



Main Street Matters!

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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SPOTLIGHT ON SAN ANGELO

Written by Del Velasquez, Main Street Director and Lucie Hofheins, Assistant Director, San Angelo Main Street Program, Population approx. 97,492

Downtown San Angelo, Inc. has been actively involved in continuing the preservation and revitalization of the city of San Angelo. There are wild & wooly wonders, historic murals, painted alleyways, a river running through it, entertainment venues, varied dining establishments, museums, an old fort, a historic hotel, renovated city hall, art galleries and so much more that makes our downtown so unique. Downtown San Angelo offers a multitude of avenues to explore.

San Angelo has come a long way from when it first joined the Texas Main Street Program in 2005. It was in 2004 that a group of property owners and merchants began a conversation on how to revitalize San Angelo's downtown.

Due to a decline of the downtown district that commenced in the late 1960s, several of the department stores moved to the newly built



Downtown San Angelo, a Main Street City since 2005, celebrating their First Lady Tour with Former First Lady, Anita Perry

mall in southwest San Angelo. The downtown district became a sparsely occupied area of a few locally owned retail stores, a couple of restaurants, and a nightclub.

A group of concerned citizens and the city of San Angelo worked through the process of submitting an application to the Texas Historical Commission, and in 2005, Downtown San Angelo, Inc. was recognized as a nonprofit organization with partial financial support from the city.

Like many organizations, after the initial growing pains of recruiting a board of directors, acquiring memberships, finding fundraising, and developing priorities, things started to take shape.

Once all the details were worked through, and with economics impacting businesses, the priority was to get vacant buildings occupied and increase employment opportunities. This needed to be done, while simultaneously keeping a fine balance on preserving San

Angelo's history and culture while creating economic impact.

The city of San Angelo's municipal government was vital to our success. Fortunately two previous main street managers were working in key positions as the assistant city manager and planning director. The city's Development Corporation was another vital component leading us towards a successful implementation of the Texas Main Street Program. Establishing a working relationship with the Development Corporation helped when potential business opportunities became available in our efforts to recruit new businesses to the central business district.

Our initial marketing campaigns were directed toward bringing attention to the fact we existed; educating our community on the concept of "Main Street;" and why San Angelo was chosen to become a Main Street city. Slowly but surely, we started seeing results of this effort.

Our first project was a major success. The project titled "Sheep Spectacular" was a tongue-in-cheek play what originally helped put San Angelo on the map: the Miss Wool Pageant. It originated in the late 1950s and continued into the early 1970s and was a nationally recognized event. Having the moniker of the "Wool Capital of the World" (and we really were during that time) provided San Angelo the opening to capitalize on a major economic engine for the community. The Miss Wool Pageant brought beauty contestants from across the country to compete for the title of Miss Wool. The event drew nationally-known celebrities like Johnny Carson and Art Linkletter to host an evening of entertainment



The Miss Wool Pageant, which originated in the 1950s, has been slightly revised since then. The contestants (fiberglass sheep) are now painted by local San Angelo artists. Seen above are the work of local artists Trimble Batjer (top left), Laurel Dane (top right), Mejo Okan (bottom left) and Crystal Goodman (bottom right).

and pageantry. Another event that took center stage was the Miss Wool Parade, highlighting local entertainers and of course, the Miss Wool contestants.

The Downtown San Angelo, Inc. board of directors decided to bring back the Miss Wool Pageant, but this time the contestants would be fiberglass sheep painted by local artists and displayed by their sponsor. The new Miss Wool Parade also highlighted the painted fiberglass sheep. Following the parade, the fiberglass sheep were displayed in a prominent vacant building for voting by the community for the title of Miss Wool. The Sheep Spectacular became a tremendous success

for marketing downtown. The entire community supported our fundraising initiative by purchasing and hiring local artists to paint and create pieces of art throughout the community.

