TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONES

2017 TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM UPDATE

A SOLID FOUNDATION
FOR STATE SERVICES

HEART AND SOUL
OF OUR COMMUNITIES

IT’S HIP TO
BE SQUARE
IN MOUNT VERNON

COURTHOUSE REDEDICATIONS
IN NAVARRO AND
THROCKMORTON COUNTIES

CELEBRATING PARTNERS
IN PRESERVATION

ENSURING THE SAFETY
OF VITAL HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS
Since it began, the program has contributed more than $550 million in wages in Texas. The Texas Land Title Association’s tireless support for the preservation and conservation of Texas’ historic courthouses benefits all Texans, both culturally and economically,” said THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe at the October 2016 award ceremony.

“With more than 60 courthouses fully restored, the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) has played a significant role in ensuring these buildings and the records they protect are here for generations to come. But there is still work to be done. “These buildings need to be cared for after the restoration to prevent them from falling back into disrepair,” explains TLTA Executive Vice President and CEO Leslie Midgley.

For the last 10 years, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and TLTA have partnered to ensure the continued preservation of these landmarks through the Texas Courthouse Stewardship Program. This initiative provides technical assistance and training workshops to county officials and facilities managers, with an emphasis on preventative and routine maintenance. The workshops also offer an opportunity for dialogue between counties that often results in solutions for technical issues.

Since the first Texas Courthouse Stewardship Workshop in 2007, the THC and TLTA have presented more than a dozen workshops representing over 140 training hours to more than 500 attendees.

“The Texas Land Title Association is proud to continue its partnership with the Texas Historical Commission’s Courthouse Stewardship Program,” says Midgley. “Our grant helps facilitate the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of these beautifully restored landmarks. Our continued commitment to this important project is an additional way for our industry to assist the counties we serve throughout the state of Texas.”

In recognition of its important contributions to courthouse preservation, TLTA received the prestigious 2015 Governor’s Award for Historic Preservation. “The Texas Land Title Association’s tireless support for the preservation and conservation of Texas’ historic courthouses benefits all Texans, both culturally and economically,” said THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe at the October 2016 award ceremony.

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TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Here’s a look at many of the state services counties deliver to local residents, often in services for generations.

County government operates as the functional arm of state government, and county driver license.

Texan visiting a probation officer, getting connected with veterans’ services, or renewing a obtain a marriage license, or watch district court trial proceedings. You may also find a Walk into most county courthouses across the state and you can register your truck, deliver myriad state government services to more than 27 million Texans.

More than just pretty buildings with storied pasts, Texas’ historic county courthouses represent a cache of history and heritage for both the county and state.

In some counties, these records date back generations, serving as archives, safely storing vital records about citizens, property ownership, and court proceedings.

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE

Counties are involved at every level of public safety and justice. For example, a county sheriff enforces state traffic laws by issuing a speeding ticket. The driver disputes the ticket, then appears in the justice of the peace court, held in the county courthouse. The county prosecutes the misdemeanor on behalf of the state.

Counties provide virtually all the facilities to house the 1,800 courts in the state system, including 13 of 14 regional courts of appeals and the 465 district courts. These courts and their staff can often be found in county courthouses, particularly in rural counties.

Counties provide most of the funding to run state district courts, constitutional county courts, county courts at law, and justice of the peace courts. According to the Texas Office of Court Administration, counties also provide supplemental pay for the salaries of judges in the courts of appeals and district courts serving their areas. The cost to a county in setting up and maintaining a district court can quickly cascade.

“An example, just to create one district court in Ector County cost the county $500,000 for the first year. After that, it cost $215,000 a year to run it—and counties can run multiple district courts,” Redford said. “We supplement the salary of the district judge, pay for the court administrator, the court clerk, court reporter, and bailiff, and provide the courtroom, offices, computers, office supplies, telephones, and more.”

VITAL RECORDS KEEPING, REGISTRATIONS, AND ELECTIONS

Counties enforce state laws, operate the statewide court system, and run the county jail, which often holds mostly state prisoners.

“Counties also represent the state in the prosecution of both misdemeanors (such as speeding tickets) and felonies—crimes such as possession of drugs, aggravated assault, and robberies,” said Susan Redford, Judicial Program Manager at the Texas Association of Counties and former Ector County Judge.

