



An old Greek proverb has it that:

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in." We Hamiltonians have always invested in this idea. We sacrifice immediate wants and needs to see that our children are cared for, and educated so that we send productive citizens back into our community and the world. We agree to fund institutions such as an outstanding local hospital so that everyone in the community can have decent, available health care, today and in the future. Two of

Hamilton's public-private ventures have this very idea in their missions. These are our Hamilton Economic Development Corporation, and the Hamilton Historic Mainstreet program. Both organizations are dedicated to economic development.

The responsibility of the Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) is to reinvest public funds in Hamilton; to expand the city property tax base and create quality job opportunities. For example, over the past 5 years, accomplishments have included granting over \$270,000 in incentive grants for local start-up businesses, as well as grants for downtown facades, awnings and signage. In partnership with the City, HEDC and Hamilton Healthcare System a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant was obtained for expansion of the hospital and its services. Success is an incremental process. Each year's accomplishments add to the aggregate of previous years which moves our community closer to the goals of business recruitment and retention, and full and gainful employment.



The Hamilton Historic Main Street (HHMS) program seeks economic development through historic preservation and downtown enhancement. Our downtown is unique. According to Texas Historical Commission architects, our downtown is in a high state of historic conservation. Our limestone and brick facades evoke times past in ways that many downtowns do not. Our history is a marketable aspect of our community. Hamiltonians treasure it, and we think others, too, will want to shop, and locate new businesses in such a beautiful setting. Though the HHMS is only a year old, it has been noted by the Texas Historical Commission as a model program because of the speed the program is being assembled and the quality of the work being done. For example, the HHMS has created



virtual tours- titled "Imagine the Possibilities" --of downtown properties for sale or lease which have been placed on the nationally-promoted website DowntownTX.org. The program is developing a downtown walking tour celebrating the history of Hamilton and its architecture. Finally, the program has partnered with the City and HEDC to apply for the Texas Department of Agriculture Community Development Block Grant for Main Street programs to improve downtown sidewalks. This and a number of other grants are available only to Main Street program cities.

These programs are essential to guiding change. They make sure that Hamilton continues and improves in economic vitality and livability while ensuring the soul of the town- its history and its small-town charm-- are retained. These goals are not accomplished accidentally. It takes planning, foresight, and sense of planting those trees for future generations to take us there.