



What is Hamilton Historic Main Street?

When imagining the Hamilton of the future, we must first look to our past. But what does the future of Hamilton look like? Thriving small businesses, downtown bustling with visitors shopping and dining at local restaurants, families gathered for community events or out enjoying the beautiful outdoor spaces?

As the new kid on the block with national and state-backed resources to help make this a reality, the Hamilton Historic Main Street program is working to preserve history, revitalize the town center and create a vibrant community for citizens, businesses, and visitors.

In 2020, Hamilton was accepted as an official Texas Main Street community. The Texas Main Street program operates through the Texas Historical Commission and is affiliated with Main Street America, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This designation has allowed Hamilton to receive valuable resources, technical expertise, and guidance from the team at TMSP.

To get an idea of what this could mean for the future of Hamilton, you can look at some of the other 88 Texas Main Street communities like Corsicana, Georgetown, Grapevine, Tyler, Kilgore, Kerrville, Hillsboro, Llano, or Seguin to name a few.

Efforts in these towns have led to a variety of improvements from new businesses, saved historical buildings, showcased tourism, and more. They stand as examples of how historic preservation can lead to economic vitality. In a cookie-cutter, shopping center, strip mall world, people seek out unique small towns for one reason or another, whether it's to visit or move or start a business. One very visible example is Tyler's recent transformation of a 280-foot blighted span of concrete and picket fence into "Tyler Art Alley," where 40 artists each painted a section. The alley is a draw for tourists, photographers, and anyone who enjoys art. There's even a small, designated space where the public or other aspiring artists can contribute. This is just one example of countless that have taken place across the state and nation.



According to the TMSP website, more than \$4.5 billion of overall reinvestment has been reported in Texas' Main Street districts, comprised of about half from private investment plus all public and partnered investments. The organization also reports that

More than 45,000 jobs and 10,500 small businesses have been added to the Texas economy.

The Hamilton Historic Main Street area is currently a designated two-block area of downtown Hamilton surrounding the courthouse. The only employee, Main Street Manager Joni Hoxsey, and her team of volunteers and local leaders are working in accordance with the National Main Street Four Point Approach® of organization, economic vitality, design, and promotion. Separate from, but in partnership with the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation and the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Historic Main Street has already accomplished so much in a year (and with a pandemic no less) that it was named a model startup by TMSP. The last acknowledgment Texas Main Street noticed similar momentum in a community like ours was Linden in 2017. What gained Hamilton Historic Main Street so much attention? The group has been hard at work this past year building the program from scratch and accomplished multiple projects. Our local program has developed not only a volunteer board of ten voting community members but is also developing four committees, which includes many committed community volunteers and will continue to grow. They developed and conducted a community survey and used it to help determine their work plan and goals. In two short months, they steered the application for a Texas Community Development Block Grant to help improve our downtown sidewalks. They created a tourism map of our Main Street District showcasing every business in the area, which is the centerfold of our Hamilton Visitors Guide. They launched Hamilton's page on www.downtowntx.org that houses photos and information on each property within our Main Street District, even historical pictures and listings of properties that are for sale or lease. They implemented their very first event, called the "Imagine the Possibilities" tour, which through social media successfully promoted our town and four available turnkey business spaces. All of this work is beginning to gain new traction to town and should continue to help us strengthen our history and build upon our future. Now moving from the startup and planning stage, Hamilton Historic Main Street is ready to start implementing even bigger and better projects. Be on the lookout for some exciting events and announcements soon. If you'd like to learn more or find out how you can help, visit the website at www.hamiltontexas.com/285/Main-Street or the Hamilton Historic Main Street Facebook page.

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