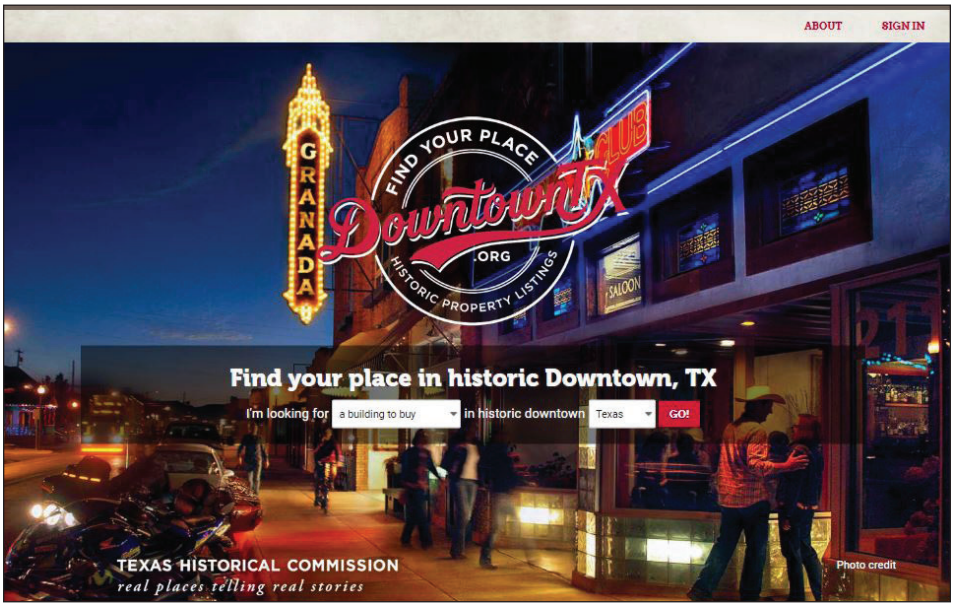
DowntownTX.org | Find your place in historic Downtown, TX

DowntownTX.org is a Google-Maps-empowered real estate and building inventory tool for historic downtowns across Texas.



DowntownTX.org is unique in the revitalization field in that it combines multiple types of software commonly used by downtown managers into one online platform that facilitates: **1. real estate marketing, 2. building and business inventories, and 3. historic resource surveys.**

About DowntownTX.org

DowntownTX.org builds community by showcasing historic downtown properties and inviting entrepreneurs and developers to participate in your town's revitalization movement. While real estate can often seem transactional, this is a tool for those more interested in becoming a part of the community through their investment. Because DowntownTX.org is the only complete inventory of downtown districts' commercial building stock, it serves as a valuable public resource for data that's not typically digitized and often difficult to track down. This includes building histories, photographs, historical resource survey information, and more. Additionally, this functionality provides powerful administrative capabilities for downtown program management, which helps build historic preservation and economic development capacity in your town and small towns across Texas.

The first of its kind in the downtown revitalization field, this software was conceptualized and developed by the Town Square Initiative, an affililiate of the Texas Main Street Program, for use by the Texas Historical Commission's Main Street and Certified Local Government programs. It officially launched on May 1, 2017, for Preservation Month, and cities are being continually added over time. The THC is continuing to invest in development features for advanced reporting capabilities in 2019 specifically for historic survey, inventory and property profiles. Long-term goals include licensing the software as DowntownUS.org and making it available to downtown programs across the country.

How to Participate

Any Texas Main Street city or Certified Local Government city can now join. There is no additional cost to your city. It is another benefit of participating in the Texas Historical Commission's programs. Contact Emily Koller at emilyk@thc.texas.gov or (512) 463-7466 to discuss the scope for implementation in your city.

More info at: thc.texas.gov/town-square-initiative.

ELIGIBILITY: Any Texas Main Street or Certified Local Government City.

COST: There is no cost to cities.

REQUIREMENTS: Local programs are required to assign a project manager who will complete the training and maintain an accurate building and business inventory using the site including current real estate listings. Currently use of DowntownTX.org is evaluated as part of annual accreditation for the Texas Main Street Program.

Imagine the Possibilities Tours

Cities that are active on DowntownTX.org can participate in the annual Imagine the Possibilities tours. These events invite potential investors, downtown developers, entrepreneurs, and residents looking to be part of downtown's transformation, to imagine the possibilities each May for Preservation Month. This statewide event began in 2017 with the launch of DowntownTX.org to help promote the resource and connect available historic property with interested new stewards. The concentrated statewide effort creates synergy and excitement for Texas' historic downtowns and helps bring the site to life. Selected properties featured on each city's DowntownTX.org page are open and accessible to the public, and tour attendees obtain additional information on downtown development and business resources at a central point.

2018 Tour Summary

Cities: 20
Tours: 22
Attendees: 825
Properties Showcased: 154
Buildings with Accepted Offers: 6
Unique users: 2,400

Linden, TX

Bastrop, TX

"Participating in DowntownTX.org and having an Imagine the Possibilities Tour is like gardening. You plant the seeds in the tour, but seeds take time to germinate—so keep doing what you need to be doing to make your downtown community great and don't sweat the empty "garden plots." Stuff is happening under the surface that you can't see! One day, you will be surprised to find something growing! Just keep watering and fertilizing—it is happening, you just have to be patient."

- Melida Heien,
Main Street Coordinator
City of Longview

Success Story

Kingsville, TX

Kingsville launched their site in the fall of 2017 and participated in the Imagine the Possibilities tours in May 2018. During this time, they uploaded a completed historic resource survey and illustrated the proposed downtown National Register district boundary on their site, which was officially approved by the National Park Service on October 15, 2018. They have seen renewed interest in their downtown. The tour prompted the owners of three vacant buildings to consider the sale of those properties and the downtown manager was able to list them For Sale by Owner with a price. 400 E. Kleberg, the historic Coleman's Appliance Store, sold to local developers interested in converting it to residential.

400 E. Kleberg, ca. 1940.

New City Process

1. CITY CONTACTS TSI AND PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING:

- Basic building inventory—current name, historic name, site address, ownership, and year built if known.
- An export from the county appraisal district data—parcel ID/tax ID, ownership, legal description, assessed/appraised values, building square feet and parcel acreage.
- Zoning map and zoning ordinance.
- A list by address of historic designations in downtown—local, state, and National Register landmarks and districts.
- Boundary maps for all downtown districts—Main Street, historic districts, TIRZ, etc.

2. TSI CREATES THE CITY'S DOWNTOWNTX.ORG "DASHBOARD" SITE.

3. CITY ASSIGNS A PROJECT MANAGER TO COMPLETE A TRAINING.

4. PROJECT MANAGER ADDS ESSENTIAL INFORMATION SO SITE IS COMPLETE FOR THE PUBLIC. INFO INCLUDES:

- Current and historic photos.
- Brief building descriptions/ histories.
- Property availability.
- Community profile page includig narrative and 5-10 high quality photos that convey the best qualities of the downtown.
- Incentives and development process information.

5. CITY LAUNCHES SITE TO PUBLIC & MAINTAINS* IT BY:

- Hosting an annual Imagine tour.
- Working with property owners/real estate agents to update listings.
- Adding new data such as historic photos and Design Reports. *THC maintains appraisal district data.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories