

Main Street Matters

DECEMBER 2018 • A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

A DOWNTOWN CUERO CHRISTMAS



*By Sandra Osman, Main Street Manager,
Cuero Main Street Program*

It's that time, the most wonderful time of the year as Cuero is transformed into a magical holiday downtown Texas destination that caters to kids of all ages. This holiday transformation includes a giant Snowzilla inner tube slide, ice skating rink, romantic horse carriage rides, and classic carousel surrounded by thousands of sparkling white lights. Make the trip to create some lasting memories with family and friends with cozy and historic Cuero as the backdrop. The 6th Annual Christmas in Downtown will host a 32-foot christmas tree with a gold star that lights up the entire holiday season, and you can expect to see around 10,000 visitors for all the Christmas festivities. Returning favorites include local talent on the entertainment stage, as well as the Frozen Snow Sisters, Elsa and Anna, and their ice harvester friend, Kristoff. You can catch Santa and his helpers on Friday and Saturday evening. Prepare to find yourself carried along by horse and carriage in

front of the decorated DeWitt County Courthouse. The courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and has served as a landmark of civic community and pride in South Texas since 1896. Its four-year interior and exterior renovation (2003-07) earned the prestigious 2010 Historic Restoration Award from the nonprofit Preservation Texas Inc.

The Christmas Crafter's Market will be back with artisan vendors and many of downtown shops will be open late for holiday shopping. The Pharmacy and Medical Museum has a fascinating display of history you won't want to miss. There will be plenty of food trucks to delight your appetite with funnel cakes, corn dogs, barbecue, teriyaki chicken, cajun food, fried treats, and a dessert truck at the ice skating rink to tempt your sweet tooth.

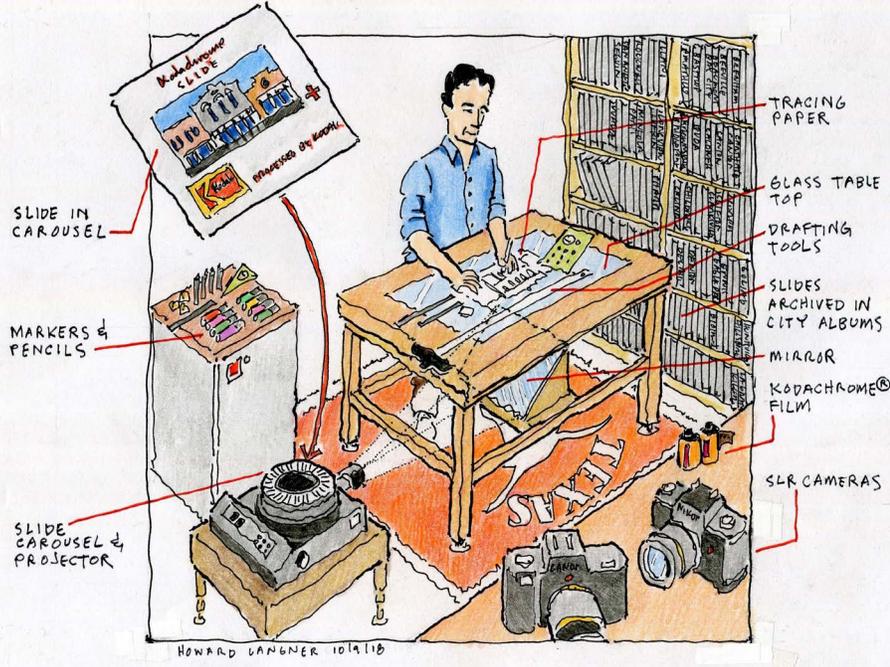
Event dates and hours are Friday, December 7, 6 p.m.-10 p.m. and Saturday, December 8, noon-10 p.m. Christmas in Downtown is brought to you by the City of Cuero staff, Cuero Main Street volunteers, and community sponsors. Keep up with Christmas in Downtown and other Cuero Main Street events by following the Facebook Cuero Main Street-Certified Page, Instagram, and website at www.cueromainstreet.com.



