



Main Street! Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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SPOTLIGHT ON CORSICANA, TX

Written by Sara Beth Wilson, Main Street Manager, Corsicana Main Street Program, Population approx. 24,000

Corsicana was one of the earliest cities selected to participate in the Texas Main Street Program in 1985. Today, 30 years later, we are going strong with a vibrant, and full-of-life historic downtown. The main focus of the Corsicana Main Street Program is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation. In 1985 Corsicana's business, political, and civic leaders decided to adopt the Main Street Program into the city to coordinate, promote, and revitalize the downtown community. Today downtown Corsicana is a growing, flourishing, and charming marketplace, office, and residency to many citizens of the city.

Over the past 30 years, the Corsicana Main Street Program has strived to rehabilitate existing downtown buildings. Today the Historic Downtown District portrays a preserved image for the city. It has in fact become a central business destination with a variety of merchants, businesses, restau-



Happy 30th anniversary Corsicana Main Street!

rants, health care providers, legal offices, and even lofts.

The Main Street office is located at the Visitor Center in the Historic Downtown District. Within the office the Main Street Director fulfills the Four Points Committees, Advisory Board, and the Historical Landmark Commission. The Four Points Committees and Advisory Board help Main Street accomplish many downtown projects such as Second Saturday events, annual events, holiday events, and

overall promotion campaigns for downtown. The committees and board consist of local citizens who volunteer and invest their time to keep the downtown growing and prospering. The Historical Landmark Commission's sole purpose is to protect and preserve places and areas of historical and cultural importance and significance, and to maintain heritage and property values. In 2002, City Council created the Historical Preservation Ordinance to "perpetuate, protect, enhance, and preserve the historic



Promotions Committee – left to right, Carolyn McCombs, Brad Haynie, Lelani Petty, Melissa Dean, Sara Beth Wilson, Carey Dean, Kyle Hobratschk, and Wrenda Freeman.

resources, districts, and landmarks which represent distinctive elements of Corsicana's historic, architectural, social, economic, ethnic, and political heritage."

Not only is 2015 the 30th anniversary for Main Street, but it is my whopping one year anniversary with Main Street as well! In the past year, as the Corsicana Main Street Director, I have felt overwhelmed with the amount of local support and generous contributions in volunteerism from people invested in downtown as well as people who are passionate about preserving our rich history. Since joining the Main Street team, I have made the downtown my sole priority. Our downtown is one of the largest I have ever seen, for a city of about 24,000 people, our historically designated downtown stretches across seven avenues and four main streets, totaling 207 buildings. I try my best to connect with each business owner as much as possible, but some days there are just not enough hours in the day to connect with each and every one.

A few successes achieved in the past year include a series of Second Saturday events driven to increase footsteps downtown and promote local small businesses. Second Saturdays are purposed to encourage people to shop locally, and stroll downtown for an hour or two. There is something for everyone to enjoy downtown, from shopping, restaurants, home décor, and even hardware and auto stores. Some months we have car shows and bands, and other months we partner with events such as the Bike Race and Derrick Days. Last fall we hosted a Taste of Downtown Event, to promote all the downtown restaurants. People were able to visit each restaurant and taste a signature item from each restaurant's menu. Our main goal was to attract people who were unaware of the restaurants downtown and what they have to offer.

Another event we hosted was the Pumpkin Patch, which was a huge success. The community helped tremendously to volunteer time at the Pumpkin Patch. The patch will

become an annual event for people to enjoy with friends and families. In December, we partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department to host a blow-out Christmas event for the entire city. A 50-foot Christmas tree, which was donated to the city, was placed at the center of downtown to heighten the Christmas spirit and season. In addition to the tree, the events consisted of a Downtown Lighting Ceremony with live music, free food, and fireworks. As if live music and free food were not fun enough, the Parks and Recreation Department and Main Street also hosted a "Beaton on Ice" event, complete with an ice rink, roller rink, free food, and refreshments to the entire community. These events are not possible without our loyal volunteers. We are beyond thankful for each and every person who supports our downtown and city.

Successes this year were not only achieved by events but also in project growth. The City of Cor-



Annual Pumpkin Patch hosted by Corsicana Main Street Program.



Suggestions and design work for Cotton Kisses included painting, cleaning the brick, repairing the canopy, and uncovering the transom windows.

sicana and Corsicana Convention and Visitors Bureau purchased and installed an electronic billboard on the corner of Interstate 45 and Highway 31. The purpose of the billboard is to attract visitors to the city with the goal of having people visit our attractions, enjoy our historical preservation and cultural offerings, shop in our stores, eat in our restaurants, and spend the night in our local hotels. The next successful project contracted and underway is the wayfinding project. For years the city has planned to install wayfinding signs throughout the city to help guide people off the highway and into the city to important attractions and historical areas. The wayfinding project is currently underway in the design phase and will soon turn into the installation phase in fall of 2015.

