TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



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"MAKING MAIN STREET WORK" THE LIVING GOAL GRAPEVINE CONTINUES TO ACHIEVE

Written by David Klempin, Main Street Manager, Grapevine Main Street Program, Population approx. 50,915

Creating a destination with charisma, historic charm, and a modern vibe that draws visitors from neighboring towns, states, and countries is the Main Street goal for the city of Grapevine. The Grapevine Heritage Foundation board of directors serves as the Main Street board, and along with the Grapevine Historic Preservation Commission, the Historic Downtown Grapevine Association and the City of Grapevine departments, all work together to make downtown even more spectacular each day.

Since joining the Texas Main Street Program in 1984 as one of the state's first self-initiated cities, Grapevine has turned a bland downtown into a shopping, dining, and entertainment destination



(Top image) Grapevine in 1984. (Bottom image) Grapevine in 2015.

for Texas and the world. With 5,000 first-class hotel rooms and a shuttle service sponsored by the Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) that transports hotel guests and visitors to Historic Main Street, over 15 million annual visitors find their introduction to Grapevine a very exciting experience. Main Street's mix of business is approximately one-third retail and two-thirds office, arts and entertainment, restaurants, service

businesses, and wineries.

Grapevine is one of my favorite places to visit in the world! I love to cook, and the Grapevine Olive Oil Company and the Spice & Tea Exchange have great products and wonderful atmosphere. The Grapevine Farmers Market is the best there is in Texas! —Fran Stout of North Richland Hills, a neighboring city Because of its emphasis on festivals and events which promote all the city has to offer, in 2012 Grapevine was named a "World Festival & Event City" by the International Festivals & Events Association (IFEA). This is an extremely high achievement and one that was carefully and strategically grown for over 25 years. Today, Grapevine's Main Street bustles with 17 festivals and events each year.

Public art has proven to be a great way to share Grapevine history. Bronze sculptures and interpretive markers are strategically placed along Main Street to engage visitors, citizens, and children on school tours. Grapevine Today magazine, published each year by the Grapevine CVB, puts current information at the visitors' fingertips; if visitors don't want to read this, they can ask the employees in the shops on Main Street for information about activities and events. For the past 13 years, the Grapevine CVB has offered "Destination Grapevine" classes to educate employees who are on the tourism frontline each day in all types of local businesses. "Destination Grapevine" also teaches the importance of creating positive visitor experiences. Over 2,000 employees from various businesses have participated in the classes, creating a corps of informed Grapevine tourism professionals who have personal knowledge and a handy manual for answering all types of visitor questions.

During the 31 years that Grapevine has been in the Texas Main Street Program, over 500 new jobs have been created and nearly 100 new businesses started on Main Street. Grapevine's total employment tops 49,000 with over 28,000 hospitality employees included in the number.



(Top image) Grapevine's Main Street bustles with 17 festivals and events each year. (Bottom image) Martha Roitman-Boothe, Director of Destination Services, shows the "Destination Grapevine" manual that can answer all types of visitor questions.

Main Street's vacancy rate has also significantly improved since it joined the Texas Main Street Program in 1984.

Grapevine embodies the word 'Texas' which means 'Friend,' and is perfect for the type of business I have—a community-type eatery. The community believes in and supports its downtown.—Dan Weinberger, owner of Weinberger's Delicatessen

Investment in the historic downtown area is nearly equally divided between the public and private sector. Public investment includes the replica 1891 Wallis Hotel building reconstructed in 1991 for an office and now used for a winery; a new City Hall building constructed in 1997; the restored 1940 Palace Theatre completed in 2001; and a new Convention & Visitors Bureau world headquarters building completed in 2012. Private investment includes three oneblock retail development areas; a 188-unit apartment and retail development; and the grand Bank of the West at the north end of Main Street.

Grapevine Main Street is a great place for visitors, residents, business owners, and employees. Banks, restaurants, shoe repair shop, auto repair business, doctors' offices, dentists, optometrists, printers, barber and beauty shops, and more can be found on Main Street. Everyone can conveniently handle a lot of "life" over their lunch hours in downtown Grapevine.