BACK WHEN TEXAS MAIN STREET RENDERINGS WERE DRAWN BY HAND



By Howard Langner, Main Street Designer, Urban Architect, and Architect from 1999 to 2016



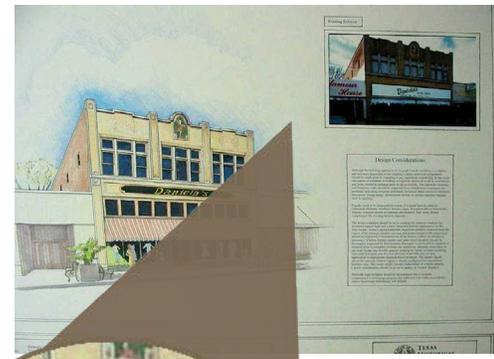
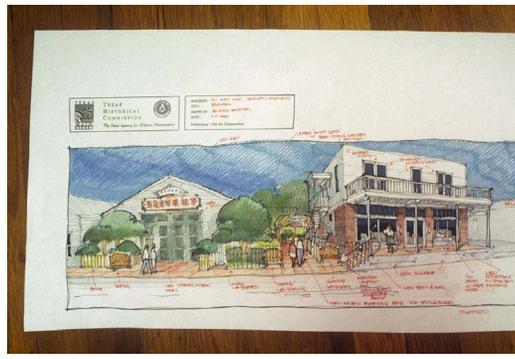
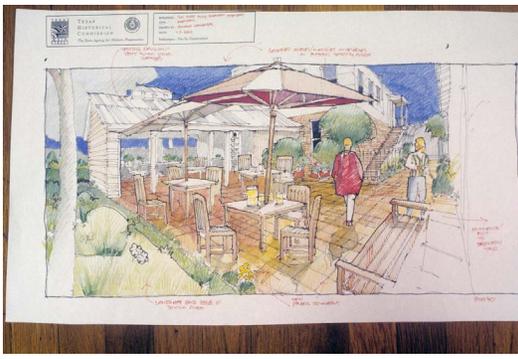
Main Street facade drawings were created with pencils, paper, ink pens, and color markers in the 1980s.

It should come as no surprise that the use of computers has had a huge impact on Texas Main Street Center services over the years. While office software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint has become essential for letters, reports, surveys, budgets, and presentations, design software such as Adobe Photoshop and Google SketchUp has become just as important for producing high-quality facade renderings. This article will take a look at how Main Street renderings were created before computers, when the Texas Main Street design staff drew things by hand.

Starting back in the early 1980s and continuing through the early 2000s, all Main Street facade drawings were created by using pencils, ink pens, and color markers. The pre-rendering, site visit process has remained the same over the years; however, instead of utilizing a high-resolution digital camera, design staff members took photographs with a single lens reflex (SLR) camera containing 35mm Kodak Ektachrome slide transparency film. After the film was developed at a downtown Austin lab, the finished slide mounts were placed into carousels and projected onto a tilted mirror positioned underneath a large wooden drafting table that incorporated a clear glass top surface. Sheets of tracing paper were aligned and taped to the top of the glass surface and images projected from the slide were meticulously outlined in pencil. Proposed facade recommendations/improvements were added at this time. The drawing was then photocopied onto opaque paper along with a title block sticker. Finally, colors, textures, and shadows were applied with markers and colored pencils, the title block was filled in with pertinent city/address/building information, and the finished rendering was photographed for the

Texas Main Street Center archives (a collection of thick black notebooks containing hundreds of pages of clear plastic slide sleeves). The original paper rendering was rolled up and placed into a small cardboard tube then mailed to the Main Street manager along with a written report for delivery to the building/business owner. Prior to the advent of email, telephones were utilized for follow-up questions.

