



Main Street! Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

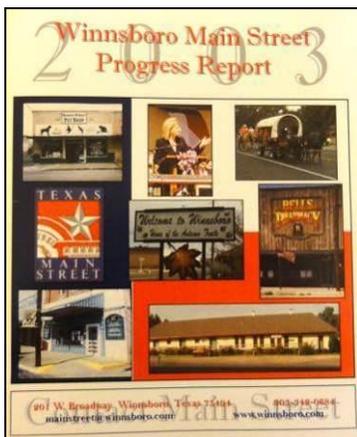
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Spotlight on Winnsboro

(Population approx. 3,442)



Before there was Winnsboro, the town was known as Crossroads (due to the intersection of roads), then Wynnsborough and Winnsborough, in honor of John E. Wynn, an Englishman who settled in the town in 1850. After the Civil War the city began growing, aided by the addition of the East Line



Winnsboro Main Street celebrated their first-year accomplishments with a published progress report.

and Red River Railroad in 1876 and the Texas Southern Railroad in 1904. By 1914 the flourishing community had about 2,300 citizens.

Winnsboro Main Street (WMS) became a Texas Main Street city in 2003. Proud of its first-year accomplishments, in 2004, WMS published (with financial assistance from a strong downtown partner, the Southwestern Electric Power Co.—Main Street is about partnerships) a 16-page Winnsboro Main Street 2003 Progress Report. Numerous accomplishments were cited this first year, including the completion of a downtown building inventory, reinvestment of more than \$1 million in downtown, establishment of an incentive grant program with matching funds provided by the Winnsboro Economic Development Corporation, production a downtown historic walking tour and business directory, acquisition of key donations for the program and more.

More notable achievements since that first year include:



Downtown Winnsboro (photo credit top picture: Michael Alford)

- Receipt of a Main Street Texas Capital Fund Grant for a paved parking lot in front of the Chamber/Travel Center for downtown visitors.
- Purchase of vacant lot due to fire in 2002 and construction of a new compatible building was constructed after working with the local and state Main Street programs.
- Feature in the *Dallas Morning News*, Sunday edition and in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, front page travel section, April 2005.



(top) Winnsboro Center for the Arts Women in the Arts exhibit.

(bottom) 3rd Friday Art Walk with Steampunk as the theme.

Photo credit: Michael Alford

- Establishment of the first (and “annual” ever since) Classic Car Cruise-In show in Sept. 2005. Currently, Main Street shares this responsibility with another non-profit—Main Street profits go to downtown façade grants.
- From 2008–2011, receipt of a grant from the federal Vista/Americorps Program to secure individuals to work on many downtown projects, a few of which were forming a Farmers Market and writing grant applications for downtown.
- Passage of preservation ordinance in 2009.
- Walking tour booklet revised and reprinted.
- Receipt of “Best Afternoon Stroll” and “Best Small Town Downtown” designations in 2008 by readers of *County Line Magazine*.
- First Main Street Fine Art Market held in Nov. 2009.

- Downtown map, displayed at the Chamber kiosk, completed in Feb. 2012.
- Sign ordinance passed in April 2012.
- Facebook page initiated in July 2012.
- Building rehabilitations resulting in more than \$12 million reinvestment in downtown.
- Consistent 95% occupancy in downtown.

WMS will be proudly celebrating its 10th anniversary with a Celebrate Main Street event on March 15. The event will include a community-wide reception at the Winnsboro Center for the Arts, with downtown window displays featuring the history of each building and how they have been preserved/renovated. The town has been transformed by the presence of the Main Street Program

Cultural Arts District

Winnsboro is unique in that the historic Main Street area has more than one designation, including Certified Retirement Community, Preserve America Community, and a Texas Cultural Arts District. The city was among the first seven state designations of Cultural Arts Districts and the only downtown area to be so honored.

Winnsboro has been a magnet for painters, potters, photographers, writers, musicians, and performers for many years. Today, not a weekend goes by that there aren’t multiple events in various venues all within a walkable area.

