

# WELCOME GUIDE



## LIVING & WORKING IN ELGIN'S HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT



Kristina Alvarez  
Main Street Manager  
City of Elgin  
P.O. Box 591  
Elgin, TX 78621  
(737) 308-3669



## Main Street is a Movement

Main Street America has been helping to revitalize older and historic commercial districts for 40 years. Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities, and urban commercial districts, Main Street America represents the broad diversity that makes this country so unique.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

## Getting Started

Information on what steps you start with when considering the move to Elgin's historic downtown.

2

## Living & Working Downtown

Navigating living and working in nationally registered historic downtown.

3

## Main Street Program

Main Street is a grassroots downtown revitalization effort focused on Historic Preservation and Economic Development.

4

## Historic Review Board

Elgin's Downtown is a nationally registered Historic District. All exterior changes including signage must be reviewed.

5

## What is the EDC?

The EDC board administers the 1/2% sales tax for economic development for a 4B Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

6

## Development Services

Zoning, certificates of occupancy, inspections, permits, and more.

7

## Volunteering

How to get involved in local events and programs.

8

## History of Elgin

Information on the founding of Elgin, the oldest home, walking tours, and historical stories.

Welcome to the Historic District of downtown Elgin, Texas. The goal of this guide is to assist you in navigating the regulations that come with the historic district. Whether you are leasing or buying, moving into residential, or opening a business, this guide offers suggestions on understanding the rules of a nationally registered historic district.



**SUBSCRIBE TO ENEWS**



*Elgin*  
TEXAS  
perfectly situated...

*in Elgin*

[HTTPS://WWW.ELGINTEXAS.GOV/LIST.ASPX](https://www.elgintexas.gov/list.aspx)



JOIN THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS EMAIL LIST

TO KNOW  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING IN

**DOWN TOWN**



[HTTP://EEPURL.COM/ILWBFG](http://EEPURL.COM/ILWBFG)



