarterly
17. Do you have a current survey of your district?

Yes

18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
We are so small that I know and are aware of the vacancy.
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
60% full, 40% empty
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
Deep East Texas Electric Coop, San Augustine Independent School District, Memorial Medical Center
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
Local community groups, county, state, chamber, we are part of the city, churches, school, Deep East Texas Electric Coop.
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
It has a great positive impact on activity
23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? It houses most of the county offices. Does it still house county departments?
Yes, plus my office Main Street
24. Has your courthouse has participated in the THC's preservation grant program?
Yes in 2010
25. If so, did Main Street have any involvement?
We became Main Street in 2013 after the restoration
26. What else should I know about your district?
The people are what make this district special. They are proud of their heritage and are looking forward to continued historic improvements.

PARIS (email interview)

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Paris was incorporated in 1845 as part of the Republic of Texas.¹²⁶ It was located on the Central National Road of the Republic, which ran from San Antonio to Paris where crossed the Red River. Before the Civil War, the city was a cattle and farming center and in later years was a major railroad junction. The extant

¹²⁶ Harvill, "Paris, Tx."

courthouse was designed by Barry & Smith and Sanquinet & Staats in the Classical Revival style in 1917.¹²⁷ Today, the population is around 25,000 people and the median income is \$32,062.¹²⁸

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
The City of Paris has been a Main Street City 22 years; 1984 – 1989; 1998 – Current
2. What is the structure of your program?
City department; advisory; We operate under the traditional main street Four Point Approach. We have an advisory board that meet monthly, and then the organization, design, economic restructuring, and promotions.
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
4 years
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Yes, both a local historic district and national register
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
To relax by fountain, to work, to enjoy promotions, to shop and eat.
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Locals, but we do have a lot of tourism. We are Paris!
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
The Main Street program helps unify the district. Our program brings all elements to the table and helps develop relationships with community partners that might not otherwise happen. The program brings awareness to the downtown. It offers tools that help the local business/building owners. The Program provides volunteer hours to organizations. Revitalizes the Farmers market. Main Street is involves the community, helps preserve the sense of place that makes downtown special.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Downtown Visitors Guide, Building Inventory, Sidewalk project, Studying feasibility of public restroom, Special events - April in Paris Wine Fest, Nomination of Texas Treasure Business award of 4 businesses downtown.
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Yes: The Paris Main Street program actually created it's own grant incentivizing reinvestment up to 50% of 10,000.
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
Last year we had 3 major projects complete, and one major project in progress.
11. What types of rehab projects have been done?

¹²⁷ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 169.

¹²⁸ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

Façade restoration, window replacement, façade improvements, roof repair

12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
YES. There were 4 who are using the suggested design this year.
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
NO
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Yes, they use tax abatements for the improved amount for up to 7 years.
15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
Of course, all improvements add value to the district by preserving the heritage, reuse the space, show importance of the history of a town, bring tourism, sense of place for the community.
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes
17. Do you have a current survey of your district? Historic Survey?
Our most recent survey was conducted in 2006.
18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
No, but this is going to be in our next work plan.
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
Not all our first floor is retail. Any estimate I have probably would not be accurate.
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
We have major employers. Campbells Soup, Kimberly Clark, and J Skinner Bakery, Harrison Walker and Harper construction.
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
Paris Downtown Association, Chamber of Commerce, Paris Visitors and Convention Council.
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
The restoration of the Courthouse provides a great space for the history of downtown. It also houses employees who work and utilize the downtown for shopping and dining.
23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
Yes
24. Has your courthouse has participated in the THC's preservation grant program?
Yes
25. If so, did Main Street have any involvement?
Yes, support for the restoration.
26. What else should I know about your district?

Paris Commercial Historic district has a unique history in that it has not evolved over time like some downtowns do, due to the fact that it had a very large fire in 1916(third largest commercial district fire in the nation to date), that burnt down the entire district. In the spirit of entrepreneurship, the townspeople bounced back in record time. They cleaned the rubble, and rebuild back the entire commercial district in a period of two years. The rebuild of the district has resulted in the largest collection of the period 1916-1918 buildings in the Nation. It is very unique and has quite beautiful architecture

AMARILLO (email interview)

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Amarillo was established in 1887 as a commercial center of the Texas Panhandle along the Fort Worth and Denver City railway.¹²⁹ The discovery of natural gas and oil supported the local economy in the early 1900s. The extant courthouse was designed by Townes, Lightfoot & Funk in the Moderne style in 1932.¹³⁰ Today, Interstate Highway 40 and 27 intersect here. The city's population was reported at 190,695 people in the 2010 U.S. Census and is estimated to have grown by 2.4% by 2012.¹³¹ The median household income was reported at \$45,659. The extant Potter courthouse was constructed in 1932 and was restored with funds from the THCPP in 2012.¹³²

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
From 1996 to 2001, Center City of Amarillo self- initiated a Main Street application but was not considered a designated program. We were officially designated 2002.
2. What is the structure of your program?
We are a private nonprofit 501 c 3 organization. We receive funds from the city in the form of a contract for downtown services. That is about one-third of our budget. The remaining part of our budget is about one-third in a membership fund drive with memberships from businesses and individuals and the last third from special events such as the Center City Block Party.
We have these committees within the Main Street 4-Point Approach. Organization (this includes our board and our fundraising committees) Design (this includes the Design Review committee and Art in Public Places) Promotion (this includes special events such as our summer noon concerts on the Courthouse Square and the Electric Light Parade for the holidays. Economic Restructuring – this

¹²⁹ Anderson, "Amarillo, Tx."