Another successful project underway is the new Beaton MarketPlace. In 2009 the original structure was involved in a fire, demolishing the entire building. The City Manager and Main Street Director contacted the Texas Historical Commission for design and construction assistance. Construction on the Beaton MarketPlace began in March and will be our second pocket park located

downtown. It will also provide additional downtown public restrooms. The Texas Downtown Association and Communities Foundation of Texas have helped support this project through a grant from the Anice Read Fund. Another recent project this spring was done by Rockie Glicksman of Cotton Kisses, a new property and downtown business owner.

2015 has been a great year for the Corsicana Main Street Program, and we look forward to growing and preserving more in years to come. With more than 14 businesses opening in the past year, it is safe to say our downtown is thriving more than ever!

UNDERSTANDING COMMERCIAL LOANS

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

To a large extent, commercial banks influence the business mix in many Main Street communities. Accordingly, commercial lenders play an underappreciated

role in deciding which businesses are worth pursuing and deserving of capital. Since many of us have purchased a house or car, it's easy to presume that we're familiar with the commercial lender's perspective. However, while there are many similarities between consumer and commercial loans, there are distinct differences worthy of mention.

Residential borrowers are qualified based on their income and credit score and are told how much house they can afford. The value of the house is determined by an appraisal that looks at recent sales of similar property in the neighborhood. Commercial borrowers are qualified by their financial profile that includes how much income the subject property generates compared to similar properties.

As Main Street managers, the most common commercial loans you're likely to encounter are for the purchase or construction of real estate; refinance options that arise as interest rates drop or when a property owner wants to pull equity from a property and bridge financing when a borrower is purchasing or refinancing a property. As commercial bankers are not investors, their lending practices

reflect the risk they are willing to accept when evaluating the credit factors of each of these type loans. Understanding how commercial lenders assess a borrower's credit worthiness can help determine the type of programming and services that Main Street communities offer.

One of the ways that commercial lenders evaluate a borrower's credit worthiness is by their geographic location. The rationale is that the larger the population, the more resilient the property is to the pressures of business cycles and the stronger the resale opportunity of the collateral. Commercial lenders also take into consideration whether the property is owner-occupied or non-owner occupied. These distinctions are important to understand because of how the income stream from the property is evaluated by the lender.

Commercial banks make money by collecting interest on loans and paying interest on core deposits. Therefore, a bank has typically less than a 3 percent net interest

margin ... the difference between what it pays depositors and its loan rates. Therefore, part and parcel of a bank's lending practices is its ability to evaluate a borrower's credit worthiness and to charge different rates of interest based upon that assessment. Oftentimes, the best possible outcome for a commercial bank is to get paid back its principal with a small spread on the interest.

When considering a loan, commercial lenders evaluate the borrower's income, assets and debt. Part of the lender's financial analysis is to review several years of audited financial statements, tax returns, and contracts with customers, distributors, vendors, and suppliers. To minimize risk, most commercial lenders will only finance businesses that have at least 2-3 years of operations. Commercial banks do not generally finance startup businesses, as they have no historical financial performance. Today, approximately 57 percent of all startups are self-funded. The most common funding sources for business startups are friends and family, credit unions, credit cards, and the Small Business Administration.

After obtaining a consumer loan, the lender only requires that the borrower make timely monthly payments. With a commercial loan, even if the borrower makes all its payments in a timely manner, the lender will still require annual financial statements and proof of insurance on the collateral. Some commercial loans contain provisions that allow the bank to call the loan, if it believes changing market conditions place the loan

in jeopardy. To a lender, collateral is viewed as a safeguard, not as a repayment source.

Naturally, commercial lenders evaluate the physical condition of the collateral when evaluating risk. Accordingly, commercial real estate is divided into categories A through C. Class A property is the most desirable as it possess the best location and amenities. Class B characterizes most commercial real estate that is currently usable. Class C properties typically suffer from neglect, are located in less than desirable neighborhoods, and pose the greatest risk.

An important factor in how the lender decides the interest rate of the loan is whether the local real estate market is stabilized. This means that the occupancy rate for the market is steady at 92 to 95 percent. Is it little wonder that an owner of a functionally obsolete building located in a small community with high vacancy rates cannot obtain competitive financing? These credit factors not only affect a property owner's ability to obtain competitive financing for building improvements but also impact a growing businesses ability to secure lines of credit for working capital.