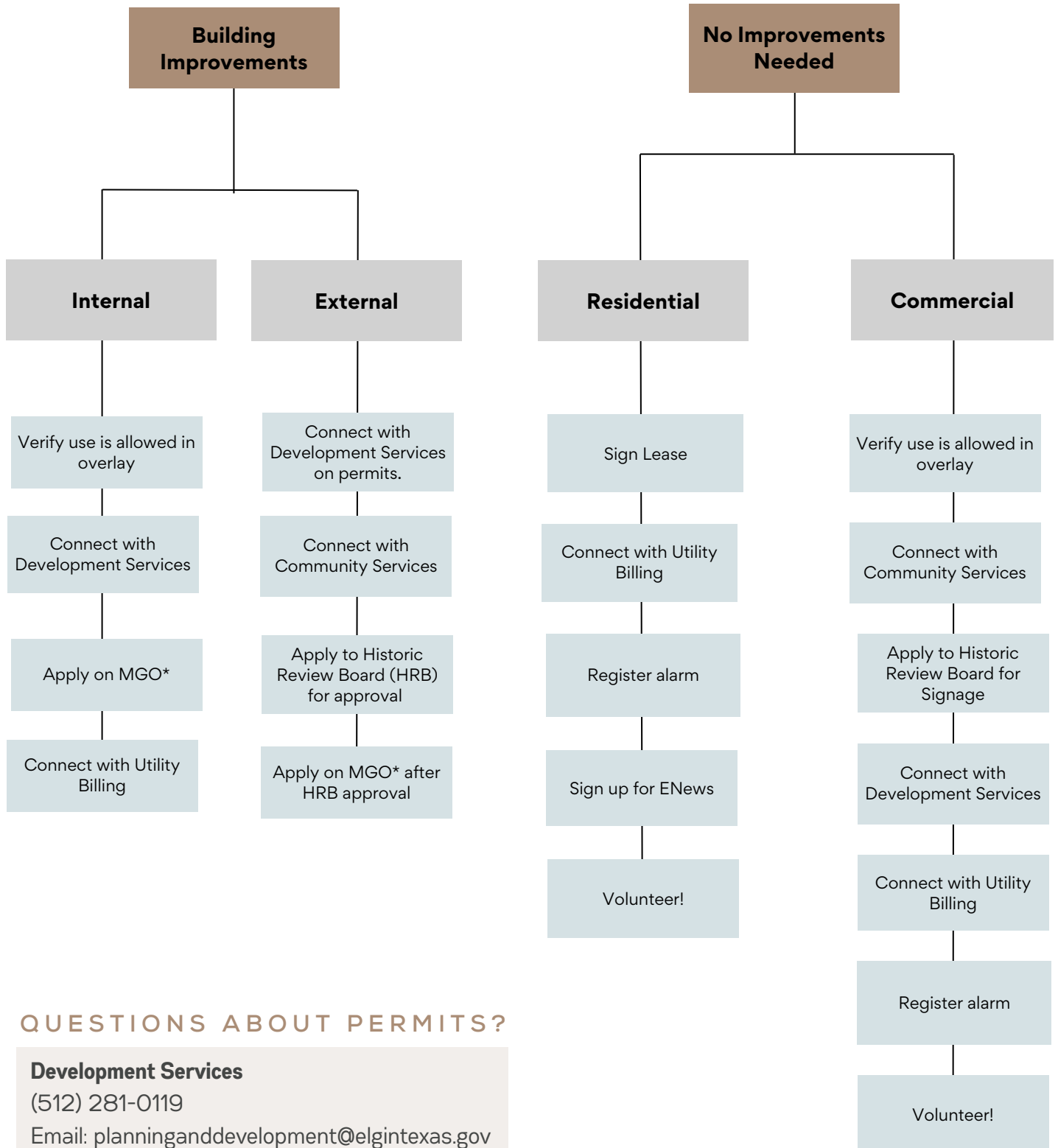
*Elgin*



## SECTION 01

# GETTING STARTED

Considering living or operating a business in downtown Elgin? Whether you are leasing or buying a building downtown, creating a home downtown, or opening a business in Elgin please consider the following on any and all properties whether they need improvements or not.



## QUESTIONS ABOUT PERMITS?

### Development Services

(512) 281-0119

Email: [planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov](mailto:planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov)

# PROVIDERS

for the Elgin Area

## Elgin Utilities

Water, wastewater, and trash services

Sign up online or in person:

310 N Main Street

Elgin, TX 78621

(512) 281-5724

<https://www.elgintexas.gov/956/New-Account>

## Texas One Call

Utility line/pipe locate

(800) 245-4545

## Bastrop County Tax Office

702 Bull Run, Elgin Tx 78621

(512) 581-7146

## Electric Provider Choices

[www.powertochoose.org](http://www.powertochoose.org)

[www.choosetexaspower.org](http://www.choosetexaspower.org)

## Bastrop County Transfer Station

NO BRUSH - Trash and construction debris ONLY

Tuesday-Saturday 8-4

(512) 549-5166

## CenterPoint Energy/Entex-Gas

P O Box 591 Houston, TX 77210

(800) 427-7142

## Elgin Post Office

21 N AVE C, Elgin Tx 78621

(512) 281-3978

## Spectrum

12012 N. MoPac Austin, TX 78758

(800) 418-8848 or (512) 485-5555

## Elgin Police Dept

202 Depot St. Elgin Tx 7821

(512) 285-5757

## AT&T

Establish/Change Service

(800) 464-7928

## Alarm Permits

All residential & commercial alarms

must be registered with the Elgin Police Department.

For more information:

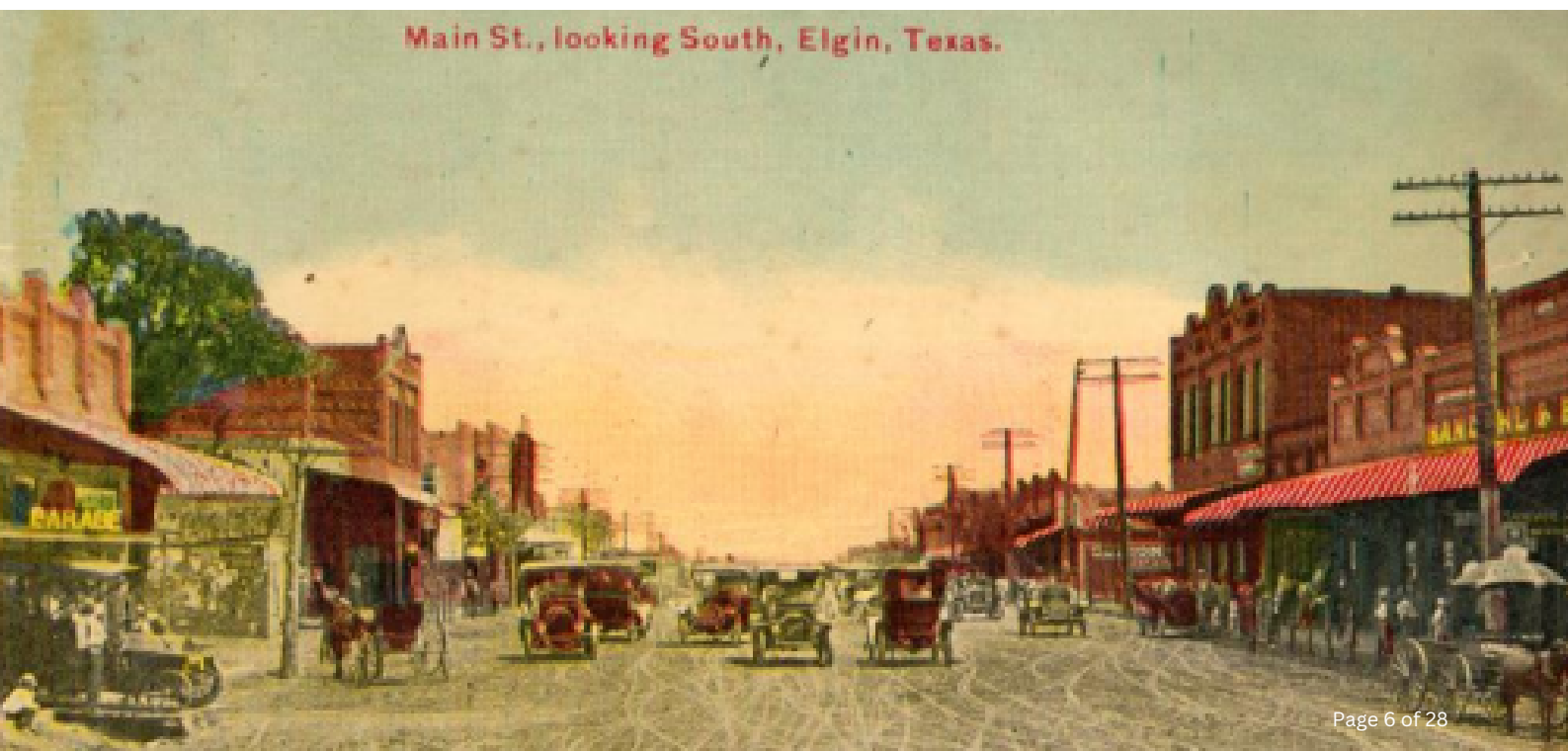
<https://www.elgintexas.gov/251/Alarm-Permits>

## Oncor

Streetlight/Power Outage

(888) 313-4747

Main St., looking South, Elgin, Texas.



## SECTION 02

# LIVING & WORKING DOWNTOWN

Historic districts are designations of a group of buildings that together form a historically or architecturally significant area. The designation is intended to preserve the character of the significant area. The first historic district was created in Charleston, South Carolina in 1931.

Elgin is a National Register Historic District, which allows for the use of historic rehabilitation tax credits and other tax benefits.

Many people love living and working in a historic district, but it's not for everyone. Talk with your real estate agent, local planning departments, and local historical societies to find out more about historic districts to make sure you understand all of the aspects before making the move.

As Elgin grows, the main purpose of the Main Street Program is to assist new tenants or owners in successfully navigating the steps to living or opening a new business in downtown.

**So, what are the benefits of living in a local historic district? While living in a national or state historic district can provide tax benefits, living in a local historic district provides real protection for you and your neighbors. Studies have also shown that properties in historic districts have higher resale values than those in similar neighborhoods. Additionally, living or working in a historic district means that you are going to have neighbors who have a strong sense of community and care about you and your property because they care about the neighborhood.**





# HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP





# HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

## Elgin FAQ

**Q** What kind of business can be located in downtown Elgin?

**A** The zoning overlay added wineries, breweries, food production and processing, meaderies, metal smithing, pottery making, cabinetry making, woodworking, fiber processing, automotive repair, leather working, and soap making, in addition to the man uses already allowed such as restaurants, offices, bakeries, dry cleaners, grocery, barber shop, hair and nail salon, financial services, real estate, etc.

**Q** My property is vacant, how can I get tenants? Can I have more than one tenant?

**A** Some properties do not meet building code to have commercial or residential tenants. Some zoning allows residential and commercial. Call Development Services at (512) 281-0119 to verify.

**Q** My property is in the blue zone, can it have residential use?

**A** Yes, the second floor can be 100% residential use, the rear of the first floor can be up to 50% residential use. Commercial use must be maintained in the front 50% of the first floor in the blue zone.