The greatest difference between hand drawings and computer renderings is probably the degree of information that is portrayed in the final product. Hand drawings tend to be more visually succinct; the designer is limited by the fact that she/he can trace only so many lines before the image becomes too busy or visually messy. In many respects this is actually a good thing because the renderings end up showing only the most essential information in outline form with color providing basic material, texture, and tonal qualities. By comparison, computer renderings tend to have an over-abundance of non-essential information. This doesn't mean they are inferior to hand drawings, it means the designer always has to find ways to reduce the overwhelming content of a computer-generated image into only the most relevant information. Of course, another difference between hand drawings and computer renderings is the crafted, representational look of a hand drawing versus the photo-realistic look of the computer rendering. Some folks think that a rendering that "looks like the real thing" is better for explaining and convincing building owners how their facades

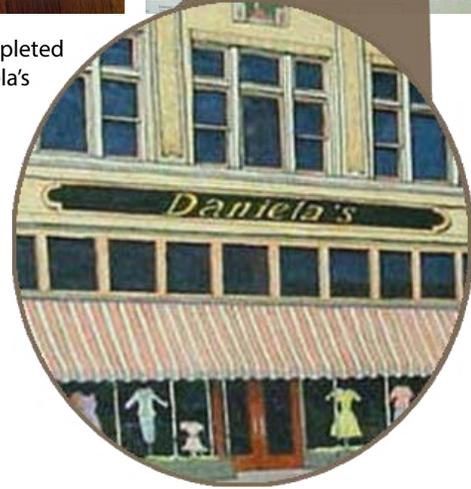


(Left and middle) Hand sketches of 200 block of west First Street in downtown Brenham, completed by architect Howard Langner in the early 2000s. (Right) Del Rio's First Lady's Drawing of Daniela's completed by project designer Ellie Elbin in the early 2000s.

will look after improvements have been undertaken, whereas others think a hand drawn rendering is better for explaining the mood and character that a facade improvement can offer.

Today, hand-drawn renderings seem to have gone the way of hand-written letters, rotary telephones, floppy disks, slide film, and cassette tapes. Some people even refer to hand drawings as a "lost art form." Whether done by hand or computer, it's important to remember that the true purpose of a rendering is to provide information and communicate ideas. If the rendering ends up having certain visual characteristics that transcend the banal and carry it into the realm of "Art," then so be it. Consider this a rare circumstance: the vast majority of Main Street drawings are much more at home attached to a written report tucked away in a file cabinet than they would be on display in an art gallery.

The following drawings were included to point out a few of the qualities unique to hand-drawn renderings. The Del Rio First Lady's Drawing of Daniela's, created by Main Street Designer Ellie Elbin in the early 2000s, clearly illustrates the idea of selective emphasis that the hand drawn image provides. Notice how the facades to either side of the subject building are stripped of a great deal of their information. This is much easier to accomplish with a hand drawing than a computer drawing. Also, notice how the facade of the Daniela's building is simplified in the rendering when compared to the photo insert. There is no need to slavishly clean up the windows and brick surface when drawing by hand; just trace and render the areas that need to communicate the idea. It is important to note that Ellie's drawings were so well done that she made the hand drawing process look easy; choosing the right marker colors, knowing how to sketch people



and window displays, hand-lettering signs, and calculating shadows are not easy tasks. The other two drawings, which I produced for a specific situation in Brenham back in 2000, illustrate how hand drawings permit a designer to "loosen-up" in such a way that isn't possible with computer renderings. These images employ a sketchbook quality as opposed to a polished rendering. As the designer I was hoping to communicate that what I was illustrating was merely a suggestion. If the property owner was stimulated into coming up with completely new ideas after seeing the renderings that was fine by me. I was interested in establishing a creative dialog not a design mandate.

After the early 2000s I happily switched over to doing most of my rendering assignments by computer. These renderings weren't produced any quicker, and I was told on more than one occasion that they didn't look any better than my hand-drawns, but the process of incorporating the renderings into reports and getting them sent to the Main Street managers was certainly streamlined by using the computer. After retiring from the Texas Historical Commission in 2016, I returned to private practice as an architect in Austin. I spend most of my work time creating architecture and travel-related sketchbooks. Interestingly, all of my work is hand drawn. The only time I use the computer is to scan my work for digital download and publication.