The Historic Downtown Grapevine Association (HDGA),



(Top left image) A new Convention & Visitors Bureau world headquarters building was completed in 2012. (Top right image) Messina's Shoe Repair is just one of the many businesses that can be found on Main Street. (Bottom left image) The Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport was constructed over 7,800 acres of farmland in the late 1960s. (Bottom right image) Grapevine's farmers market increases good healthy eating habits and supports the community atmosphere.

a non-profit organization with approximately 80 business members located and operating within the historic downtown area, has a mission to enhance and promote the historic downtown area for the benefit of its members; to be engaged with local leaders and groups to maintain Grapevine's quality of life; to help secure and protect downtown's heritage; and to ensure a healthy business environment. Monthly meetings inform merchants about upcoming festivals and events and large-group meetings being held in Grapevine's hotels.

A strong "walkability index" is positive for visitors and for those who live near Main Street. Grapevine's physical environment is pedestrian friendly because the town is located on one of Texas' designated prairies, the Grape Vine Prairie. Grapevine's generally flat terrain was one of the reasons for settlement in 1844 and for the construction of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport in the late 1960s on over 7,800 acres of farmland inside the Grapevine city limits.

To add safety to walkability, the city of Grapevine has created pedestrian-friendly sidewalks in the Historic Township. A short walk to Main Street provides endless opportunities for exercise, visiting friends and neighbors, shopping, dining, enjoying entertainment, wine tasting, listening to music, attending church, going to the library, or to the REC (Recreation, Education, Community) center to workout, swim, take computer classes, and more. Access to the Grapevine Farmers Market, located



(Left image) Grapevine's Vintage Railroad, circa 1896, is the oldest operating steam engine in Texas. (Right image) Grapevine's Palace Arts Center showcases a lot of talent, and keeps the toes tapping.

behind the downtown Gazebo, increases healthy eating habits and supports Grapevine's cosmopolitan community atmosphere. Crosswalks on Main Street with sustainable LED flashing lights imbedded in the street as well as on overhead poles facilitates safe street crossings.

A future short walk to Main Street and the "soon-coming" new, historically-designed commuter rail depot will enhance convenience and also reduce automobile traffic and greenhouse emissions by providing rail service to Dallas, Fort Worth, D/ FW International Airport, and other Metroplex rail stations.

From their historic Main Street with its unique shopping, wine tasting, and entertainment experiences, to their wonderful historical museums that showcase artifacts and depict what life was like in the 1800s, Grapevine is a community full of wonderful treasures waiting to be discovered.—Traci Mayer, Executive Director of the Dallas/ Fort Worth Area Tourism Council

Main Street means fun! Whether you get your hands dirty learning an exciting craft such as glass blowing or blacksmithing, or lean more to the fine art of crafting your own bottle or case of wine, those options are available in downtown Grapevine. And for young explorers, enjoy a train ride adventure, art class, interactive museum exhibit, being temporarily locked up for a photo in Grapevine's historic 1909 calaboose (jail), or just a playful stroll up the street and back in time.

The Grapevine Vintage Railroad and its eclectic mix of engines including Puffy, the circa–1896 oldest operating steam engine in Texas—and a dozen beautifully restored train coaches, all blend perfectly into Grapevine's event schedule. The historic 1888 Cotton Belt Railroad Depot provides a unique beginning and ending point for each excursion adventure. From wine trains for adults, to Thomas the Tank Engine for the littlest travelers, there is special railroad fun on Grapevine's calendar of events for everyone.

Ten wineries on Main Street are sure to provide the perfect taste for the discriminating wine lover. Economical "Sip and Savor" wine passports, created by the Grapevine CVB, encourage Main Street strolling and wine tasting and can be used throughout the summer. Four Main Street museums and two galleries with rotating exhibits create an educational adventure for families, school groups, and visitors.

Main Street's nightlife keeps the toes tapping. Country music shows in the Palace Arts Center have been a Grapevine staple since 1975. Classic movies and performances by guest artists, such as the Texas Tenors, ensure sold-out houses in the vintage 1940 Palace Theatre. Restaurants such as Chill, Willhoite's, Tolbert's, and Farina's offer regularly scheduled live music in the evenings. Visit one or all of them—they are just a stroll apart. The Texas Star Dinner Theatre at Main and Dallas roads offers yearround, interactive murder mystery performances that are more fun than the law allows.

Grapevine's commitment to historic preservation is the underlying, strong and steady heartbeat of our Main Street and surrounding historic districts. It gives us our vibrant and very much alive downtown.—Melva Stanfield, Vice Chair of the Grapevine Heritage Foundation, long-time volunteer, and financial supporter

Bedrock to all its success is a commitment to historic preservation. In Grapevine, if you live in the historic township or own a building on Main Street, you know your property is important and that the city is committed to preserving it. Design guidelines, Certificate of Appropriateness procedures, and the preservation ordinance are accessible on the City of Grapevine website. Answers to questions are just a phone call or office visit away.