¹³⁰ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 218.

¹³¹ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

¹³² Texas Historical Commission, "Restored Courthouses."

includes partnerships with the Tax Increment Reinvestment Group, Downtown Amarillo Inc. for economic development, the Amarillo Economic Development Corporation, and the city of Amarillo.

3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
I have been a Main Street Manager for 9 years. I began in 2005 after retiring as city editor from the Amarillo Globe-News, a daily newspaper.
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Our boundaries were originally set as the Central Business District as zoned by the city. This was a about a 120-block area. In 2006, we worked with the city to establish the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone. To avoid confusion, we changed our boundaries to match theirs. This is a much bigger area. Boundaries are: North – the railroad tracks, South – Interstate 40, East –the railroad tracks, West – Washington/Adams These are major transportation boundaries, so it made sense to adopt them. We border a residential historic neighborhood to the south, the Plemons Eakle Historic District.
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
Here is a link to our downtown strategic action plan that we adopted in 2006.
http://www.ci.amarillo.tx.us/departments/planning/pdf/Downtown_Action_Plan.pdf More informally, this is the document I share with people who ask. We use the slogan that Center City is a place to live, work, play, learn and worship: Additionally, we have a full calendar of special events to bring people downtown: Trade shows, performances, parades, festivals, events to benefit charities, etc.
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Mostly locals.
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
I believe being part of the state and national Main Street programs is vital to our success. Although we pay about \$2,600 a year for our Main Street Contract and we have travel expenses to state and national meetings, we get so much more for our investment:
The prestige and influence of being part of a state and national organization
The accreditation of being recognized as a state and national Main Street City
The networking and training with other downtowns in Texas
The resources at the Texas Historical Commission when we are working on a project or issue
The exchange of ideas with other towns for fundraising, volunteer recruitment, etc.
Being part of Main Street means you will spend about four hours a month in reporting, but the rewards are that you have great statistics to track your downtown reinvestment and show your progress.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
We have a full schedule of special events. We anticipate a new downtown convention hotel, a multipurpose stadium and a Texas Dept. of Transportation streetscape.
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
The city of Amarillo gives Center City \$60,000 a year for façade grants. This is a matching grant of up to \$20,000 per project. In addition, our Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone has allocated \$150,000 for façade grant recipients to receive up to \$50,000 for pedestrian lights, landscaping and benches with our Urban Design Standards.
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?

Attached is a cumulative list of façade grant projects since the project started: [removed – ask author for original.]

11. What types of rehab projects have been done?
Our money is for façade grants only, exterior only. This has ranged from giant neon signs, to new windows, to landscaping to cleaning stone work.
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes, THC has done several renderings. Two of my buildings used the design service.
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
Yes.
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
The Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone provides incentives. They can rebate up to 90 percent of the ad valorem taxes. They did this with the Courtyard by Marriott hotel.
15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
I would refer you to our Reinvestment Report for Texas Main Street.
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes. We report reinvestment statistics to Texas Main Street every quarter.
17. Do you have a current survey of your district?
No. We are hoping to update it this year
18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
Yes, by building.
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
Our statistic is that our downtown office occupancy is 89 percent. We do not break it down between retail and offices.
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
Our major employers are the Amarillo Independent School District, Bell Helicopter, Pantex Plan (nuclear weapons), Northwest Texas Hospital, BSA Health Systems, Amarillo College (a two-year school) and Texas Tech University Health Science Center Amarillo Campus.
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
These are our downtown partners numerous.
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Amarillo is in two counties: Randall and Potter. The Potter County Courthouse square is a center for our downtown. The courthouse was recently renovated with help from a \$5 million grant from the Texas Historical Commission. We rededicated it in August of 2012.
The Courthouse this year has won major awards:
First Place Texas Downtown Award for Historic Restoration
International trade magazine Building Design +Construction named the venture one of three “platinum” projects last week, the highest annual rating for reconstruction

In addition, the courthouse is a major focal point for our Center City events. Every summer we have noontime free concert series called High Noon on the Square. We draw between 600 and 700 people each Wednesday to the square to showcase the arts against the historic backdrop of our courthouse. We maintained the series even through the construction!

23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?