Counties are involved at every level of public safety and justice. For example, a county sheriff enforces state traffic laws by issuing a speeding ticket. The driver disputes the ticket, then appears in the justice of the peace court, held in the county courthouse. The county prosecutes the misdemeanor on behalf of the state.

Depending on the county’s population and the nature of the charge, the county prosecutor could be a county attorney, a district attorney, a criminal district attorney, or a county and district attorney.

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Hundreds of historic courthouses across the state serve as archives, safely storing vital records about citizens, property ownership, and court proceedings. In some counties, these records date back generations, representing a cache of history and heritage for both the county and state.

Officials and staff working in these buildings not only preserve these treasured and essential documents, but also manage elections and provide residents with state vehicle licensing and registration services.

The clerk’s office records and archives everything from birth certificates, marriage licenses, adoption, and name change records to bonds, divorce records, wills, and death certificates. Clerks are also responsible for safeguarding records of property ownership, from land deeds and mineral rights to livestock brands. State agencies and the courts rely on this service and the data collected through it. Texans depend on these records to conduct business throughout their lives.

District clerks serve as the records custodians for district courts. They collect court filing fees, and handle funds held in litigation and money awarded by the courts to minors. They also handle the jury panel selection process.

County tax assessor collectors license and register Texas’ cars, trucks, boats, and horse and utility trailers for the state. Counties must confirm vehicles have passed state safety inspections and that owners do not owe child support.

Counties play a central role in our democracy. They register voters, run elections, maintain more than 8,400 voting precincts, and report election results data to the secretary of state for each and every race, from local school board and city council races to state and national contests for governor and president.

These are just a few of the many state services counties provide. Others include:

- Represent the state in the prosecution of child protective services and welfare fraud cases;
- Remit monies to the state collected from vehicle registration fees, speeding tickets, and court costs;
- House and care for state prisoners prior to transfer to state facilities;
- Pay for the defense of indigent defendants;
- Deliver probation services to juveniles in the court system and adults convicted of a crime;
- Provide the Texas Department of Public Safety with facilities to issue driver licenses;
- Deliver services to veterans and their families.

For generations, Texas citizens and businesses have gone to county courthouses to receive the essential state services they need to prosper. A restored county courthouse connects them to the legacy of hard work and sacrifice that have made Texas a model for the world.

By Liz Carmack, Senior Communications Specialist, Texas Association of Counties

More than just pretty buildings with storied pasts, Texas’ historic county courthouses deliver myriad state government services to more than 27 million Texans.

Walk into most county courthouses across the state and you can register your truck, obtain a marriage license, or watch district court trial proceedings. You may also find a Texan visiting a probation officer, getting connected with veterans’ services, or renewing a driver license.

County government operates as the functional arm of state government, and county courthouses are the primary venues where Texans have received many of these essential services for generations.

Here’s a look at many of the state services counties deliver to local residents, often in the courthouse.
Built in 1905, the Navarro County Courthouse in Corsicana was in dire need of repairs a century later. In 2011, wastewater lines broke, flooding the second floor, and there was a small electrical fire in the judge’s office. The county had received a planning grant from the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program that enabled the hiring of Georgetown’s 1113 Architects firm to produce construction documents and specifications for the restoration project. The Texas Historical Commission then awarded a construction grant exceeding $5 million to complete a full restoration executed by its general contractor, Phoenix I of Dallas. The county contributed over $5.5 million as a match, which was approved through a bond election.

Major improvements included a complete replacement of electrical wiring, plumbing, and mechanical systems, and the installation of fire protection and a security system. In addition to a beautiful interior restoration of the courtroom, atrium, and lobby, a copper replica of the missing Lady Justice was reinstated atop the main entry. On July 9, 2016, Navarro County rededicated its impressive Beaux Arts-style courthouse, which anchors the Main Street district. The ceremony was emceed by County Judge H.M. Davenport, who championed the restoration project. U.S. Rep. Joe Barton, State Sen. Brian Birdwell, and State Rep. Byron Cook participated in the ceremony and commended the courthouse program for its success in preserving some of the state’s most significant landmarks. The rededication program was followed by cookies provided by the local Texas Treasure Business Award-winning Collin Street Bakery and a tour of the courthouse.

“We recognize the significance of these old courthouses as the workplaces of our government, which have laid the foundation for what we have today.”