Grapevine's Main Street is a living example of adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Daniel's Place at the corner of Main and Dallas roads was formerly a cabinet shop. Today it is a lively entertainment corner with restaurants, dinner theater, and retail shops. Jess Daniel, charter board member of the Grapevine Heritage Foundation, led the "preservation way" in the late 1980s by demonstrating his personal preservation ethic and commitment to Grapevine. At the opposite end of Main Street is the historic Brock Farm, now Cross Timbers Winery. A registered Texas Historic Landmark, Cross Timbers Winery daily showcases its history, Texas products, hospitality, and sustainability.

The Main Street Program got us organized in the sense that we started staying open late as a group and advertising collectively for the holidays. In 1986, we merchants pooled our money and built the Gazebo on Main Street as a place for outdoor entertainment. Grapevine has continued to get better in every way since then.—Burl Gilliam, Main Street merchant, property owner and the first Chairman of the Grapevine Main Street Board (1984)

Pooling several thousand dollars to build the downtown Gazebo was significant in 1984. Those merchants, however, would never have dreamed that 31 years later, millions of dollars would be invested in their historic downtown and millions of visitors would come to Grapevine each year. Today, there are people on the street every day of the week, day and night.

The program's greatest advocate is the



(Top image) Daniel's Place is a good example of adaptive reuse in Grapevine. Originally a cabinet shop, it's now a lively entertainment corner. (Right image) Daniel's Place consists of restaurants, a dinner theater and retail shops.



Grapevine CVB, which employs the Main Street staff and whose executive director, Paul W. McCallum, sparks the visionary engine for the city. The Grapevine CVB provides print and electronic materials, destination services, and a dynamic festival program. Other Main Street program partners include the Grapevine Historical Society, Grapevine Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, and individual volunteers.

Grapevine's Main Street board focuses key groups on a common goal—historic preservation and making Main Street work. Their leadership works hand-inhand with partners to facilitate building design, guide economic reinvestment, and "knock-yoursocks-off" promotional planning. It's not work if you love it—and Grapevine loves tourism and the Texas Main Street Program.

UNDERSTANDING VACANT COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

Article written by Brian O'Connor, Economic Development Specialist, Texas Main Street Program/ Courthouse Square Initiative

The Realtor's[™] mantra of location, location, location, rings true as the single most determining factor of value for commercial real estate. A vacant commercial property in Buffalo, for instance, may remain abandoned for years, while a similar property in San Francisco may quickly attract an investor. In some areas, there may be little or



San Angelo vacant building. Commercial properties remain vacant for a variety of reasons.

no market demand for a commercial property in any condition, and in others, there may be demand, but not at levels sufficient to motivate developers to restore a vacant property. However, through a better understanding of local market conditions, gap financing tools and a strategic plan, it is possible to create a more favorable environment for downtown commercial development.

Commercial properties become vacant as people and businesses relocate, but they remain vacant for various reasons. Some vacant properties remain vacant as a result of court proceedings, estate settlements, or are passed on to new, uninterested, or incapable heirs. Often properties remain vacant because their market value is too low to justify the cost to make them habitable. Whatever the reason, the longer properties sit vacant, the more expensive they become to rehabilitate and the more they lower surrounding property values. Once decline starts, it can

spread steadily and reinforce itself. Therefore, municipalities should take it as an early warning sign when a property owner loses rentpaying tenants or avoids fixing up a deteriorating building. As the financial losses to maintain the property exceed the benefits, abandoning the property may appear to be the only reasonable alternative for the owner. It is at this time that local officials must ask themselves how they can make it less expensive and more expedient for owners to rehabilitate existing buildings.

Since the property owner is legally responsible for keeping the property to city code, contacting the owner should be a first step toward determining the owner's intentions and helping the owner place the property back into active reuse. However, many municipalities do not have the necessary systems in place to track vacant properties, so data collection and organization is a crucial initial step. Creating a centralized information depository on a property's ownership, location, condition, and type will be needed in order for the municipality to address conditions at the property.

However, property data without a strategy is insufficient to generate lasting change, which is why some municipalities have started commercial revitalization programs. The lead organization Main Street, Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Community Development Corporation (CDC), and city hall can coordinate stakeholders toward a common vision for a district using programming such as storefront improvements, real estate development, crime prevention, business support, business attraction, community festivals, marketing, and streetscape improvements.