Over the years, well-known musicians, such as the Law’s of Canada, the legendary Ray Wiley Hubbard, and actor/musician Ronny Cox, have made Winnsboro a con-

venient tour stop on the way to or from Austin or Dallas. In addition, many local musicians, including the award-winning duo of Alder & Hearne, have their own home-grown fan base.

In the past few years, interest in fine art has increased. Keyring Gallery is a sizable gallery with works of numerous local artists. In addition, several stores and the coffee shop, Art & Espresso, hang photos and paintings for sale. Sayadream Studio, offers classes to visitors and local residents. They also work closely with the Winnsboro Center for the Arts (WCA) in downtown managing major exhibits, including a Dali event in 2012. WCA, located in a historic building on Market Street, manages to combine art exhibits with the requisite receptions, as well as theater productions. WCA also serves as temporary venue for Crossroads Music Co., while the adjoining building is renovated.

On the first weekend in November, the Winnsboro Fine Art Market (WFAM) is held on Market & Elm Streets and features many Texas artists. The 2013 event will mark the fourth year for outdoor WFAM.

Not to be overlooked is the significant number of writers in the area who enjoy the solitude of the country to write their novels and screenplays, as well as photographers and videographers who are documenting life in the Upper East Side of Texas.

In Winnsboro, everyone is encouraged to either participate or be part of an appreciative audience at the various venues. The downtown Art Walk is held every 3rd Friday, and includes a Fashion Walk with those in costumes for the particular theme: Medieval, Victorian, Steam-

punk, etc. The theme for February is Mardi Gras. Main Street works with the downtown merchants for monthly Art Walk advertising. These events are getting popular enough to attract out-of-towners to don their attire and drive to Winnsboro.

During the past 10 years of being a Texas Main Street City, Winnsboro has become the destination city it has dreamed of by focusing on preserving and restoring its downtown, retail, arts, entertainment, and restaurants.

Winnsboro has grown from a sleepy town to a vibrant cultural center that draws people from Dallas, Tyler and other cities. It is hard to find a parking space on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights—it's a great problem.

Thanks to Denise Miranda, Winnsboro Main Street Manager and Anita Williams, publisher of the Winnsboro Online Guide <http://winnsboroonlineguide.com>, for providing this article.

NEWS

Preservation Day Feb. 20

Supporters of historic preservation from across the state will join in Austin on February 20 for Preservation Day.



Two courthouses in Texas Main Street cities were rededicated in January—Comal County Courthouse (left) in New Braunfels, and LaSalle County Courthouse (right) in Cotulla. Both of these beautiful restoration projects were participants in the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program through the Texas Historical Commission (THC). These cities are also participating in the I Love Texas Courthouses initiative as well. Become a friend of the Texas Historical Commission on Facebook to see more.

Preservation Day. This will be a great time to meet Preservation Texas' new executive director, Anna Glover Hudson, (previous board member). For a schedule of events and registration information, see www.preservationtexas.org.

Recruiting the Right Board Members

In recognizing that board members are one of a Main Street program's most critical assets, National Main Street recently posted an online Story of the Week article on the subject:

www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2013/130207boardrecruit/recruiting-the-right-board.html

Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off...Let's Clean Up Downtown

The Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off will be Saturday, April 6. This is the single largest one-day cleanup event in the state and serves as Texas'



signature event for the Great American Cleanup, the nation's largest community improvement program, held annually from March 1 through May 31.

In 2012, more than 2,017 Great American Clean-up events were



Texas Main Street Managers attending winter training Jan. 29-Feb. 1 in front of the Llano County Courthouse

held, with more than 87,000 volunteers. More than seven million pounds of trash was collected along 5,122 miles of highway. For more information on how your community can be involved, see www.dontmesswithtexas.org.

The Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off is part of the partnership between Keep Texas Beautiful and the [Texas Department of Transportation](http://www.txdot.org). Participants can receive trash bags, volunteer giveaways, promotional items, and more. See <http://ktb.org/programs/dont-mess-with-texas-trash-off.aspx>

MAIN STREET AROUND THE STATE

Kerrville

Utilizing the “I wish this was” project (see www.iwishthiswas.com), originally used after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans to gather input on what locals wanted to see in their vacant stores, Kerrville held its own version of this event for downtown. Ideas poured in at the downtown First Friday Wine Share



Pictures were posted along with the question “What do you wish this was?” at this community Wine Share event in Kerrville, which gathered 140 ideas for vacant downtown buildings.

event in January, sponsored by the Historic Downtown Business Alliance and Kerrville Main Street to solicit ideas for vacant downtown buildings. Attendees filled out cards and posted their suggestions next to a picture of a downtown building.

Vernon

Vernon's community tourism committee recently allocated a total of \$95,000 in Hotel Occupancy Tax funds to two community organizations that are using these funds to develop two museums in downtown. One will be the Jack Teagarden (father of the jazz trombone) Museum, which will be located in the historic Firestone building. The other is the Wilbarger County Historical Museum, which will be housed in the historic county jail. Both museums plan to open in the next few months.



Remodeling work is underway on the Wilbarger County Historical Museum, set to open in Spring 2013.

Vernon Main Street will also be meeting with the Texoma-Area Downtown Improvement Coalition on Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 11:30 a.m. in Frederick, Oklahoma at the Lois Long Center. Featured speaker will be Mayor Fred Fitch of Lawton, Oklahoma talking about their new 2nd Street project. Texas and Oklahoma downtown organizations (all are welcome) attend this quarterly meeting.

FOCUS ON MAIN STREET DESIGN

Main Street Design: It's Not an Island

Main Street has been going strong in Texas communities for over 32 years! That's a remarkable run for any organization, and an accomplishment that has been achieved together. The Four-Point Approach™ works because it looks at the whole picture. It recognizes that it isn't **one** thing that works—it is **many** things working together.

It should come as no surprise that there are many other organizations and movements that share Main Street's motivation and goals, two of these are **Project for Public Spaces** and **Team Better Block**. **Project for Public Spaces (PPS)** PPS has been around even longer than the Texas Main Street Program, and the two programs have collaborated many times over the years. While Main Street is identified by the Four-Point Approach™, PPS is identified by a concept called Placemaking. This is further explained on the PPS website, www.pps.org.

“Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Our pioneering Placemaking approach helps citizens transform their public spaces into vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation and serve common needs.

PPS was founded in 1975 to expand on the work of William (Holly) Whyte, the author of *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. Since then, projects have been completed in more than 2500 communities in 40 countries and all 50 U.S. states. Partnering with public and private

organizations, federal, state, and municipal agencies, business improvement districts, neighborhood associations and other civic groups, improves communities by fostering successful public spaces.”

The real key to understanding what PPS is all about is identified in that last sentence “...we improve communities by fostering successful public spaces.” Make no mistake; “public spaces” is much more than streetscapes, pocket parks, or grand plazas. PPS believes that public places are only successful when they are the result of vigorous public input (bottom-up versus top-down planning) and when they are capable of supporting multiple uses. They refer to great places as some place that has at least 10 things to do or 10 reasons to be there. This would include such things as sitting, interacting with art, listening to music, buying food, learning about history, being able to read books, and so on. They believe a truly successful place should be safe, fun, charming, and welcoming. Their focus is on what people **do** in a city versus what the elements of a city look like.

So how does PPS relate to Main Street? Well, placemaking is about getting people together in order to achieve positive results. Placemaking is about economic and community development (when you get people together in viable public spaces, they are much more prone to buy and sell). Placemaking is about community organization (when there is a clear vision volunteers are more motivated). Placemaking is about getting youth involved (kids learn about setting goals and developing leadership skills). In other words placemaking is Main Street with a special emphasis upon what actually motivates people to use spaces. While Main Street uses historic preserva-

tion as the basis for economic development, PPS uses human behavior and preferences as the basis for economic development. Can Main Street learn from PPS? You bet. If Main Streeters start looking at their towns in terms of public spaces and how people use them on a day-to-day basis, they can enhance the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ by injecting more vitality and greater involvement in their commercial districts not only during special events, but on a daily basis as well.