**Q** My property is in the yellow zone, what uses can I have?

**A** Properties can be 100% residential for first and second floors in the yellow zone.

**Q** I want to renovate my property, what should I do first?

**A** Call Kristina Alvarez at (512) 229-3232 to set up a historic district review prior to starting your project.

**Q** My tenant needs to get a sign approved, who should they contact?

**A** Call Amy Miller at (512) 229-3213 to set up a historic district review for the signage. Once approved by HRB, complete an application with Development Services for a sign permit on MGO.

**Q** I am handy with tools, can I do my own renovation work?

**A** Yes, you can do a lot of the work yourself, but you must use licensed professionals for plumbing, electrical, and HVAC. All work must be inspected.

**Q** Where can I see a map of the Historic District and the Zoning Overlay?

**A** Maps of the historic district and the zoning overlay can be found on page 17 of this document and online here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/DocumentCenter/View/106/Historic-District---Overlay-Zoning-Map-PDF>

**Q** I have a business on the first floor, and I want to live there too, can I do that?

**A** You must obtain a certificate of occupancy before you can add residential occupancy use. Contact Development Services at (512) 281-0119 for more information.

**Q** Are there any grants for these properties?

**A** The Economic Development Corporation offers reimbursement assistance grants. Main Street offers marketing and financial assistance reimbursement grants. As a Main Street City technical design and preservation assistance is available through the Texas Historical Commission. All plans must be reviewed before work begins and must be approved by the Historic Review Board (HRB).

**Q** I am ready to go, can I start work right away?

**A** Your plans must be reviewed, a historic district review completed, and a building permit secured before work begins.

**Q** Do I need an asbestos study before I do work on the building

**A** Yes, state law requires that you get an asbestos study completed. See the state health website: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/asbestos-program> for resources and more detailed information.

**Q** Can I get tax credits for the property I own?

**A** The Elgin downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Properties in the district are eligible for state and federal tax credits. Call Amy Miller at (512) 229-3213 for more detailed information.



Contact the Main Street Program at (512) 229-3232

## SECTION 03

# MAIN STREET



## MAIN STREET PROGRAM

- Downtown Elgin Public Art Plan - Design Committee Art in Elgin.
- Promotion Tourism Committee is a joint committee between the Main Street Program and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Business Retention & Recruitment includes volunteers, Economic Development, Main Street Manager, and Chamber President who work together to provide business training classes, business promotions, and market analysis.
- Organization Downtown 78621, a direct mail publication sent 3 times per year to 15,000 local households.

## BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

The Main Street program provides the following reimbursement grant programs:

- Main Street Marketing Assistance
- Main Street Financial Assistance

Links to the applications are available on the website under the Business Assistance section: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/209/Main-Street-Program>

## PROGRAM & ACCREDITATION

What is Main Street? Main Street is Elgin's Historic Downtown District. Elgin's Historic Downtown District includes 14 city blocks of commercial and industrial buildings. Most of these buildings are constructed of locally produced brick and were erected between 1872 and 1947.

These buildings are occupied by a variety of businesses from banks and insurance to retail and restaurants. Elgin was selected to be a Texas Main Street City in 1990. The grassroots program focuses on economic development in the context of historic preservation. A volunteer board appointed by City Council implements the program based on the National Main Street Four Point approach.

Since 1990, more than \$25 million has been reinvested in the downtown area by the private and public sectors. The historic district has over a 90% occupancy rate. Elgin has been a Certified Main Street Community since 1999.

Hundreds of volunteer hours support implementing Main Street programs and the Hogeye Festival each year. Hogeye is the primary fundraising event for the program.

## MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD

### Meetings

- 3rd Thursday of each month
- 7:30 AM
- Location located on current agenda

<https://www.elgintexas.gov/209/Main-Street-Program>

*Time, date, and location are subject to change, see current agenda on the website to confirm this information.*

Elgin, Texas was designated a nationally recognized historic district for the downtown business area in 1991. Properties within this area require a review of any changes to be made to the exterior that is visible from the public right-of-way. Some of the benefits of living and working in the historic district are:

- Preservation Briefs offer guidance on preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic buildings. The Historic Review Board utilizes these briefs in conducting reviews and they provide useful information for property and business owners.
- The Historic District has specific provisions for signage within the City Sign Ordinance.
- Sidewalk displays and sidewalk dining options in Municode.
- Option to participate in Sip, Shop, & Stroll on the second Thursday of each month.
- Elgin is a Certified Local Government and a Texas Main Street City, which brings a variety of technical assistance to the community to support historic preservation programs.
- The Elgin Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Free design assistance through the Texas Historical Commission.
- Properties in the district may be eligible for state and federal tax credits. See the Texas Historical Commission website for more information:  
<https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/preservation-tax-incentives>
- Properties in the commercial business district may be eligible for grant assistance and small business assistance through the Elgin EDC and the Main Street Program.