The county courthouse is still functioning as county offices. The County Judge offices here as well as two Justices of the Peace. The County Attorney is here. The county commission holds court here. It is a vital part of our downtown. The Federal Court is across the street, the Federal Bankruptcy Court is within walking distance, and the Potter County Justice Building with our district courts is across the street to the east.

BRENHAM

No questionnaire completed by Main Street Manager. Information gathered from other sources. See References.

Brenham became the county seat of Washington County in 1844, but was not officially incorporated until 1858.¹³³ It served as a major supply center for agriculture and served as the rail terminus for the Houston and Texas Central railroad until 1871.¹³⁴ The community evolved into a manufacturing and processing center. The most significant company who still occupies Brenham today is the Blue Bell Creameries who opened in 1907. The extant courthouse was designed by Travis Broesche in the Moderne style in 1939.¹³⁵ The current population is 15,716, while the median income is \$38,728.¹³⁶

NACOGDOCHES (*in-person interview*)

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Nacogdoches, the oldest city in Texas, is located in East Texas. The site was first occupied by Caddo Indians.¹³⁷ A mission was eventually established by the Spanish in the early 1700s and received pueblo or town designated in 1779.¹³⁸ Nacogdoches was a major gateway for trade with the French and later the

¹³³ Christian, "Brenham, Tx."

¹³⁴ Christian, "Brenham, Tx."

¹³⁵ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 269.

¹³⁶ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

¹³⁷ McDonald, "Nacogdoches, Tx."

¹³⁸ McDonald, "Nacogdoches, Tx."

Americans, from Natchitoches and New Orleans, Louisiana. It was also an important military and political boundary during the Republic of Texas. Nacogdoches itself had been incorporated in 1837. Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College (now Stephen F. Austin State University) was established in Nacogdoches in 1923, and is currently the city's largest employer. Agriculture and manufacturing also support the local economy. The extant courthouse was built in 1958. It was designed by J.N. McCammon and some have compared the form of the building to "early motel style."¹³⁹ Today, the population is 32,996 and the median income is \$28,647.¹⁴⁰

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
15 years, 1998. Late 1970s – started downtown revitalization and applied to program twice before accepted. Went to Austin and applied in historical costume.
2. What is the structure of your program?
City department, Advisory board, Report to city manager and council
3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
2002 part time at visitors center, 2008 started as MS manager
4. What are the boundaries of your district? Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district?
Entire district listed in National Register in 2008. CBD, zoning, and 1921 fire district - combined all in 2010 – used National Register boundary
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
Event, History, Retail stores
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Good mix, but not as many locals as we would like. Have to get creative to get locals to pay attention 42,000 people in visitor center guest book last year alone. Lots of citywide events that people come for like blue bird festival. Discounts for senior citizens and tourists
7. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Events , Azalea trail , Beautification constantly , Bike racks most recent , Economic development
Vacant building showcase - 80,000 sq. ft. of unsafe, un-rentable properties before 2009. Did first showcase in 2009. Now 3 out of 5 white elephants are on the market and usable. More have done rehabs
8. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Historic restoration grant program - Funded by hotel occupancy tax. History puts heads in beds, so we can justify using the money this way. \$35,000 a year just façade. Applies to five historic districts; downtown and neighborhoods; have had money left over in the past years. Sign grant, Main street only
9. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
A lot

¹³⁹ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 204.

¹⁴⁰ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

10. What types of rehab projects have been done? (i.e. façade improvements, minor interior repairs, major renovations?)
All the above
11. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes several
12. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
No - Brought down several project reviewers and nobody wanted to follow their strict rules.
Department store was interested and did a lot of things right, but closed off stair to upper floor to create residence and that was why they didn't get credit.
13. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Tax abatement for downtown district. Percentage based on improved value - building owner gets back difference between improved and before, five year, 100% first year, 20% sliding scale every year after.
Potentially creating a TIF within next five years
14. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Quarterly for THC
15. Have gone back and filled holes from previous years
Use permitting system to track
16. Do you have a current survey of your district?
Yes! GIS project with SFA. Used Preserve America grant.
17. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
Vacant building showcase and board update summaries
18. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
Before 2009, lots of vacancy because buildings were unsafe. Owners have rehabbed but now have rents too high, so buildings are sitting empty. Less then before, several have businesses while on the market. Spaces for lease, spot goes within 6 weeks. Biggest problem is white elephant buildings.
Zero leasable space right now, still have vacant spaces just not leasable. Added 14 upper story residences.
19. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
SFA University is crucial to Main Street. SFA is half of town population. MS has worked to integrate the two. Student labor – community service and interns, events with hospitality department, Orientation, parents day, alumni association - “town and gown relations,” sponsor orientation, newspaper, radio, and TV stations. Taste of Downtown during welcome week – set up in retail stores and bussed students/parents into the district. Partner with visitors center to do this. Number one call for housing downtown are professors. Single family zoning downtown- can't have more than 2 unrelated people living in the same house. Keeps college students out.
Pilgrim's Pride – meat processing, Nacogdoches ISD, and city
20. What other organizations work with Main Street?
EDC, Chamber of commerce, Tourism / visitors center

21. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Doesn't, not on square, off a little bit and relatively new
22. What else should I know about your district?
No courthouse on square, but visitors center. Tore down courthouse in 1970s. Texas's oldest town - "History is our thing." Lots of historic sites, Walking tours, Garden capitol of Texas, Trying to build on that. Planter box program, Pocket park downtown , Starting nature tours , Azalea trail - 32 miles of driving trails. City doesn't own too many buildings - city hall, fire station, two museums. City improvements downtown, visitors center and square, light poles, benches, planter box program. Does not have 4b or 4a economic development sales tax. Sales tax goes to hospital district, No money to play with, difficult to draw developers.

TYLER (email interview)

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Tyler, the county seat of Smith County, is one of the major cities in East Texas. Tyler was established in 1846 when the Texas legislature created Smith County and its corresponding county seat.¹⁴¹ Numerous planters were attracted to the area due to the rich soil and eventually grew to be a leading shipping and commercial center for the region.¹⁴² The extant courthouse was designed by Thomas Jameson in 1955.¹⁴³ Today, the Tyler is home to 96,900 people with a median income of \$42,729.¹⁴⁴

1. How long has your city been a certified Main Street program?
Since 1990
2. What is the structure of your program?
We have a fairly unique structure. From 1990 to 2008, Heart of Tyler Inc., a 501©3 non-profit entity, served as the Main Street organization in Tyler. The City of Tyler and Heart of Tyler, Inc., entered into a working partnership in 2008. At that time, responsibility for the Main Street designation moved to the City of Tyler, and a Main Street Department was created. Heart of Tyler remains a separate 501©3 non-profit, but also has strong ties with the City of Tyler and acts as an advisory board to the Main Street Department. Per the operating agreement, the City of Tyler houses the Main Street Department and the Heart of Tyler, provides all equipment and pays the staff, which is "loaned" to Heart of Tyler

¹⁴¹ Long, "Tyler, Tx,."

¹⁴² Long, "Tyler, Tx."

¹⁴³ Kelsey, *The Courthouses of Texas*, 242.

¹⁴⁴ United States Census Bureau, "2010 Census State & County Quick Facts."

as well. Heart of Tyler has its own separate budget and is contractually obligated to contribute to the Main Street Department budget each year. Heart of Tyler is also considered the volunteer arm of the Main Street program.

3. How long have you been Main Street manager?
20+++ years
4. What are the boundaries of your district?
Approximately 400 acres: Palace to Beckham, Gentry to Front (map available).
Do any other districts overlap such as a local historic district or National Register district? No, but several abut.
5. Why do people come to your downtown?
Federal and county courts, professional services (legal, banking, etc.), oil industry administration, restaurants, cultural destinations (gallery, theatre, museums, etc.), city and county government, schools, small retail, special events.
6. Who uses your downtown more, locals or tourists?
Locals
7. In your opinion, how does Main Street specifically help the community?
Maintains and improves a major seat of employment; maintains and improves established private and public property, thereby alleviating and preventing blight; preservation of historic properties; quality of life improvements; providing services for small businesses; assisting property owners with various programs, etc.
8. What types of projects is Main Street currently working on?
Too many to fully list, but list includes: Operation of full arts program, including special events and operation of Gallery Main Street with juried exhibits every eight weeks; façade grant program; numerous special events; wayfinding program; improvement of entryway corridors; assistance with tax credit projects, etc.
9. Does Main Street support a reinvestment grant program in your community?
Yes – a \$10,000 façade grant program
10. How many business owners have done rehab projects?
30+++
11. What types of rehab projects have been done?
All of the above
12. Have any of the property owners have used the free design service offered by the THC?
Yes
13. Have any rehab projects applied to and/or received the federal tax credit?
Yes
14. Does your city provide tax incentives? What kind?
Property tax abatement

15. How have these rehab projects helped the community in a bigger way?
These incentives have provided much-needed points of leverage for financing adaptive reuse and rehabilitation projects.
16. Do you keep track of reinvestment statistics or economics?
Yes – a requirement of the state program
17. Do you have a current survey of your district?
Yes
18. Do you keep track of vacancy rating? By building, store front, or square footage?
No formal tracking, but informal tracking on a by-building basis.
19. What is your current vacancy rate for first floor retail? Estimates are sufficient.
10% (estimate)
20. What other factors influence the economy in your community? Who are the major employers in your community?
Major economic and employment factors: Medical, education, oil, service
21. What other organizations work with Main Street?
It would be far easier to name who does not. We enjoy positive, productive working relationships with all sectors of the community.
22. How does the courthouse affect your district?
Serves as a destination point and anchor service provider.
23. What is the courthouse structure's current function? Does it still house county departments?
Still active seat of county government.
24. What else should I know about your district?
Oh, my! I'll let you read these responses and let me know if you have any more questions. 😊

APPENDIX B: COUNTY INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

1. When was the courthouse restoration completed?
 2. What is the current function of the courthouse? Does it still maintain county functions or is it used for other purposes (i.e. museum)?
 3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration? (Was the building in bad shape? Was it being repurposed? Did you think it would help the community in a bigger way?)
 4. Who represented the county during the design process?
 5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail?
 6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project?
 7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county?
 8. Has your county been involved in the THC's Courthouse Stewardship program?
 9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration?
-

Denton County (email interview)

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1. When was the courthouse restoration completed?
2004
2. What is the current function of the courthouse?
The Courthouse on the Square currently holds Commissioners Court every week. It houses the County Judges office, Commissioners Offices, Aide to the Court, Office of History and Culture, Museum, and the Regional Collections Specialist North Texas Region Office of Court Administration.
3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration?
The building was renovated due to it being in poor condition. Commissioners Court wanted to repurpose the building to hold Commissioners Court and for the museum. At that time, the County had expanded into multiple facilities throughout the County. I do believe the renovation helped the community downtown area tremendously. It gave the community a place to meet, have public functions in the facility and on the lawn. Functions such as car shows, chili cook offs, twilight concerts, noon concerts on the Square , Memorial Day celebrations, weddings, and this is just to name a few.
4. Who represented the county during the design process?
Commissioners Court
5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail?
The architect was Architexas. The project was a complete renovation of the interior and exterior of the building.
6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project?
I was unable to obtain any records of this type of study.
7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county?
I believe the restoration affected the downtown three block radius tremendously. Had it not been for State of Texas and their two organizations, Texas Historical Commission and the downtown Texas Main Street Organization along with the City of Denton and Denton County, this could not have been possible. They took a downtown area in the City of Denton and completed restorations to a dying downtown and turned it into a vibrant small community on any given day.
8. Has your county been involved in the THC's Courthouse Stewardship program?
Yes, I have been a member for 9 years and have participated in being involved in the class itineraries and have been a speaker at these conferences. As you are aware, historical courthouses are unique all their own. Not only are they a facility, they are a piece of history. These historical buildings are not maintained in the same manner as a standard facility. These Stewardship conferences are vital to the individuals held responsible for maintaining these historical treasures. Not only are the conferences

vital for the knowledge of maintaining the buildings, it's vital to network with other members of the Historical Courthouse Community.

9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration?

In 2008 Denton County received the Courthouse Stewardship award for maintaining a beautiful courthouse. The stone you see today on the outside of the building was quarried in Denton County. A closer location is the old Cauble Ranch off 35. Denton County was able to negotiate the ability to quarry more stone out of the same location.

Lamar County (email interview)

Judge M. Chuck Superville Jr.

Lamar County

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1. When was the courthouse restoration completed?

The courthouse restoration was completed in September of 2005.

2. What is the current function of the courthouse?

The current function of the courthouse is the same as it always has been. The main function is the operation of 4 courtrooms (2 district courts, 2 county courts, 2 JP courts, share the four courtrooms). All of the space in the courthouse is used to perform a county function and no other purpose.

3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration?

The primary motivation of the restoration/renovation of the courthouse was that the building was in very deteriorated condition. Every mechanical/electrical/plumbing system was on the verge of collapse. In fact, just before we exited the building for renovation, the elevator was condemned by the State. The State fire marshal was seriously considering condemning the building because of the poor electrical system. Water was coming in through the walls, and plumbing was leaking from one floor to the next. The list goes on, but the point is that the building was in a serious state of disrepair. The second motivation was that we were out of space. We had a lot of filing cabinets. To make a long story short, we moved all the people and filing cabinets out of the building for renovation/restoration. When we moved back into the building, we left most of the filing cabinets in the space we occupied during renovation/restoration. Also, we removed the old jail on the top floor. Historically, it was a loss, but it was necessary to save the rest of the building because we needed the space. So, we actually increased our usable space by about 20%. Most renovations reduce usable space. Also, we left the "tag office" at the previous space because we installed a drive-thru which obviously increased our ability to serve the public. This also increased space in the courthouse. Finally, it was because money became available for us to perform this work, that ultimately made the project go forward. It was the "tobacco money" that started the conversation for minor repairs. Then we discovered the "Texas Historical Commission" courthouse restoration grant(s), then we borrowed the rest of the money at low interest to fully renovate/restore the courthouse. Although it was the money and disrepair of the building that made the project go forward, it cannot be emphasized enough that the decision to renovate/restore the courthouse was politically demanded by a significant number

of community opinion shapers that insisted that the building be restored/renovated and protected. There was a serious, serious, discussion about abandoning the courthouse and building a justice center for significantly less cost than renovation/restoration. However, we would still have had all the problems with files, and a vacant building downtown. So, once we solved the financing problem, we then had to convince a number of Commissioners, and elected officials that restoring the courthouse was the way to go for a lot of reasons, and not constructing a justice center. The argument for a justice center was mainly financial. But, the historical society, the downtown merchants and other, older citizens, fully realized that the courthouse was a piece of living history and a reflection of the character and legacy of the community, and this was the argument and facts that led to the restoration/renovation of the courthouse.