TURN POTENTIAL VISITORS INTO REAL VISITORS AT REAL PLACES



By Colleen Dilenschneider, Chief Market Engagement Officer for IMPACTS Research and Development

We're only one month away from the [Real Places 2019 conference](#) taking place in Austin on January 16-18. I'm thrilled to share market research at the conference and shine a light on what motivates potential visitors to historic places to become actual visitors. There's a lot of fun and exciting information to cover. The conference is a bright spot in my calendar as the seasons are changing, especially as it gets colder in nippy Chicago. Even in Texas, 'tis the season to put on another layer and start bundling up a bit. Boy, does a vacation to Hawaii next week sound great before the conference.

What do you think? Are you interested in going to Hawaii next week as well? I'm going to guess you probably are. It sounds amazing, doesn't it? I can see it now. Sandy beaches, a palm tree waving in the warm breeze, and a piña colada in my hand. Given your interest, consider this: You may agree that you are *interested* in a piña colada cheers on the beach in Hawaii next week, but do you actually *intend* to go to Hawaii next week? Drat. Now, that's a different question, but it's a similar question to the one facing potential visitors to historic places in Texas. Data shows that over 30 percent of people who actively report interest in visiting a cultural organization or historic site do not actually attend within two years. Why not? Because *interest* is different than *intent*.

Asking questions about interest doesn't take into account the tactical barriers to visitation such as time and other responsibilities. While I am *interested* in going to Hawaii next week, I have previous commitments and quite a few deadlines. (Perhaps you do as well, fellow Hawaii fantasizer.) Similarly, interest in visiting a historic destination may be a prerequisite to visiting, but that doesn't mean that these folks *will* visit. It means—simply—that they are interested.

At IMPACTS Research and Development, we call these folks “inactive visitors.” They make up a full 16 percent of the U.S. population (approximately 52 million people)—and it's my job to dive into data about who these people are, what they expect, how they make decisions, and what motivates them to *actually* visit historic destinations. This is the information that I will be sharing at the Real Places conference in January, with a focus on activating inactive visitors in Texas, specifically.

Here's a jarring (though perhaps unsurprising) fact: The most prevalent attribute among people who have visited any museum or cultural institution in the U.S. in the last two years is that they are white, non-Hispanic. This is a problem in a state like Texas, where diversity has grown at a faster rate than much of the rest of the country. You know what's coming: In order to reach new audiences and activate inactive visitors, we benefit by working to be welcoming to those beyond the profile of our traditional patrons. During the Thursday morning keynote on January 17, I will share with you the four data-backed trends that we've found most helpful in engaging new audiences and activating inactive visitors to history-based places.

These trends illustrate findings that individual organizations can leverage. The information comes from advanced, big-data methodologies (and a sample of 121,000 people). The data shows that your organization's mission matters, and though we live in a world increasingly marked by digital connection, *people* matter most. I'll share how you can leverage these elements of your experience to activate patrons and motivate visitors. Most importantly, perhaps, I'll share the data-informed framework for how to think about engaging new audiences so that conference attendees may integrate it into their culture and strategic approaches.

Are you ready for another fact? Data shows that the top reason why interested people do not *actually* attend historic destinations is simply that they prefer an alternative activity.

This makes sense. Time is precious. Though someone may be interested in visiting a history museum, they may be *more* interested in spending their Saturday taking a hike, going to a sports game, or hanging out on the couch watching *Stranger Things*. It begs a relevant question: What are inactive visitors doing, and how can we motivate them to visit our cities and organizations instead? As it turns out, I have data on that to share with you in January.

Following the keynote, I'm running a breakout session called "Happy Hours? Fun Runs? How to Successfully Diversify The Visitor Experience." In this session, we'll dive into the nitty-gritty of who inactive visitors are, their interests, and what they are doing instead of visiting. By understanding what potential visitors like to do, we are better able to create effective community partnerships that leverage strengths and motivate visitors to come see us.