Team Better Block (TBB)

Team Better Block (TBB) is referred to by Project for Public Spaces (PPS) as a lighter, quicker, cheaper approach to revitalizing streets and public spaces in the short term to inspire people to think differently about how those places could evolve. TBB was set up to speed up the public improvement projects process by making what usually takes years happen in the course of days or weeks. Once an entity has identified that they have an underused property that needs to be improved or revitalized, TBB is called in to test on-site strategies using full scale landscaping and furnishings in order to create mock-ups of public space improvements. The beauty of this approach is that if the mock up needs adjustment or proves to be unsatisfactory, it is simply rearranged until a more successful outcome is achieved. The conventional approach of spending huge sums of money for a design that may not even work is avoided and the public has the opportunity to have real involvement on important design decisions.

TBB already has a noteworthy track record. The TBB approach has been used in more than 30 cities across the United States, including six cities in Texas. TBB’s work has

been labeled as “tactical urbanism” or “guerilla urbanism” because of its real-time, on-site, and rapid deployment of urban transformation. They have the ability to help people transform underused urban spaces into “laboratories” that test urban strategies in fun, vital, and exciting ways. Communities feel empowered because their vision is translated into physical reality right before their eyes. The TBB process is also important because it helps civic leaders gauge public interest and commitment toward public improvement projects. When stakeholders can actually see and tinker with design recommendations using full-scale elements, infrastructure projects proceed with less disagreement of over design features, less construction change orders, and less dissatisfaction after construction is completed.

TBB maintains an arsenal of different design elements that are used based upon project need. These elements focus on amenities and public art, event-based programming, temporary public spaces, temporary complete streets (elements that show what happens when you reduce traffic capacity, add bike lanes, introduce mid-block pedestrian crossings, and transit stops), and elements for pop-up development (inexpensive structures and low-overhead retail) that creates a destination and activates the street.

Again, how does this organization’s work complement Main Street? Just as with PPS, TBB is all about vitality, reinvestment, and community involvement. Preservation is not at the forefront in this approach but it is a vital partner—when people are committed to public spaces, they will naturally care for the buildings that define those spaces.

Learn more about this organization's important work at www.teambetterblock.com.

Thanks to Howard Langner, Texas Main Street Architect, for providing this article.

I Texas Courthouses

★ NATIONAL TREASURES IN THE LONE STAR STATE ★



Many other Texas Main Street cities (besides the two restorations featured earlier) are already joining the Love Fest of Texas Courthouses in February. Recent participants are, from left to right: Llano County Courthouse in Llano, Harrison County Courthouse in Marshall, Williamson County Courthouse in Georgetown, Denton County Courthouse in Denton, and DeWitt County Courthouse in Cuero. Signatures are being collected from courthouse admirers across the Lone Star State and beyond for a giant, heart-shaped love letter, which will be unveiled on the steps of the Texas State Capitol on Wednesday, February 20, during Preservation Day. Sign your name today at www.ilovetexascourthouses.org/love-letter. This campaign is presented by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Texas, and the Texas Historical Commission.

Calendar of Events

- **March 28**
Texas Main Street First Lady's Tour (welcoming 2013 cities to the program) to the downtowns of: Childress (9:30 a.m.–10:45 a.m.), San Augustine (1:30 p.m.–2:45 p.m.), and Cuero (5:30 p.m.–6:45 p.m.).
- **March 28, Victoria**
Presentation by Jon Schallert, 8 a.m. –1:30 p.m., "Transform your Business into a Consumer Destination" at the Leo J. Welder Center for the Performing Arts, 214 N. Main St., tickets \$25 Victoria County and \$50 out of county, contact karol Stewart at Victoria Main Street Program karol@VictoriaMainStreet.org or call 361/578-0060
- **Apr. 14–16, 2013, New Orleans** National Main Streets Conference, theme: *Main Street and the Cultural Economy*
- **June 4–5, 2013, LaGrange**
New manager training prior to the beginning of Summer training for all managers. New manager training will last all day June 4 through noon June 5
- **June 5 (after noon)–June 7, 2013 (noon), LaGrange**
Summer Main Street training for all Texas Main Street managers

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
real places telling real stories