4. Who represented the county during the design process?
The architectural firm, Archi-Texas represented Lamar County in the design process.
5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail?
Craig Melde, one of the owners of Archi-Texas was the architect of the master plan. The project was comprehensive in scale. It involved most of the building interior and the windows. The grant funding was a two-step process. We had to invest several tens of thousands of dollars to write a proposal for a \$500,000 grant to write the master plan. Once we were awarded that grant and wrote a very detailed master plan we then applied for funding for the project. The Texas Historical Commission paid about 4 million of the project, and Lamar County paid about 6 million. At this juncture it is very important to emphasize the amount of planning that had to occur. We had a firm budget and we could not exceed the budget. So a huge amount of work went into planning and costing every detail we could. Ultimately, we brought the \$10 million project in at about \$ 30 thousand under budget. This level of planning is crucial to the success of such a project. Then we had to locate new space and completely move the county operation from the courthouse to another location. There are about 14 or so different offices in this building comprising something like 75 people. So, it was a huge move and transition for us. Again, planning cannot be stressed enough.
6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project?
We have not conducted a "post occupancy" study formally. But, by and large, I think everyone is generally happier (not happy) with the renovated building.
7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county?
In my opinion, the restoration of the courthouse has had a very salutary affect on the community, especially the downtown area. A number of surrounding buildings have invested considerably in restoring/renovating their property. The downtown merchants, the historical society, the chamber of commerce, the city of Paris, the main street project folks, and others have all pushed to restore/renovate the downtown. The courthouse project was part of a general upgrading of the downtown, which is an on-going process as we speak. I think also, there was a great deal of pride, especially, in the older citizens, that the courthouse was restored/renovated. It was an appreciation of who we are, where we came from, and where we are headed. It was a renouncing of a cheap, pre-fabricated, character-less, structure, and how such a structure reflects the community.
8. Has your county been involved in the THC's Courthouse Stewardship program?
No. We are not involved in the THC Courthouse Stewardship program.
9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration?
Courthouse restoration is very difficult. It is financially expensive, technically arduous, and politically fractious (e.g., who goes where, how much space etc.). The most important thing is to get strong,

sustained, grass roots, political support for the project. Then, detailed, tedious planning must be performed. Then execution. It will take a lot of time, money, and effort. There will be good and bad things along the way. But, the outcome, for future generations, makes it all worthwhile.

Potter County (email interview)

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1. When was the courthouse restoration completed? August 18, 2012.
2. What is the current function of the courthouse?
Currently is utilized for County Functions.
3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration?
The motivation was directed by me and our County Judge. We had the vision and desire to restore the Courthouse before the Courthouse Program was ever established, using Federal Funds through an ISTE A Grant. The ISTE A Grant was very hard to obtain so eventually when we heard of the Courthouse Program we pursued this direction for help with funding. The desire was to return this Temple of Justice back to the County taxpayers. It was the last of the great period of this type of construction.
4. Who represented the county during the design process? I did. Normally it is the responsibility of the County Judge, but I have had a working relationship with the Texas Historical Commission for about 18 years and the Court directed me to oversee and manage the project.
5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail? What I am about to explain I have seen happen many times. We hired an Austin based Preservation Architect during round two to establish our Master Plan. The County received about \$450,000.00 for funding. We then proceeded into schematic then the project design with this same architect. During about a two and half year duration we seen the architect we was working with was taking the County in the wrong direction, so we no longer needed his services and let him go. (We had modified the AIA documents to fit our needs not the architect, meaning we could let the firm go at any time). Then we waited about two years then re-invented the wheel again by hiring a new Preservation Architect based out of Austin. The firm was Architexas. This firm carried us through a complete new design as well as the preservation project.
6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project? We performed a thorough study for the design regarding the occupant's usage. The occupancy usage after the completion went as planned. We spent about 1 year performing our programming for usage. So I feel the time was well spent preparing for its usage.

7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county? Potter County is the largest of all Counties in the Texas Panhandle we received a lot of support from the surrounding Counties because they had witnessed Potter County performing another preservation project larger than this Courthouse project back in 2000. The local citizens of Potter County supported this project from the very beginning through its conclusion. The Potter County Courthouse has received the three following awards due to its preservation:
 - Local Award: Downtown Revitalization Award / “Spearhead” the highest of all awards for preservation in Amarillo.
 - State Award: “Texas Downtown Associations Presidents Award” the highest of award in the State for preservation.
 - National Award: Given by the Building Design and Construction Magazine / “Platinum Award” highest in the nation for reconstruction and preservation.
8. Has your county been involved in the THC’s Courthouse Stewardship program? Yes.
9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration? Potter County started this preservation project back in 1996 long before the Courthouse Program was ever established. We had the desire to return this Temple of Justice back to its original condition of 1932 for many generations to enjoy. The road was long and hard, a lot of politics and doubters. One has to believe in their vision and have the desire and patience to see a preservation project be completed, it will not happen overnight.