“The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program is essential for smaller counties like ours. If it wasn’t for this program, restoring our courthouse would be almost out of reach.”

“Before being elected, I went door-to-door and put together a needs-assessment list. I can tell you, overwhelmingly, everyone talked about this beautiful building in downtown Kingsville, the Kleberg County Courthouse.”

“Our 1928 courthouse is the jewel in the crown of downtown because of the commitment of our judges and commissioners to historic preservation.”
COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONES

TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Movies on the Square, Denton

Food and Wine Festival, Mount Vernon

Lighting of the Square, Georgetown

Classic Corvette Show, Sulphur Springs

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE SQUARES ARE HOME TO BELOVED COMMUNITY EVENTS

By Debra Drescher, Texas Main Street Program Coordinator, THC

When the Texas Historical Commission (THC) launched its Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) in 1981, many historic downtowns across the state were desolate. Vacant and neglected, they lacked the vitality of bygone years when downtowns pulsed and Main Streets buzzed. Similarly, Texas’ historic courthouses—some of the most iconic structures in the state—had significantly deteriorated due to years of inadequate maintenance, insensitive modifications, and weather-related damage. But thanks to the success of two THC programs—TMSP and the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program—many historic city centers in the Lone Star State have been revitalized and are once again lively destinations that provide remarkable settings for community festivals and events.

The tiny East Texas town of San Augustine (pop. circa 2,000) saw the 2010 restoration of its 1927 county courthouse. Center City, Amarillo’s Main Street program, each have a popular music series that takes place around the courthouse and live music and games on the courthouse lawn...

La Grange showcases food and heritage on the courthouse square during several events throughout the year, including the La Grange Uncorked food and wine festival, Oktoberfest on the Square, and Schmekenfest—all of which are set against the lovely backdrop of the restored 1891 Fayette County Courthouse, designed by renowned architect J. Riely Gordon. During Schmekenfest (which is named for the German word for taste, schmecken), Christmas is celebrated with old and new traditions, including wassail tastings, a parade, cookie decorating, a visit from Santa, a tree lighting, and the curious and popular Schmekenball pit, a game similar to dodgeball that takes place in a hexagonal pit on the courthouse lawn.

During Halloween, about 1,000 kids and their parents descend on La Grange—which has a population of less than 5,000—for trick-or-treating at the shops around the square and live music and games on the courthouse lawn.

Like La Grange, many other events on historic courthouse squares across the state feature music. The Main Street cities of Denton, Brenham, Gainesville, and Mount Pleasant each have a popular music series that takes place around the courthouse. Center City, Amarillo’s Main Street program, sponsors High Noon on the Square, a free weekly concert held at noon during the summer on the lawn of the Potter County Courthouse, which was restored as part of the THCPP and won a Best Restoration award from TDA in 2013. In its 22nd season in 2016, the event averaged 500 attendees each week, with a record-breaking crowd of 800 for the season finale. Musicians donate their time, caterers provide lunch for a nominal fee, and there is a live radio remote broadcast each week.

Another longstanding tradition on a courthouse square is Marshall’s popular Wonderland of Lights, which turned 30 in 2016. From the day before Thanksgiving to December 31, thousands of lights adorn the restored 1901 Harrison County Courthouse and trees along the surrounding red brick streets. The event features a large outdoor ice skating rink, a carousel, Santa’s workshop, train and horse-drawn carriage rides around the square, and many other activities. The city anticipated about 55,000 visitors from out of town for its 2016 Wonderland of Lights.

There are countless more festivals and events held on courthouse squares in Texas Main Street cities across the state. Find more at thc.texas.gov/courthouses.
TOWN SQUARE INITIATIVE MELDS COURTHOUSE AND MAIN STREET PROGRAMS
By Emily Koller, Town Square Initiative Planner, THC

Carolyn Teague, a longtime Mount Vernon resident, business owner, and the current Main Street manager, recalled a late-summer evening in this tiny county seat in northeast Texas. On this particular night, the courthouse square buzzed with life and activity—storefronts were lit; diners enjoyed pizza, beer, and music at a new pub; friends chatted outside a quaint coffee shop; and kids ran and played in the plaza, all with a backdrop of the recently restored 1912 Franklin County Courthouse. Noting it was “quite magical,” Teague added, “If you’d told me it would look like this a year and a half ago, I wouldn’t have believed you.”