Another promotional activity that developed into a successful marketing tool has been what we simply call The Art Walk. Starting in 2007 with 13 art galleries and the San Angelo Fine Arts Museum, we initiated The Art Walk. It has sustained itself over the last seven years drawing participation from not only traditional artists, but also musicians, chefs, and a variety of artists. Merchants who traditionally close their doors in the evening started staying open



Every third Thursday of the month is the Downtown San Angelo Art Walk. The Art Walk showcases some the best art, food, and fun in downtown San Angelo. (Left image) Free trolley service is available, and you are free to board or depart the trolley anywhere along the route. (Middle and right images:) The San Angelo Fine Arts Museum and other local art galleries showcase their current exhibits and West Texas art.

to host artists and provide the community an opportunity to shop locally. The entertainment businesses, such as restaurants and nightclubs, joined in to help bring attention and showcase their investment and support for the revitalization of the downtown district.

San Angelo is a community that believes art and economic impact added beautification to our community. Downtown San Angelo, Inc. was instrumental in the creation of Paintbrush Alley. This alley became another venue where young and old alike come and enjoy a diverse base of art. It became a place where someone can come to get a glimpse what a downtown represents.

Art Walk Alley has also become a photography background for graduation, wedding, and special occasion pictures.

A key promotional event for San Angelo is the San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo. It is one of the biggest events and the fourth largest rodeo in the nation. Downtown San Angelo, Inc. also created the Woolly Bully Festival. Held each spring since 2012, the Woolly Bully Festival is a miniature rodeo for kids from ages 5 -10. The main event is one of the most popular events of any rodeo across the country called “mutton bustin.” Instead of barrel racing, our event has the stick horse barrel race. The steer roping competition consists of a converted workhorse station with a

plastic cow head and horns. There is also a boot scramble, and we provide pageantry with an opening ceremony emulating a professional rodeo.

The key to success for any Main Street city is the historic preservation of our primary assets – the historic buildings and preservation of our culture. Before Downtown San Angelo, Inc. existed, there was Historic San Angelo and San Angelo Old Town Conservancy, both which formed to preserve San Angelo’s architectural history.

Prior to Downtown San Angelo, Inc., the major contributor was historian and preservationist Ken Gunter. He single-handedly saved



The San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo is the fourth largest rodeo in the nation. A special festival created by DSA is the Woolly Bully Festival. From activities such as “mutton bustin,” to a boot scramble and other fun events, it is one of San Angelo’s biggest events throughout the year.

the first block of buildings that were representative of trade and commerce in the founding of our city. Mr. Gunter purchased and revitalized “Block One” with a vision for the future preservation of the heart of the city in the late 1970s. His ingenuity led toward the initial modern day movement toward the preservation of downtown San Angelo.

Another major project was the preservation of the “Three Sisters” buildings, which suffered a devastating fire in the early 1990s. In most cases, this would have led to demolition. However, organizations partnered with the city of San Angelo and worked diligently to save and restore these landmarks.

With the inception of Downtown San Angelo Inc., another era of renewal began. Beginning in 2008, several of the historic buildings downtown have been given new life.

The Cooper Building located on historic Concho Avenue was completely renovated in 2015. The building appeared to be one structure; however once the building was listed for sale, it was determined there were actually four separate buildings. The improvements have been key to the area and one of the buildings recently sold, becoming a successful women’s clothing store. A once popular outdoor music venue and bed and breakfast called Sealy Flats Inn and Café has been transformed into the Flamingo Flatts and Lagoon Lounge, bringing a refreshing transformation to this local hot spot. The Roosevelt Hotel, Town House Hotel, and the Harry’s Food Store buildings, all built in the late 1920s, were purchased in 2014 and 2015, and renovations will begin soon. All will have a significant



A lot of transformations are currently taking place in San Angelo. (Top images) Just last year in 2015, The Cooper Building was renovated. (Bottom image) The Roosevelt Hotel and other buildings recently purchased are due for renovations, in hopes of making a significant impact on the downtown district.

future impact to the downtown district. Their conversions will create a new climate of preservation and revitalization.