San Augustine County (email interview)

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1. When was the courthouse restoration completed?
 2010: Completion and Re-dedication of San Augustine County Courthouse
2. What is the current function of the courthouse?
 The San Augustine County Courthouse is still a fully functioning courthouse. County Judge, all four County Commissioners, County Tax-Assessor, County Treasurer, District Clerk, District Judge, County Agent, and many other offices are located there. Space has recently been made to accommodate the Main Street Director for the City of San Augustine, since the courthouse is adjacent to the designated Main Street area.
3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration?
 The building, although fully functioning as a courthouse in the year 2000, was in an extremely endangered condition. It was completely unsafe, filled with asbestos, in danger of fire from its original 1927 wiring, and generally in a pitiful, moldy, mildewed, run-down condition. Texas Historical Commission, at the instigation of then Governor George W. Bush, came up with a plan to restore these endangered courthouses throughout Texas with the 85/15 funding plan. San Augustine Garden Club considered this an excellent opportunity to try and receive a grant for our courthouse, since the 15% match seemed to be an achievable goal. With permission given by County Judge Jack Nichols and the Commissioners Court, Garden Club applied for the grant. We persevered on through three other

county judges: Curt Goetz, Wayne Holt, and Randy Williams. Our club paid for everything concerning getting the first grant application to Austin, and all subsequent grant applications. We met with the THC Advisory Board, reporting to them throughout the entire process, traveling to Austin on repeated occasions, pleading our case, and always at our own expense. We continued to amass points toward the goal of receiving the state grant. The point system is very important in obtaining a grant. As years went by, so did cost figures. Final cost was \$4.3 million, with Garden Club raising the 15% match of \$657,000. Before being awarded the construction grant, the county through our efforts received a planning grant in the amount of \$94,000, during the tenure of County Judge Wayne Holt. Fortunately, Garden Club received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation of \$7,250 for investigative paint and metal work, which helped meet the match for that grant. TLL Temple Foundation contributed to the cause, as did citizens and friends of San Augustine County. We have a long, long list (37 single-spaced pages) of donors. So, it is important to say that this is "The People's Courthouse," one of those "apple pie, motherhood" things that everyone wanted to see happen. It was also one of those projects that the various commissioners didn't think would happen; it was just "those Garden Club women," they thought, "Just sign those grant applications and the "perpetuity" maintenance page, and appease them." Needless to say, they were first surprised by the planning grant, and totally amazed by the later construction grant.

4. Who represented the county during the design process?
I'm not sure how to answer that question. Would it have been our club? Or the sitting judge at that time? Please clarify the question.
5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail?
Garden Club asked architects/engineers Scott and Strong of Lufkin, Texas to assist us with the original plat and plan design. Mark Strong and his associates were friends of San Augustine, and had restored and just completed the addition to San Augustine Public Library. We really appreciated their help and interest. As everything worked out, they became the architectural firm that restored the courthouse, along with the J.E. Kingham Construction Company of Nacogdoches, a firm that builds many schools and hospitals in the East Texas area. Interestingly, architect Ray Stripling of the Kingham Company was the person designated to oversee the entire restoration of the courthouse. Ray's grandfather, Judge R.N. Stripling, was county judge for more than twenty years. The project entailed a complete restoration of the San Augustine County Courthouse.
6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project?
I believe this is done fairly frequently.
7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county?
Everyone is so proud of our courthouse! It is beautiful, and a source of pride for all our citizens.
8. Has your county been involved in the THC's Courthouse Stewardship program?
This is a requirement of THC. It's that "perpetuity" mentioned earlier...the county has to promise that the restored facility will be fully maintained after completion. So yes, our current County Judge Samye Johnson makes sure that all these promises are kept to the best of everyone's ability.
9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration?
Actually, there are not words to describe all the events (scary moments) that occurred before everything concerning the courthouse restoration came to fruition. The last judge, Randy Williams, and one of his commissioners decided that "all this sounded like too much trouble," and decided they (the Commissioners Court) just might not accept the construction grant! Unbelievable! Fortunately, Garden Club learned of this unacceptable decision soon enough that we were able to fill the District

Courtroom with friends of San Augustine County, and thwart this terrible happening. Our allies, District Judge Charles Mitchell, and former County Judge Jack Nichols, were crucial in helping to convince the commissioners that turning down this opportunity would be a disaster, not only for now, but for future generations. We breathed a collective sigh of relief when Judge Williams signed the acceptance of the grant (albeit with his arm twisted up behind his back.) The THC people are absolutely wonderful...Amy Lambert and Bess Graham in particular...even Ray Stripling of Kingham Construction, suffered along with Garden Club members as the project progressed...like “pulling teeth”...when meeting with the commissioners court during those construction days. I am happy to say, though, that “All’s well that ends well!” Our San Augustine County Courthouse, on its 1833 State Archaeological Landmark Courthouse Square, located along the most historic of trails...El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail...is beautiful, safe, and thoroughly enjoyed by all our citizens. We are truly indebted to THC, Governor Bush, the Texas Legislature, and all those in positions of power, that created this fine program. We are indebted as well to all those people, great and small, locally and from afar, who supported our efforts to “never give up!”

Williamson County (email interview)

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1. When was the courthouse restoration completed? October 2007. The rededication & ribbon cutting was December 8, 2007.
2. What is the current function of the courthouse? Does it still maintain county functions or is it used for other purposes (i.e. museum)? County offices in the courthouse are the County Judge, County Treasurer, County Auditor, Budget Office and Public Information Office.
3. What were the motivations behind your courthouse restoration?
Back in the mid-1960s, a piece of the terra-cotta balustrades fell off. So, the Commissioners Court voted to tear out all the balustrades and triangular pediments on all four sides and replaced it with a brick parapet. Many people referred to that as a massacre of the original architecture. The original purpose when they applied for the THC grant was to put the courthouse back to its original exterior appearance. After working with the THC, however, they required the county to put the entire courthouse – inside and out – back to its original appearance. That rendered much of the space non-usable by today’s standards. The District Courtroom is used for meetings or special events. The Commissioners Courtroom is used to hold Commissioners Court meetings on Tuesdays as well as other meetings or special events. The courthouse can be rented by the public and the Williamson Museum handles the rentals.
4. Who represented the county during the design process? Broaddus and Associates was the owner’s representative.
5. Who was the architect / designer of your master plan? What did the project entail?

1113 Architects was the architect and Browning Construction handled the construction. The building was closed for two years during the construction. There was hazardous material removal, removal of a ceiling to recreate the two-story courtroom, reconstruction of a staircase, moving of an elevator, installation of first floor public bathrooms and the re-creation of the top exterior. The pediments were artistic features and had no blue plans, so they had to create these using what few photographs that were available.

6. Have you conducted a post-occupancy study after the completion of the project? No
7. In your opinion, how has the restoration affected the surrounding community and county? The historic courthouse is a vital piece of the center of Georgetown. The square has developed into a popular dining and shopping location, so having this beautiful architectural feature in the center enhances its overall appearance. Georgetown recently started using the slogan “The Most Beautiful Town Square in Texas” and that is partly due to our restoration.
8. Has your county been involved in the THC’s Courthouse Stewardship program? I believe so.
9. What else should I know about the courthouse restoration? The actual cost was more than twice what was received by the THC. They contribution \$4 million of a nearly \$10 million project.

APPENDIX C: OTHER CONTACTS

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APPENDIX D: THCPP SELECTION CRITERIA

Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 12, Rule 12.9

(c) In considering whether to grant an application, the commission will assign weights to and consider each of the following factors:

- (1) the status of the building as a functioning courthouse;
- (2) the age of the courthouse;
- (3) the degree of endangerment;
- (4) the courthouse is subject to a current conservation easement or covenant held by the commission;
- (5) the proposal is in conformance with the approved master plan and addresses the work in proper sequence;
- (6) the county agrees to place/extend a preservation easement/covenant and/or deed restriction as part of the grant process;
- (7) the importance of the building within the context of an architectural style;
- (8) the proposal addresses and remedies former inappropriate changes;
- (9) the historic significance of the courthouse, as defined by 36 CFR §101(a)(2) (A) and (E), and NPS Bulletin 15, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation."
- (10) the degree of surviving integrity of original design and materials;
- (11) if a county submits completed and Commission-approved construction plans and specifications for proposed work at the time of the application, provided the plans and specifications comply with the previously approved master plan;
- (12) the use of the building as a courthouse after the project;
- (13) the county's provision of a match greater than 15% of the grant request;
- (14) the proposal results in a fully restored county courthouse;
- (15) the status of the courthouse in terms of state and local historical designations that are in place;
- (16) the county government's provision of preservation incentives and support of the county historical commission and other county-wide preservation efforts;
- (17) the location of the county in a region with few awarded courthouse grant applications;
- (18) the existence of a plan for physically protecting county records during the restoration and afterwards, as well as an assessment of current and future space needs and public accessibility for such records;
- (19) the existence of a strong history of compliance with the state courthouse law (Texas Government Code, §442.008);
- (20) the effort to protect and enhance surrounding historic resources; and
- (21) the evidence of community support and county commitment to protection.

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