The city and county are committed to preserving the rich history of Mount Vernon, which has become one of the Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) best examples of a local partner. It’s been a Texas Main Street city since 1992, has an active County Historical Commission, and was a successful participant in the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP). Despite these accomplishments, Mount Vernon struggled to attract a sustainable mix of businesses on its courthouse square and offer an experience to residents and visitors that set it apart from other small, charming East Texas towns.

At the conclusion of the courthouse restoration project in fall 2014, Mount Vernon Main Street agreed to participate as a pilot city in one of the THC’s new efforts, the Town Square Initiative (TSI). Established in 2014, the original concept for the TSI was to meld the best elements of two of the agency’s marquee programs—Texas Main Street and the THCPP—as a way to leverage the substantial investments already made by local governments and the state. Using the historic preservation-based economic development approach of the Main Street program, the TSI intended to provide more advanced and specialized services to cities with recently restored courthouses as a way to spur additional redevelopment projects and further invigorate downtowns.

Now, nearly two and half years later, the TSI offers an array of advanced revitalization services that address the challenges of turning vacant and underutilized properties into vibrant, economically viable projects that enhance downtowns. An interdisciplinary team comprised of an architect, planner, and economic development specialist work closely with communities to provide specialized project assistance with a focus on:

- Design and financial feasibility studies for vacant buildings that are place-driven and market-informed.
- Downtown planning strategies to address development barriers to make it easier for local property owners and entrepreneurs to invest downtown.
- Market exposure of available properties in downtowns across Texas, including attracting investors who value historic architecture and communities’ unique qualities.

The TSI team worked with Mount Vernon to complete a Downtown Strategy Report with a goal of filling vacancies and creating a diverse, sustainable business mix. After a series of open houses, well-attended presentations, conversations with property owners, and a consumer survey, the TSI drafted a highly visual set of recommendations focused on public improvements, a coordinated approach to business recruitment, several key policy changes, and a catalyst redevelopment proposal for one of the premier, but as yet vacant, downtown buildings.

The courthouse restoration, Main Street program, and TSI’s efforts were not the only things creating a special synergy downtown. They were coupled with participation in the THC’s Bankhead Highway Tourism workshops in 2015, and the active engagement of several new families who were committed to investing in downtown when they arrived. The vision established in the Downtown Strategy Report and the momentum created by that process instilled confidence for these new investors and entrepreneurs.

Today, the five spaces on the square documented as vacant during the planning process are now either occupied with impressive new businesses, or undergoing substantial rehabilitations with grand openings in the works. Some of the projects include:

- The M.L. Edwards Store—this grand, historic two-story building on the west side of the square is also undergoing a complete rehabilitation by the Ostertags and will re-open with a café, home goods store, and first-floor commercial kitchen and second-floor event space.
- Bliss Wine Bar and Bistro—an upscale restaurant is slated to open in early 2017 on the northeast corner of the square after an extensive rehabilitation by Russell Powell and his wife, who recently moved back to the area. It will include a complete restoration of the façade.
- Steve O’s Pizza and Pub—a brick oven pizza restaurant with beer, live music, and a new outdoor deck opened in the historic Fleming building in May 2016. It was undergoing rehabilitation by Brad and Stephanie Hyman during the TSI planning process. This business provided a much-needed evening gathering spot for drinks, conversation, and entertainment.
- The M.L. Edwards Store—this grand, historic two-story building on the west side of the square is undergoing a complete rehabilitation by the Ostertags and will re-open with a café, home goods store, and first-floor commercial kitchen and second-floor event space.
- Watermelon Mills Coffee Shop—a beautifully restored small corner building that reactivates the southeast side of the square, a distinctive area that lost many of its buildings to fire years ago. The shop celebrated its grand opening in September 2016, and the project was completed by new Mount Vernon residents Shannon and Greg Osterrag.

The TSI is proud to have played a part in bringing people together to craft a vision for Mount Vernon’s downtown. For additional information about the TSI and its work helping communities spur preservation-based projects and small-scale, high-quality development, see thc.texas.gov/town-square-initiative.
The fully restored Throckmorton County Courthouse was rededicated on March 12, 2015. More than 150 people attended the rededication, which included a cookout, ceremony, and evening street dance. Teens McShane, a local business owner and project fundraiser, emceed the event and shared the community’s history. The courthouse joins more than 60 others across the state that are ready to stand strong for another century thanks to the THCPP.