“We continue to see the positive impact the revitalization of our historic downtown has had and will continue to have on the San Angelo community” commented Brenda Gunter, chairman of the board of directors of Downtown San Angelo, Inc. “Progress has been made but there is still a need for more. Our ability to continue to move the revitalization effort forward requires continued support from the community, our members and the partnership support from City of San Angelo Development Corporation and the city of San Angelo.” (Website source)

DAZZLED BY THE FOOD TRUCK TRAIN? SMART THINGS FOR MAIN STREET TO CONSIDER

Article written by Emily Koller, AICP, Texas Main Street Planner

Gone are the days when people get excited by a food truck simply because it is a food truck; however, the trend continues. The lure of a low barrier to entry can be too great to resist for entrepreneurs, and cities are attracted by the idea of a low cost transformation strategy for underutilized areas of town. Nonetheless, what works for big

cities does not necessarily work for small towns. Here are some things to consider should your Main Street decide to pursue food trucks.

Is the Market Ready?

In rural areas, food trucks have always been used at festivals and fairs, and there is a long history of roadside farm stands and trucks. However, the urban food truck is more about better-quality food, innovative concepts, and creating an “experience” like artisanal grilled cheese, fusion food, and specialty desserts. Should your city be pushing the creation of a food truck ordinance for revitalization purposes, it is important to consider if the market is ready. Ebay and Craigslist offer an unfortunately large number of food trucks for sale. While the lure of a low barrier to entry can be hard for entrepreneurs to resist, running the actual business can be far more challenging than expected, especially in places where cuisine may be new or unfamiliar. Food trucks can be most effective as a way to “incubate a hospitality concept,” meaning they allow an entrepreneur to test their concept before making a larger investment.

Is your town short on usable buildings that will meet code for a restaurant? Testing the concept first and then helping your business owner move into a bricks-and-mortar restaurant space once the market has responded is a win-win for everyone. This was the case in Ennis where Pop Top Coffee began at the local farmer’s market selling delicious hand pulled espresso, ice-blended coffee creations, and loose-leaf tea drinks out of their 1978 Volkswagen bus in 2014. Just six months after debuting



Pop Top Coffee Shop founder Mandie Tartaglia stands in front of the bus, “Zooey,” at the Farmer’s Market in Ennis. Photo courtesy Pop Top Coffee.

at the Farmers Market, they received so much support from the community, they were able to set up a permanent shop in the Ennis National Bank Event Center, where they continue to thrive.

Policy Issues

While food trucks seem harmless and fun, they present a whole host of regulatory questions for city officials. Municipalities are forced to address issues that arise over competitiveness, parking, sanitation, property and sales taxes, and proximity to brick and mortar businesses. Local regulatory debates are shaped by the different perspectives of the varied stakeholders, including food truck vendors, local restaurant owners, restaurant associations, consumers, and city officials.

Generally there are four main policy areas for your local decision-makers to consider:

1. Economic Activity—What is

the city’s overall economic strategy for wanting to encourage food trucks? What aspects of a food truck ordinance could potentially enhance economic development (e.g., streamlining permitting processes and permitting costs)? Permitting food trucks should be a strategy to increase economic activity, and not deter potential investment by making the process difficult and cumbersome.

2. Public Health—What aspects of an ordinance relate to sanitation and food safety? Should the process originate from the health department, planning department, or be managed equally by both departments? Who will review the plans and inspect the physical truck?
3. Public Safety—What aspects of the ordinance relate to the utilization of private property, vending proximity to schools, and pedestrian safety? How do you ensure the trucks do not create an unsafe environment for patrons?
4. Public Space—What aspects of the ordinance address the utilization of public property to conduct business (e.g., time constraints, proximity rules, and geographic limitations related to density)? Where can trucks be located so they meet the city’s strategic revitalization goals, but do not compete with existing businesses?