Since the essential element of any commercial loan is cash flow, the lender likes to see a healthy cash flow so the borrower can handle any financial crisis. Specifically, the property must generate enough cash flow to cover all property expenses plus the new loan payment. Commercial lenders typically require a debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) of 1.20, meaning, for every dollar (\$1.00) in debt,

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the property contributes one dollar and 20 cents (\$1.20) in cash flow to support the mortgage payment. While the lender's primary concern is the borrower's ability to make the monthly payment, they also evaluate the depth and liquidity of the borrower's total assets should the cash flow from the business decline.

Even with an established business, commercial lenders will require a business plan describing the business model, competitive landscape and marketing strategy, management, and financial projections. Lenders want to see how you are going to use the loan proceeds and how the loan will help your business make money to repay the loan.

A commercial lender performs a financial analysis to gain a complete picture of how well the business is generating a profit, and its likelihood of continuing in business. The lender's scrutiny often leads to a lasting relationship, in which the banker helps the business maintain a healthy financial position. The better we understand the lender/borrower relationship, the stronger advocates you can be as Main Street managers.

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 debra.drescher@thc.state.tx.us.

Kyle Tate, Bowie Main Street Program

Information provided by Bowie Main Street Manager, Shannon Skiles

Creative, talented, and dedicated are just a few terms that come to mind when asked to describe Kyle Tate. Kyle places his heart and soul into everything he does for the Main Street Program. He truly understands that downtown is the heart of every community as he actively seeks revitalization on a daily basis, continuously striving for a healthy and well-rounded center of our city. Kyle says, "I think it



Kyle Tate and other members attend a local Main Street workplan meeting.

is the environment it brings. It is the live music, the small shops, the restaurants, the little hidden gems in each town and the festivals. It is what makes a city thrive. It is why my small business is located in downtown. I truly feel I can help bring a vibrant downtown atmosphere to our community. It takes everyone helping to get to our ultimate achievement."

Kyle is the proud owner of our oldest building in downtown Bowie, built in 1895. He has been gradually restoring it. Kyle is also the owner of successful business, Magnified Productions. An entrepreneurial, ambitious videographer and artist, Kyle habitually situates himself behind the camera lens,

helping us capture permanent memories of our special moments and events. Kyle serves on the Main Street Board of Directors as well as the majority of committees, accepting the responsibility of serving as Chair of the Economic Restructuring Committee and Co-Chair of the Organization Committee, which is no easy feat, as all will attest. But let us not neglect to mention Kyle's service in event planning in several ways. But most significantly, he has spearheaded and executed our Small Business Saturday celebrations. Kyle's surfeit of contributions to produce and maintain awareness of our program and downtown have been exceptional, as he has put his professional graphic skills to use to design our downtown brochure and our marketing materials. In Bowie, we do understand the significance of utilizing a website and social media, and have intelligently made the decision to leave it in Kyle's capable hands since he does fantastic work with them. Kyle is an invaluable member of the Main Street family whether he is in his studio designing an Earth Day flier or walking the Chicken and Bread Festival taking charming photographs and we would be lost without him.

CHANGES IN THE TEXAS MAIN STREET NETWORK

Two of our Main Street managers have recently retired. Happy Trails to both Nancy Wood, Bastrop Main Street Manager and Carolyn Howard, Beaumont Main Street Manager. We will miss you!

We've also said goodbye to Bridgette Bise in Cuero and to Sarah O'Brien in Nacogdoches. But, we're excited that Sarah is not leaving Main Street and started May 18 as the Main Street manager in Marshall!

Nancy Wood, Bastrop Main Street Program



Nancy Wood (right), Bastrop Main Street manager, retired at the end of April. The new manager Kayli Head, formerly the assistant in San Marcos, joined Nancy at her retirement party hosted at the home of the Bastrop Main Street Board chair.

Carolyn Howard, Beaumont Main Street Program

After 23 years at Beaumont Main Street, and a total of 29 years in the Main Street network, Carolyn Howard resigned last month for family reasons. Carolyn came to Beaumont Main Street in 1992, but she first entered the Main Street network in 1986 in the communities of Lewisville, Texas and El Reno, Oklahoma. All of the local Main Street programs she has led have won many awards. In 1997, Carolyn was elected to the Board of the (TDA) Texas Downtown Association and chaired many program activities like being editor of the print newsletter, chair of an annual conference, and as TDA president in 2002. Personally, she's won numerous awards as well. In 1997, she was awarded

the Anice Read Award for Excellence from the Texas Historical Commission. The award is named after the founder of both the Texas Main Street Program and the Texas Downtown Association. In 2012, TDA recognized her with the Susan Campbell Award for Professional Excellence. She's been given an Award of Merit from the THC on at least two different occasions. She's also been named an honorary member of the Texas Society of Architects and she was also named of the 25 Most Influential Women in Southeast Texas.