To ensure long-term access to permanent records, it is essential they are stored in a location that is environmentally sound, which is required as part of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program (THCPP) restoration. A records plan is also a requirement of the THCPP grant application and scoring criteria. Instead of storing boxes, maps, and rolls of microfilm in attics, closets, trunks of cars, or old boxcars, a designated space for storing records is carefully designed and then routinely monitored by the county. The space offers protection from fire, water, steam, structural collapse, unauthorized access, theft, and similar hazards that can be detrimental to records. Additionally, records are protected from direct sunlight because UV light can cause printing to fade, and are stored away from contact with the floor because they could be damaged by flooding. Also, fire suppression systems and new mechanical systems provide temperature and humidity control.

There are many factors to consider when designing a proper records storage area. The longer records need to be kept, the more imperative it is to make certain the space is prepared and equipped to protect them. For more information on storage standards and best practices for local government records in Texas, download Bulletin F: Records Storage Standards from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission at tls.texas.gov/slrnm/publications.
**TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM**

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Fully Restored Courthouses**
    - County: City | Rededicated | Yr Built
      - Archer: Archer City | 5/12/05 | 1891
      - Atascosa: Jourdanton | 6/14/03 | 1912
      - Bee: Beeville | 5/20/06 | 1913
      - Bexar: San Antonio | 7/14/56 | 1896
      - Bosque: Mabank | 9/22/07 | 1886
      - Brooks: Falfurrias | 2/26/10 | 1914
      - Cameron: Brownsville | 10/17/06 | 1912
      - Cass: Linden | 2/18/02 | 1861
      - Colorado: Columbus | 5/17/14 | 1891
      - Comal: New Braunfels | 1/22/13 | 1848
      - Cooke: Gainesville | 11/12/11 | 1911
      - Dallas: Dallas | 5/15/07 | 1892
      - Denton: Denton | 11/6/04 | 1896
      - DeWitt: Cuero | 10/12/07 | 1896
      - Dimmit: Carrizo Springs | 11/18/04 | 1884
      - Donley: Clovis | 7/4/03 | 1894
      - Edwards: Rocksprings | 7/5/14 | 1861
      - Ellis: Waitschash | 10/4/03 | 1897
      - Erath: Stephenville | 8/20/02 | 1892
      - Fayette: La Grange | 6/25/06 | 1881
      - Franklin: Mount Vernon | 9/20/14 | 1912
      - Goliad: Goliad | 12/4/03 | 1894
      - Gray: Pampa | 4/12/03 | 1928
      - Grimes: Anderson | 3/2/02 | 1894
      - Hamilton: Hamilton | 4/28/12 | 1887
      - Hardeman: Quanah | 5/9/14 | 1908
      - Harris: Houston | 8/23/11 | 1910
      - Harrison: Marshall | 6/20/09 | 1901
      - Hood: Granbury | 10/27/12 | 1891
      - Hopkins: Sulphur Springs | 12/7/02 | 1894
      - Hudspeth: Sierra Blanca | 7/3/04 | 1920
      - Jeff Davis: Pearsall | 11/8/04 | 1950
      - Johnson: Cleburne | 12/7/03 | 1913
      - Kendall: Boerne | 4/7/10 | 1870
      - La Salle: Cotulla | 12/5/04 | 1913
      - Lamar: Paris | 9/5/03 | 1917
      - Lampasas: Lampasas | 2/2/04 | 1883
      - Lavaca: Hallettsville | 9/11/10 | 1897
      - Lee: Giddings | 10/8/04 | 1899
      - Leon: College Station | 7/17/07 | 1887
      - Llano: Llano | 6/15/02 | 1892
      - Maverick: Eagle Pass | 10/13/05 | 1885
      - McCulloch: Brethren | 5/9/09 | 1899
      - Menard: Menard | 11/10/06 | 1932
      - Milam: Cameron | 7/4/02 | 1892
      - mills: Goldthwaite | 8/22/11 | 1913
      - Navarro: Corsicana | 9/7/16 | 1905
      - Newton: Newton | 12/8/12 | 1903
      - Parker: Weatherford | 6/4/05 | 1884
      - Potter: Amarillo | 8/18/12 | 1882
      - Presidio: Marfa | 1/5/02 | 1886
      - Rains: Emory | 10/12/10 | 1909
      - Red River: Clarksville | 10/26/02 | 1884
      - Roberts: Miami | 6/7/12 | 1913
      - San Augustine: San Augustine | 1/20/10 | 1928
      - Shackelford: Alibany | 6/30/01 | 1883
      - Val Verde: Del Rio | 7/33/24 | 1887
      - Wharton: Wharton | 8/4/14 | 1869
      - Wheeler: Wheeler | 10/16/04 | 1925
      - Williamson: Georgetown | 12/8/07 | 1911