These programs are essential as property owners often lack the knowledge to compare costs and potential returns from a property investment, how to rehabilitate a building, how to finance the rehabilitation, how to locate reliable contractors, or how to attract quality tenants. While incentivizing property owners to reuse vacant properties is typically the best option, it can be difficult, especially in weak market areas where the return on investment may not be immediately apparent. Although some owners may have a plan to reuse properties, many do not.

Fortunately, Main Street and EDC staff may provide the technical support and knowledge of public incentives to allow owners to see the full cost and market potential for their property. Matching information and resources with property owner needs can be an effective strategy for the rehabilitation of individual properties. However, since the cost of redeveloping commercial properties can be prohibitively high, creative financing sources are necessary to encourage owner participation, especially in weaker markets. If possible, sources of capital must be made available from both the private and public sector, as the best opportunities for success will come from layering multiple sources of revenue from both sectors. Committing public funding sources to the redevelopment of vacant commercial property may improve access to conventional loan capital.

In weak markets, developers increasingly look to the public sector for incentives. The public sector has an array of economic tools to fill gaps in projects where the private sector considers it too risky to invest. Assisting property owners in accessing capital is one of the best ways the public sector can support neighborhood stabilization in weak markets area.

Municipalities can utilize overlay districts to provide funding for vacant property redevelopment in targeted districts. Sources of public financing can lower the overall cost of redevelopment and keep historic commercial properties competitive with new construction. Local governments have several economic development tools at their disposal (tax increment financing, tax abatement, economic development corporations, and enterprise zones) to incentivize commercial property redevelopment and reuse.

Additionally, the local government can leverage an owner's resources by improving access to project equity



In Harlingen, a small incentive and the market potential helped bring a 40-year-old business downtown to fill a prominent corner that had been vacant several years. Armando's Tuxedos originally opened in the 1970s with stores in Brownsville and Weslaco. The Texas Main Street design staff helped the owners visualize options for the Harlingen building.

through the use of federal and state tax credits for historic preservation, affordable housing, and for lowincome communities.

It is important to remember with the flip side of vacant properties: for that under the right circumstances, they can be used to advance the renewal of the neighborhoods to whose decline they contributed. When older structures outlive their uses, they can often be converted for new ones through the process of adaptive reuse. Adaptive reuse refers to adapting old structures for new purposes. Commercial buildings are best repurposed in ways that leverage the existing assets of the structure and its surrounding area.

However, choosing a reuse that matches a structure's location, size, and condition is not always easy. Therefore, Main Street or EDC staff should consider developing a property assessment checklist for review with the property owner to determine the property's reuse potential.

To complete the property assessment checklist (see top image on the right), Main Street staff should collaborate with local contractors, realtors, building officials, zoning administrators, and bankers to obtain an understanding of the building's potential amid market conditions. The information collected will allow staff to explore various redevelopment strategies for the property including:

- Renovation
- Adaptive reuse

1	Condition of the property
2	Market demand for the reuse
3	Archirectural or historical significance of the property and to the district
4	Environmental contamination of property
5	Property ownership and title
6	Costs of redevelopment
7	Capacity of entities involved
8	Access to financial and technical resources
9	Short and long-term strategies for the area

Property assessment checklist should be completed to obtain an understanding of the building's potential amid market conditions.

• Conversion to mixed-use

Building on an existing network of community connections, local government can function as a strategic ally for vacant commercial property owners.

Resources and Further Reading

National Vacant Properties Campaign

http://www.vacantproperties.org/ index.html

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

http://icma.org/main/topic. asp?tpid=17&stid=93&hsid=1

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.

Scott Sustek, San Angelo Main Street Program

Article written by Lucie Hofheins, Assistant Director, San Angelo Street Program

Downtown San Angelo, Inc. (DSA) has been a designated Main Street Program for the past 10 years. Much of the success of the program is due to the many dedicated and hard-working volunteers who assist with a variety of activities.



