

Downtown Incentives

Downtown property and business owners may apply for **matching grants** toward property renovations or enhancements, including:

Sign Grants - up to \$2500

To create and install new or upgraded signs to attract customers to your business.

Storefront Grants - up to \$6000

For awnings, new windows, doors, or exterior painting to create an inviting welcome to all who visit your location.

Fire Safety Grants - up to \$15,000

For sprinkler systems, fire walls, and/or other improvements to enhance building egress and meet City requirements.

Security Enhancement Grants - up to \$2,000

To install a surveillance system that can help with peace of mind about your building and the surrounding area. *Grants available to property owners only.*

Design Assistance - Free

The Texas Main Street Program provides limited free design assistance to property owners and tenants within the Downtown District. Assistance includes Preservation Consultation, Sign Designs and Graphics, Façade Renderings, and more!

Grant funding is limited to \$15,000 per property each fiscal year, from any combination of programs.

Promotion Grants - up to \$3,000

To encourage more cooperative downtown promotions (advertising, events, etc.), a limited amount of grant funds are available. At least 5 downtown businesses must participate, contributing at least \$50 each.



Downtown Harlingen
209 W. Jackson
(956) 216-4910 (956) 216-8037 fax
www.downtownharlingen.com

Building Inspections Department
502 E. Tyler
(956) 216-5160 (956) 216-5168 fax

Health Department
502 E. Tyler
(956) 216-5220 (956) 216-5228 fax

Planning & Development
502 E. Tyler
(956) 216-5101 (956) 216-5265 fax



Downtown Harlingen

A Quick Guide for New & Prospective Businesses and Property Owners





IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Most changes to buildings or properties in the Harlingen Downtown District require city permits and approvals. Contact the Downtown Office and Building Inspections Department **before any work begins** so staff can help you determine what is needed to complete your project. In some cases, the Downtown District may be able to provide technical and financial assistance. (See list of incentives and phone numbers for various departments elsewhere in this flyer.)

I might want to lease or buy a building Downtown. Who do I contact?

For prices and contact information for available properties, contact the Downtown Manager, (956) 216-4910 (office) or (956) 245-8886 (mobile).

SIGNS & BANNERS

Do I need a permit to put up a new sign?

Yes, a sign permit is required for **all** new signs being installed, including vinyl lettering on doors and windows. Contact the Planning Department for a sign permit application. You will need to submit a color rendering and measurements of all existing and proposed signage. There are limits on the amount and types of signage allowed.

Can I put up a banner?

Yes, but only for a very limited time. Contact the Planning Department for info on temporary banners, size limits, how they must be secured, etc.

Are sandwich board signs allowed?

Yes, but they cannot be more than 6 square feet per side and stand higher than 42". They cannot cause the pedestrian sidewalk to be reduced to less than 4' in width and must be removed from the sidewalk at the end of each business day.

PERMITS & INSPECTIONS

Projects that involve remodeling, demolition, electric, plumbing or sign installation require city permits **BEFORE** beginning the work. A Certificate of Occupancy (CO) or a Re-Occupancy Permit is required prior to moving into a space.

I want to make changes to my building. Who do I talk to first? What permits will I need?

Depending on the type of changes, you will need to talk to multiple staff members. Start with the Building Inspections Department. Most interior changes will need approvals by the Building, Fire and Planning Departments before work begins. Exterior changes including painting or installation of new doors, windows, signs or awnings need advance approval by the Downtown Board. Some changes will require review by Health or other departments. Other modifications, such as installation of barbed wire fences or exterior burglar bars, are not allowed in the Downtown District.

How do I get a Re-Occupancy Permit or a Certificate of Occupancy?

A Re-Occupancy Permit is required any time the occupant in an existing building changes. Changes in use (ie from retail to assembly) may require building modifications to meet current codes. Visit the Building Inspections Department while you are considering a new location, or as soon as you decide on one, to explain what you are planning to do and where. The application will require submission of a drawing or plans identifying the "what", "where", "when", and "how" of your project. The review process likely will take 7-10 working days and require property inspections. A Certificate of Occupancy must be issued before you may occupy your new or renovated space.

PROMOTIONS & EVENTS

Harlingen Farmers Market Saturdays (Oct-June)

On "A" Street between Jackson and Monroe, every Saturday (Oct thru June). Held rain or shine, from 3-4:30 p.m.



This open-air market features growers eager to share locally-grown *real food*. For more info, visit the Harlingen Farmers Market on Facebook.

Jackson Street Market Days First Saturday



On Jackson between Commerce and 4th Street, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Shop for treasures at an open-air market featuring antiques, plants, collectibles, food, live music, and more! For vendor info, call 423-4041.

"Good Morning Downtown" Coffee First Thursday Every Month

Get info on what's happening in Downtown Harlingen, including events, new businesses, and more. At a different location each month, 8:30 a.m. Contact the Downtown Office for more info.



For information on other events and promotions, call the Downtown Office at (956) 216-4910. Or visit www.downtownharlingen.com (*Select Events in the drop-down menu.*)