Ordinance Examples

There are many recently adopted policy examples from around Texas to serve as a guide for a city considering food trucks. Typically a city adopts an ordinance outlining the standards



Food trucks line up in front of the popular Dichotomy Coffee shop on Austin Avenue in Waco for the lunch rush. The right combination of food offerings complements the foot traffic to the popular coffee hang out. Visit the Texas Main Street Resource Library for examples of the ordinances.

for operation along with the permitting process. It is common that both the health department and planning department will be involved—often multiple permits and inspections are required. Main Street programs can be a helpful intermediary to help explain and simplify the process so that it is as business-friendly as possible. Main Street managers can visit the Online Resource Library for links to these examples:

- Austin Mobile Food Vendor Packet
- College Station Mobile Food Vendor Application and Ordinance
- Denton Food Truck Application, Requirements and Ordinance
- Round Rock Mobile Food Establishment Application and Ordinance
- Taylor Mobile Food Vendors and Food Courts Ordinance
- Waco Mobile Food Vendor Packet

SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS

We continue to spotlight in each edition of *Main Street Matters* those volunteers whose contributions and dedication are so important to the success of local programs. If you would like to honor a special volunteer with a spotlight, please send a short narrative and image to sarah.marshall@thc.state.tx.us.

Dallas Pena, Levelland Main Street Program

Article written by Missy Passmore, Main Street Manager, Levelland Main Street Program

The Levelland Main Street Program, now in its 18th year, continues to show great strides because of the continued support and partnerships in our community that has resulted in the completion of projects like center street parking, a new donated street clock, trash cans, benches, and now beautiful directional signage! But

these projects have only happened because of the work, commitment, and passion of awesome volunteers. One of these volunteers is Dallas Pena. He graduated from Baylor University in 2006. Upon graduation he worked for an oil company in Houston for two years before returning home to Levelland.

Pena began his volunteer career with Main Street Board in 2010, and his commitment and passion for the Main Street Program increased with each project, meeting, and event. In 2011, he stepped up to serve as the Main Street Vice Chair, knowing this meant an additional year would be added to his three-year term. He served as the Main Street Board Chair the following year.

Under his leadership, the Levelland Main Street Program brought back a Fall event and renamed it “Trunk or Treat on Main Street.” A new partnership was formed through the Levelland Ministerial Alliance, made up of all church pastors within the community to make this new event successful. Pena was strategic in getting new artwork added to the Main Street District, and “Ladies Night Out” had the highest involvement in merchant participation with 15 businesses open since the event began in 2005. The Levelland Main Street Program celebrated its 15th year of being a Texas Main Street city during his term as board chair and the program received its first grant from Humanities Texas for the “Downtown Historical Walking Tour.”

When asked what his most memorable moment has been in Main Street he answered, “The first

time that I volunteered as a doorman for Ladies Night Out and it wasn't until after I said yes that I learned that I had to wear a tuxedo with tails and a top hat. I remember thinking that I probably looked extremely goofy in the outfit because it was completely out of character for me. This was my first year on the Main Street board, so I was thinking that it was probably a part of my initiation requirements, so I knew that there was no looking back once I said yes. However, it turned out to be a very rewarding experience and I have volunteered for that event a number of times over the past few years. The doormen add that quality touch to the event and it is always fun to take part."

His involvement with the Levelland Main Street Program has not stopped even after his term on the Main Street board ended in 2014. One of Levelland's most recent visual victories can be attributed to this outstanding Main Street volunteer. During a Main Street design committee meeting, we needed a local welder to help with a project. Pena immediately came to the rescue and volunteered his company, Allied Oilfield Machine & Pump to lead the efforts of this project. This past year, 41 pedestrian signs for buildings and businesses downtown were created and installed with a plan of 43 more to be added by 2017 because of his philanthropy and vision for the Levelland Main Street Program. In October of 2015, Pena was named the "Levelland Main Street Hero of the Year." In January 2016, he accepted a second term on the Main Street advisory board to fulfill an unexpired term. His humble and forward-thinking attitude continue to make him a Levelland volunteer extraordinaire.



Levelland volunteer and past board chair, Dallas Pena has been a great asset to the Levelland Main Street Program. Dallas volunteered his own company, Allied Oilfield Machine & Pump to weld signage for buildings and businesses in downtown Levelland.