One such volunteer is Scott Sustek. Sustek, a well-known and well established artist, has been commissioned to prepare his art works all over West Texas with many of his sculptures featured throughout the city of San Angelo. Scott is also a dedicated teacher at Cornerstone Christian School. In 2011 Sustek secured a working studio in downtown San Angelo just two doors down from the DSA office at 24 West Concho Ave. DSA utilizes a portion of the space to house promotional materials including the fiberglass sheep, which have become a hallmark of downtown San Angelo. Sustek was hooked. Working closely with staff and DSA's Executive Committee, he has become an invaluable part of the team. His contributions are too vast to name, but the following are a few of the contributions Sustek has made:

- Organizing the "Miss Wool" fiberglass project contestants placed in beds of pick-up trucks on top of hay bales for the annual Miss Wool Parade.
- Assisting with stage set-up and break-down for special events which include the "Wooly Bully Mutton Bustin' Festival."
- Hosting students in his downtown studio for a variety of art classes using a number of mediums.
- Leading a group charged with design and creation of DSA parade float.
- Assisting the Summer For Kids "Paintbrush Alley" project, which allows youngsters to interpret their thoughts about water and other environmental issues in a public exhibit.
- Designing and painting a number of the Sheep Art Projects, and also repairing those sheep which have suffered damaged and are in need of special care.

Even the littlest requests are met with a positive response from Susek. There was the time he repaired a severely clogged paper shredder, did minor touch-up of one of the Historic Murals of San Angelo, and handled grounds keeping before a special event.

Sustek sculpted "Working Cowboy" in a downtown Concho Avenue studio space provided by Ken and Brenda Gunter over nine months. It took a little more than a year for a foundry to cast it in bronze. Scott said "Working Cowboy's" wave—a sweeping motion—both welcomes people coming into San Angelo from the north and wishes motorists headed north goodbye.

Sustek's no stranger to San Angelo art lovers. His other public art here includes a statue of an owl that's next to the Stephens Central Library and the sculpture of an airplane on Knickerbocker Road at the entrance to the San Angelo Regional Airport.

MAIN STREET EVENTS

Nov. 28th is Small Business Saturday. To celebrate in your downtown, see these sites for more details: Small Business Saturday, and SBA, and Main Street Small Business Saturday Roadmap.

GEORGETOWN

3rd Annual Ladies Nite Out— Paint the Town Red Thursday, November 19, 2015 5–9 p.m.

Show your love of the Georgetown

Square in your favorite LRD (little red dress) for a festive night and fun with girlfriends. See website for more information.

Shop Small Spree on Small Business Saturday, November 28, 2015 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Tap into your inner pirate and participate in a "Shop Small" Treasure Hunt by visiting at least six downtown small businesses that will be showcased. See website for more information.

GLADEWATER

Holiday Open House Saturday, November 14, 2015 5–8 p.m.

Come kick off the Christmas season with our Holiday Open House. Enjoy strolling through the shops and sampling some of East Texas favorite foods with a steaming cup of hot chocolate.

Small Business Saturday Saturday, November 28, 2015 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Remember to Shop Gladewater this Small Business Saturday. Visit your favorite downtown stores for amazing deals this holiday weekend.

HILLSBORO

Outdoor Movie Night "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" Saturday, November 14, 2015 7:30 p.m.

Shown on the back wall of A Tiskit A Taskit on E. Elm Street. Bring out a blanket or a chair and enjoy

Texas Main Street Program TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION 9

a great family movie in Historic Downtown Hillsboro.

LEVELLAND

Ladies Nite Out Thursday, November 12, 2015 6–9 p.m.

Christmas music plays all around the square, and horse drawn carriages transport ladies from store-to-store to shop for those perfect gifts. See website for more information.

MCKINNEY

Home for the Holidays...A McKinney Christmas Friday, November 27—Sunday, November 29, 2015

Non-stop family activities, entertainment, food galore, a chance to finish your Christmas shopping, and much more. See website for more information.

SAN MARCOS

2015 Wine and Wassail Walk Friday, November 13, 2015 5:30–8:30 p.m.

A progressive tour of retail businesses serving a variety of wines, homemade wassail, and paired hors d'oeuvres. See website for more information.

Congratulations to our new 2016 cities!

At last week's quarterly meeting, Commissioners of the THC voted to accept Brownsville, Corpus Christi and Sherman as newly designated Texas Main Street communities for 2016! We are very excited to start working with them. They will enter the program January 1, 2016, which will also be Texas Main Street's 35th anniversary year! With the addition of these three programs, there are now 90 designated Main Street communities. Brownsville and Corpus Christi are new and will be part of the state's 15-city urban Main Street network. Sherman is a recertified Main Street city, having previously participated in the early 1980s as a self-initiated program, and 1993–1998 under full designation.

Welcome Brownsville, Corpus Christi and Sherman!

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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