We'll also explore the data-informed top destination attributes that motivate someone to visit a city or area. For instance, how much does unique dining matter to likely visitors? How big of a motivator is visiting a historic location relative to attending a sporting event? How much does "learning something new" factor into the decision to go somewhere? I'll share the answers to these questions and more. This session may be especially useful for people from institutions that are looking to create impactful programs and partnerships and strengthen their understanding of destination motivators.

If you're interested in visiting Hawaii before the conference, then I hope you get there—but don't stay long! The [Real Places 2019 conference](#) has a fantastic lineup of speakers and presenters, and I am honored to be included. I'm looking forward to sharing information with leaders of history and heritage organizations so that you may better understand current and potential audiences—and effectively create data-informed cultures that help educate and inspire your communities. Until then, I'm sending you an imaginary cheers with a piña colada!

CONGRATULATIONS!



Granger



Houston Emancipation Avenue



Mesquite

Congratulations to our new incoming 2019 cities. Granger, Emancipation Avenue/Historic Third Ward district of Houston, and Mesquite will be joining the Texas Main Street Program on January 1, 2019. Welcome to the program!

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES IN ELGIN



By Amy Miller, Community Development Director, City of Elgin

Revitalizing downtown comes with many challenges throughout a program from infancy to great success, sustaining that success, and recovering from economic downturns. The one constant question has been—how should you promote commercial property? Not every owner uses a Realtor™. Not every Realtor™ promotes property effectively. Not every owner has realistic expectations. Main Street managers have to be careful and not act as Realtor™, but property must be promoted to maintain a vibrant downtown.

Imagine having great graphic design work for free to promote downtown. Imagine having properties available to the public on a searchable database. Imagine bringing Realtor™, investors, developers, and property owners together. Imagine sharing property with the community. Imagine showcasing the downtown district. Imagine making connections and filling spaces with new investment. That's what can happen by participating in the Imagine the

Possibilities tour in May. The event is promoted statewide. Each community decides how and what to showcase.

Imagine the Possibilities provides the tools to promote property year-round. An online database, available at www.downtowntx.org, lists property with photos, history, contact information, and as much detail as provided. The Texas Historical Commission (THC) provides great graphic design to promote the tour and/or property, from flyers to signs that can be used year-round to promote downtown. Elgin participated in May 2018 and had such a great experience that it's been made a twice-annual event and is heavily promoted. These events were coordinated through Elgin Main Street's Business Retention & Recruitment Committee.

In May, Elgin organized two events—a barbecue luncheon that invited realtors, owners, investors, bankers, and business owners to dine and a tour. The Elgin EDC partnered to host the lunch, and the chamber provided support with space and promotion. The second event was an evening tour held during October in conjunction with the monthly event, Sip, Shop & Stroll. This event targeted the same professionals as invited to lunch, giving them a choice of time and date options, but was also open to the community. Both events had great attendance. The May luncheon showcased downtown to the local investment community as well as those from the Austin metro. The evening tour with Sip,

Shop & Stroll also had professional participation and many local people.

From these events, there was a major sale—a 10,000 sq. ft. property that had been vacant for years sold to new investors who are completing a full adaptive reuse for loft apartments and commercial space in 2019. Other connections were



Elgin had a great turnout for its Imagine the Possibilities tours during Preservation Month, and not one, but two tours in 2018.

made through the two events, and resulted in another sale of an existing business and property that just closed this month. Finally, involving the public in the tour was a great way to engage them in the behind-the-scenes work of Main Street. Seeing properties in all states of repair helps people realize what can happen when investments are made in downtown. It helps everyone understand the vision and share in the excitement of downtown redevelopment.

Including a local Realtor™ and local loan officer in the planning of these events ensured that the needs of those professionals were addressed. The EDC, chamber, and city made targeted invitations to attendees, and the materials provided by the THC made this a successful and easy program to participate in from a Main Street manager's perspective. Volunteers helped update the online database and post the property information and tour flyers at the various locations. Holding an Imagine the Possibilities tour with Sip Shop & Stroll capitalized on showcasing downtown during an active vibrant event with lots of evening activity.