"I would say that the most rewarding experience I have had during my time with Main Street would be being able to see the Levelland Main Street program accomplish a good number of meaningful projects over the past few years to help make Levelland a better place," Pena said. All of our investments/projects will be on the square for many years to come and it is rewarding to know that I was able to be a part of making them happen. We are truly blessed to have great volunteers involved with the Levelland Main Street Program and it is an honor to be associated with such a great group of people in our community."

MAIN STREET EVENTS

ELGIN

Sip Shop and Stroll
Thursday, February 11, 2016
5-8 p.m.

Sip a little wine and shop as you

stroll through the stores in historic downtown Elgin. You will find diverse merchandise, eclectic decor, artwork by local artists, and live music in many of the venues.

GLADEWATER

Valentine's Dinner and Dance
Thursday, February 11, 2016
6-8 p.m.

An evening event of catered fine dining, dance, contests, photos, giveaways, and more. See [Facebook](#) page for more information.

HILLSBORO

Fire and Ice
Saturday, February 13, 2016
2-5 p.m.
Colonial Grand Hall

There will be numerous gourmet food vendors with booths selling their products. In addition, there will also be fire dancers and a

gourmet dinner followed by a concert by the Sinatra-styled band Sway, who will be making their Texas debut in Hillsboro after performing in the west portion of the United States for the past few years.

LA GRANGE

I Love La Grange Count the Hearts Contest February 6–13, 2016

The contest encourages residents and tourists to visit participating merchants on the square to count the hearts created by local school children scattered throughout downtown. The top three entries who come closest to the total number of hearts will receive a beautiful gift basket filled with goodies. Watch for more information on our [Facebook](#) page.

MCKINNEY

Krewe of Barkus Dog Parade and Festival Sunday, February 7, 2016 12:30–4 p.m.

McKinney is calling on all four-legged canine friends and their best buddies to share in the excitement. In past years, more than 250 dogs participated in the parade alongside more than 4,500 spectators in awe of costumes, creatures, and creativity. Patterned after the Mystic Krewe of Barkus in New Orleans, Krewe of Barkus will feature a parade, vendor booths, interactive activities, and more. See [website](#) for more information.

ROCKWALL

Night Owls Late Till 8! 2nd Thursdays Monthly 5–8 p.m.

Downtown shops extend their hours until 8 p.m. the second Thursday monthly, offering promotions, live music, and discounts.

SAN AUGUSTINE

Junk in the Trunk Saturday, February 6, 2016 10–2 p.m.

Bring your wares, crafts, antiques, organization promotions, garage sale items, etc. to the downtown courthouse parking area.

ANNIVERSARIES & TRAININGS



(Top image) La Grange Main Street board and staff started off the first workday of 2016 and their 20th anniversary year with a volunteer training held in a local business downtown. It was also the day a four-page, full-color special section in the Fayette County Record celebrating the anniversary hit the newsstands. (Bottom image) New managers and board members gathered in Georgetown for New Manager Training in late January.

Websites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: www.aahpfdn.org
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: www.ahlp.org
(The) American Institute of Architects: www.aia.org
American Planning Association: www.planning.org
American Society of Landscape Architects: www.asla.org
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: www.tclf.org
(The) Handbook of Texas Online: www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online
Keep Texas Beautiful: www.ktb.org
League of Historic American Theatres: www.lhat.org
National Main Street Center: www.preservationnation.org/main-street
National Park Service: www.nps.gov
National Trust for Historic Preservation: www.preservationnation.org
Partners for Sacred Places: www.sacredplaces.org
Preservation Easement Trust: www.preservationeasement.org
PreservationDirectory.com: www.preservationdirectory.com
Preservation Texas: www.preservationtexas.org
Project for Public Spaces: www.pps.org
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy: www.railstotrails.org
Scenic America: www.scenic.org
Texas Department of Agriculture: www.TexasAgriculture.gov
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.state.tx.us
Texas Downtown Association: www.texasdowntown.org
Texas Folklife Resources: www.texasfolklife.org
Texas Historical Commission: www.thc.state.tx.us
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: www.tpwd.state.tx.us
Texas Rural Leadership Program: www.trlp.org
Texas State Preservation Board: www.tspb.state.tx.us
Urban Land Institute: www.uli.org

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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