Tom Bell, Beaumont Main Street's Director of Community Development, said: "I feel that it is important to put into words my heartfelt thanks for the hard work and superb performance that Carolyn Howard has given to Beaumont Main Street for the past 23 years. Carolyn combined her gift of creativity, energy, loyalty, and leadership to allow Beaumont Main Street to achieve its reputation for excellence. I applaud her for her



Carolyn Howard doing what she does best... Promoting her beloved Dog-tober Fest.

years of service and achievement, and I hope she will enjoy directing her energies into her other special interests in the future." Adds Mary Jowers, chair of the Beaumont Main Street Board of Directors: "On behalf of the Beaumont Main Street Board, Carolyn has been an

asset to Beaumont Main Street and to the Beaumont community. We wish her the very best in this new part of her life. We will miss her".

The legacy that Carolyn leaves behind is tremendous. The Texas Main Street network also wishes her the very best.



Sugar Glaspy, the original Ennis Main Street manager when Ennis first participated in the Main Street program from 1984-1988, was joined at a downtown reception by Becky McCarty, who became the Main Street manager upon Ennis' recertification this year.

NEW RESOURCE LIBRARY AVAILABLE!

The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) officially launched our online Main Street Resource Library on May 5, 2015!

Over the past few months, TMSP staff has been working to develop a website to house articles, images, presentations, webinars, and other resources. All staff in the Main Street office contributed to development of the website, but special recognition goes to Marie Oehlerking for taking the lead and to Kimberly Klein for her support and assistance.

Main Street managers who have not yet received their access information can get it by contacting the TMSP office.

Topics have been taken from a variety of sources. Some is original material developed by TMSP staff. Other documents have been taken from listserv threads and developed from questions you have asked us. We have also reformat ted Main Street Matters articles by topics and have collected relevant information from other sources as well. Plus, the library is searchable!

MAIN STREET EVENTS

EAGLE PASS

3rd Annual Eagle Pass – “Back in the Day” Origins of Downtown, Pictorial Exhibit and Auction
Thursday May 21–Friday May 29, 2015

ELGIN

Music in the Park



The Decatur Main Street staff and board had an all-day organizational planning retreat during May, with a good turnout that also included City Manager Brett Shannon. The day before, the boards of the Main Street programs in Decatur, Bowie, Electra, and Bridgeport got together for a regional Main Street 101 training that included a welcome from Decatur Mayor Martin Woodruff.

Friday, May 22, 2015
Friday, May 29, 2015

Runs from May to June in historic downtown Elgin in Veterans' Memorial Park. For more information and a complete schedule, visit [Elgin Parks and Recreation](#).

PITTSBURG

Art & Wine Festival
Friday, May 23, 2015
11:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

See [website](#) for more information.

ROCKWALL

San Jacinto Plaza Music Series
Friday and Saturday Evenings
6:30 p.m.–9 p.m.

Enjoy free music in the newly constructed San Jacinto Plaza. Music schedule at [www.rockwall.com/mainstreet](#)

WINNSBORO
Bonnie and Clyde's Last Ride
Saturday, May 23, 2015

In honor of Preservation Month, Winnsboro will celebrate Bonnie and Clyde's last visit to Winnsboro before their final and fatal ride to Gibsland, LA. Bonnie and Clyde spent a lot of time in Winnsboro over the years. Local historian Bill Jones will conduct a walking tour of downtown haunts they frequented.

Winnsboro Farmers' Market
Every Saturday
9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Downtown on the Bowery (Market Street) offers pastured beef, organic pork, organic chicken, eggs, yogurt, breads, honey, and more! [www.winnsborofarmers-market.com](#)

Editors note:

We apologize for the tardiness of getting this month's issue. Most of your events were not posted in this issue, due to events having already occurred. In the future, if we are late with an issue, don't forget to see all of the upcoming main street events on our new Resource Library Events page.



Staff and boards from Celina and Pilot Point Main Street programs got together a joint Main Street 101/volunteer training at Pilot Point city hall in early May.

TEXAS TREASURE BUSINESS AWARD

Several Main Street cities recently had Texas Treasure Business Award events to recognize their long-time businesses, many of which are downtown. Two of the most recent were in La Grange and in Cuero, where 11 businesses were honored. For more information see [website](#).

La Grange Winners!



Weikel's Store and Bakery



Lincke Floors—Gale Lincke also owns Heritage Hallmark, which is on the square.



Fayette Electric Cooperative—without them, there wouldn't have been electricity in the county. Fayette Electric Cooperative was formed shortly after FDR signed the Rural Electrification Act in 1936.

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.ulি.org