Cross promotion of the tour: Elgin continued to showcase commercial property in downtown by using the signage from the tour during the Hogeeye Festival and providing realtor/owner property information sheets at a city information booth that was hosted at the festival. Calls came from Realtor™ and businesses about space, since both events indicate that there is interest in buying and leasing property in downtown Elgin. Imagine the Possibilities captures the hope and inspiration that are the foundation of downtown redevelopment and gives the Main Street program the tools to successfully market properties year-round.

*If you are interested in participating in the 2019 Imagine the Possibilities tour, contact Emily Koller before **March 1** at emily.koller@thc.texas.gov or 512-463-7466. To view examples of maps and other planning materials from previous years, visit the Texas Main Street Program Resource Library page dedicated to the tours: <http://www.txms-resourcelibrary.org/#/downtown-tx/>*

HAPPY TRAILS TO DEBY IN TAYLOR



Deby Lannen was born and raised in Taylor by a dedicated family of community servants who love and believe in their small town. After retiring from the State of Texas Comptroller's office in 2003, Deby was office manager of the Taylor Chamber of Commerce for five years before joining the City of Taylor Main Street Program in November of 2009. She was recruited by the Main Street Program for her ability to recruit and work with a number of volunteers, her financial background, and relationships she had cultivated within the community. In 2009 Taylor earned the honor as a nationally Accredited Main Street Program.

In 2010 Deby received a certificate from the Taylor Leadership Institute for "When Hollywood Comes to Town" and Taylor became a Film Friendly Texas certified community. One of her best memories from local movies was Mark Wahlberg hanging out all day in the city hall parking lot while filming Transformers IV.

With a number of successes, her best accomplishment was initiating the first Rental Assistance Program for the Historic Downtown area, which has resulted in a very low vacancy rate for downtown buildings. Deby enjoyed sharing and mentoring other cities in Texas about this program, and many Main Street cities have benefitted from her example and encouragement. She is proud of what is happening in her once-sleepy hometown and excited to see the growth and revitalization downtown with the historic architecture, and the soon to be completed renovation of Heritage Square.

She was awarded recognition for event coordination in 2017 from the Taylor Growth Summit. In 2017 the Texas Downtown Association awarded Taylor the Best Commercial Interior for Curb Side Coffee House, and a Finalist for Main Street Farm 2 Market. In 2018 the McCrory Timmerman Project was a TDA finalist.

Deby credits a great deal of her Main Street success to Taylor being her hometown and the support of so many family and friends helping make Taylor a destination city. In her second retirement, Deby looks forward to traveling with her family, and spending more time raising her longhorns, Cry Baby, Tulip, Lacey, and Jinx.

HUNTSVILLE VALUABLE MAIN STREET VOLUNTEER



By Debbie Charbonneau, Main Street Manager, Huntsville Main Street Program

Linda Pease came to Huntsville in 1972, a move that augured good things for the community. Over four-plus decades in Huntsville, her work has educated two generations of the community's children, beautified the city, and her collaborative undertakings have helped transform Huntsville into an arts destination, enriching the community, and its citizens of all ages.

Not long after she came she was able to work on a transformative project involving internationally renowned artist Richard Haas. The arts commission got the idea of commissioning a mural, and they had recently seen the trompe l'oeil works he had done in the DFW area, particularly the Chisholm Trail Mural. They brought him to Huntsville, spent a lot of time working with downtown property and business owners, ensuring that they were preserving the historic nature of the downtown area, and began trying to raise funds. The Meadows Foundation gave them some much-needed start-up funds, the city council also provided funds, and then they were off and running!

NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT GRANT



In late 2016, the Texas Main Street Program was selected to work with the 1772 Foundation and the National Main Street Center (NMSC) on a pilot program providing small revolving loans and grants to support visible improvements to buildings and storefronts. The projects have been carried out in Texarkana and San Augustine. In November, several members of the Texas Main Street Program staff joined representatives of the Foundation and the Center on visits to view the completed projects. In Texarkana (top), where the Main Street program straddles two states, program manager Ina McDowell and mayors of both Texarkana, Texas and Arkansas welcomed guests at the state line. In San Augustine (bottom, left-right), Manager Tracy Cox and Mayor Leroy Hughes welcomed Patrice Frey, CEO/NMSC; Mary Anthony and Gillian Lang of the 1772 Foundation; and Lindsey Wallace/NMSC.



There were 17 vacant shops in the nine-block downtown area. Haas ended up doing 14 major works in the Huntsville downtown, and his artists did additional work on buildings. Within a few years of the project's completion, there were only two vacant shops. The work is a product of Haas' artistry and skill, but also a produce of Pease's perseverance and skill in dealing with people.

The downtown project was a massive undertaking, needing arts commission approval, city council approval, funds from grant-giving foundations, authorization by business and property owners, as well as a busy artist. She believes that art brings people together. She likes people, and she wants people to come together and believes she is drawn to art because of that. She believes in Christ's teaching of love and forgiveness, and tries to follow those teachings. She is so blessed with energy and enthusiasm and believes it is a gift that she has been given.

She was the driving force for getting Huntsville designated a Cultural District, one of the first districts so designated. The selection occurred in 2009 and is an 88-block area. She was and still is the driving force for Huntsville becoming a Main Street city. She currently still serves as ex-officio of the Main Street Advisory Board.

According to former Mayor Mace Woodward, "Linda Pease has devoted her career to promoting the youth, arts, and quality of life in Huntsville. Her efforts have transformed the community, culminating with the vibrant art scene Huntsville boasts today, as well as the city's recent designation as a Cultural District, one of the first seven districts identified by the Texas Commission on the Arts.



YEEHAW! YAHOO!

Kudos to the many TDA President's Award winners at the annual conference last week in Corpus Christi. Here's a recap on some of our Main Street communities who took home awards.

DESIGN AWARDS

Best Commercial Interior

- Greenville - Capital Title/Money Group
- Denton - Denton Trading Company

Best Renovation/Rehabilitation/Restoration

- Palestine - The Redlands Hotel
- Denton - Monroe-Pearson Building

Best Public Improvement

- Rockwall - Ted Cain's Corner Park

Best New Construction

- Waxahachie - Franklin Townhomes/Two Amigos Taqueria
- Amarillo - Six Car Brew Pub/Crush

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Best Promotional Event

- Goliad - Christmas in Goliad
- Levelland - Ladies Nite Out
- Rio Grande City - Viva Mexico
- Tyler - Red Dirt BBQ & Music Festival
- Waxahachie - Wonderful Women in Waxahachie

Best Downtown Business

- Celina - Tender Smokehouse
- Tyler - ETX Brewing Co.

Best Downtown Partner

- Pittsburg - City of Pittsburg EDC

Best Economic Game Changer

- Buda - Buda Mill & Grain Co.
- Elgin - City of Elgin & Downtown Zoning Overlay
- Ennis - Rebranding Project

Spirit of Downtown

- Bastrop - Bastrop Small Business Revolution
- Uvalde - Coloring at the Crossroads

DOWNTOWNER OF THE YEAR

- Corpus Christi - Casey Lain



REAL PLACES

PRESERVING HISTORIC TEXAS
2019 CONFERENCE

JANUARY 16-18
SHERATON AUSTIN HOTEL AT THE CAPITOL

This will be the Texas Historical Commission's biggest and best conference yet with Main Street programming, workshops and tours, and 20+ sessions with 60+ speakers including:

- **GENE KRANZ**, legendary leader of the flight team that brought Apollo 13 safely home
- Noted museum expert **COLLEEN DILENSCHNEIDER**
- Bestselling author and speaker **NINA SIMON**
- Architect and urban planner **CURTIS DAVIS**
- Author and TV personality **BRENT HULL**

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