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Current Full Restoration Grants**
    - County: City | Status | Yr Built
      - Fannin: Bonham | In Progress | 1889
      - Harris: Kenedy | In Progress | 1923
      - Hidalgo: Harlingen | In Progress | 1886
      - Houston: Houston | In Progress | 1917
      - Hunt: Greenville | In Progress | 1909
      - Jefferson: Jefferson | In Progress | 1929
      - Jefferson: Beaumont | Complete | 1922
      - Lamar: Beaumont | Complete | 1932
      - Lampasas: Lampasas | Complete | 1882
      - La Salle: Cotulla | Complete | 1930
      - Liberty: Liberty | Complete | 1888
      - pumpkin: Brownsville | Complete | 1885
      - Red River: Clarksville | Complete | 1901

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Previous Emergency Projects**
    - County: City | Status | Yr Built
      - Bandera: Bandera | Complete | 1891
      - Callahan: Baird | In Progress | 1929
      - Dickens: Dickens | Complete | 1933
      - Glasscock: Garden City | Complete | 1913
      - Hidalgo: Hidalgo | Complete | 1886
      - Houston: Crockett | Complete | 1940
      - Hunt: Greenville | Complete | 1909
      - Jeffers: Beaumont | Complete | 1932
      - Kenedy: Kenedy | Complete | 1924
      - Lipcomb: Lipcomb | Complete | 1916
      - Marion: Jefferson | Complete | 1912
      - Mason: Mason | Complete | 1910
      - McLennan: Waco | Complete | 1901
      - Montague: Montague | Complete | 1913
      - Nueces: Corpus Christi | Complete | 1914
      - Polk: Livingston | Complete | 1923
      - Randall: Canyon | Complete | 1908
      - Tyler: Tyler | Complete | 1891
      - Upshur: Gilmer | Complete | 1933
      - Wilson: Floresville | Complete | 1884

- **Courthouses Awarded Preservation Grants**

  - 74 Counties have committed local funds and need state grants to restore their historic courthouses

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Courthouses Have Master Plans Pending Approval**
    - 11 Counties with approved master plans pending approval (not yet funded)

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Courthouses That Are Not Eligible**
    - 11 Courthouses not eligible (not 50 years old or county/city owned)

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Courthouses Have Approved Master Plans**
    - 38 Counties with approved master plans (not yet funded)

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - **Courthouses Have Received Planning and/or Emergency Funding**
    - 102 Historic Courthouses eligible to participate

- **Projects Funded from 1999 to 2016**

  - 93 Courthouses awarded preservation grants
After its successful courthouse restoration, San Augustine entered the Texas Main Street Program in 2013 to help return economic vitality to its downtown. The community of just 2,100 people has since reinvested more than $1.3 million in their downtown, and gained 10 new businesses.

Denton has seen more than 130 revitalization projects completed in and around the square since the conclusion of its courthouse restoration in 2004. The square now buzzes every night and hosts numerous events throughout the year.

Restored Texas courthouses are popular heritage tourism destinations. Centered on the Harrison County Courthouse, Marshall’s Wonderland of Lights holiday festival is visited by at least 100,000 people, with more than a third of them from out of town.

At least 21 major feature films have been shot in historic Texas courthouses, including "Bernie," "True Grit," "Lone Star," and "The Tree of Life." The Caldwell County Courthouse in Lockhart is featured in several episodes of HBO’s popular series "The Leftovers."

Since 1999, 93 counties have received grants for their courthouse projects. 63 have been fully restored, with four more in progress. The state awarded $271 million in grants from 1999–2016, with counties matching $224 million. 74 counties have committed local funds and need state grants.