#### MORE INFORMATION

**Questions** on scheduling a review, assistance, or tax credit programs?

#### **Main Street Manager**

Kristina Alvarez

Office: (512) 229-3232

Cell: (737) 308-3669

Email: [kristina.alvarez@elgintexas.gov](mailto:kristina.alvarez@elgintexas.gov)

#### **Community Services Director**

Amy Miller at (512) 229-3213

Email: [amy.miller@elgintexas.gov](mailto:amy.miller@elgintexas.gov)





## Elgin, TX is a Main Street City!

... and Elgin has a **Main Street Board**, appointed by the City Council, dedicated to our downtown's revitalization, preservation, and economic development. We use Main Street America's Four-Point Approach of Economic Vitality, Design, Organization, and Promotion.

**What's our vision?** We envision a revitalized and active historic downtown destination with warm-hearted, friendly people and vital businesses, where ethnic and cultural diversity is celebrated.

**Want to come and see what we do?** Join a board meeting or one of our working committees: Design Team, Business Retention/Recruitment, Promotion Tourism, and the Hogeye Festival. Main Street Board meetings are on the Third Thursday at 7:30 am. Agendas are posted online at [www.elgintx.com](http://www.elgintx.com) and program information is available here <https://elgintx.com/209/Main-Street-Program>.

**We put on Hogeye Festival!** Our primary fundraiser for the Elgin Main Street Program is the Hogeye Festival, held the 4th weekend of October. Does your business want to be a part of the fun? Keep an eye on [hogeyefestival.com](http://hogeyefestival.com) for more info or email us to volunteer!

**Need marketing help?** The Elgin Main Street program has created the Main Street Advertising Assistance Grant. This grant reimburses up to \$100 monthly to businesses located downtown for advertising. Business owners can apply anytime and receipts are submitted for quarterly reimbursement. The application is available under Business Assistance on the Main Street webpage: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/209/Main-Street-Program>.

For more information contact our Main Street Manager, Kristina Alvarez at 737-308-3669 or [kristina.alvarez@elgintexas.gov](mailto:kristina.alvarez@elgintexas.gov).

- ... or any Main Street Board member:
- Stacey Wilhite, President – (512) 731-7872
- Ed Rivers, Vice President – (512) 281-2463
- Krista Marx, Secretary – (512) 698-2342
- Jake Carter – (512) 785-1872
- Katy Gassaway – (512) 923-1333
- Sarah Gudenkauf – (512) 318-4470
- Monica Nava – (702) 275-4753
- Skie O'Mahoney – (512) 567-7569
- Mercathea Hughes – (512) 229-7398





## Imagine the Opportunities in Elgin Texas

### 2015-2022 Restorations

16 buildings restored  
65,000 sq. ft.  
23 new businesses

### Now OPEN!

Downtown Elgin Café & BBQ  
Studio 22 Music Academy  
Lightnin' Bar  
Dance Elgin Studio



### Restoration in Progress

111 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Mixed Use  
212 North Main Street, Mixed Use  
111 S. Ave. C, Mixed Use

### Loft Apartments

35 new loft apartments 2016 - 2022

**Overall Reinvestment Dollars** by private and public sector

**2015 - 2022**

\$10.3 million

**Since 1990**

\$27.2 million

**Sidewalk Dining Ordinance** Allows use of public sidewalk for dining

**Sidewalk Displays** Allowed for 2 feet in front of business.

**2021 International Building Code**

**2021 International Existing Buildings Code (IEBC)**

**Historic District Listed on** National Register of Historic Places - Eligible for State franchise tax credits, National Historic Preservation tax credits,

Elgin Economic Development Corporation Façade assistance, Main Street assistance.



### 2018 Best Economic Game Changer

Elgin Downtown Zoning Overlay

**Allows mixed use, and 50-50 commercial**

**residential occupancy on 1<sup>st</sup> floor** plus uses such as food manufacturing, brewery, winery, distillery, cabinetry, metal smithing, and artisan production.

### Elgin Main Street Program

**VISION STATEMENT:** We envision a revitalized and active historic downtown destination with warm hearted friendly people and vital businesses, where ethnic and cultural diversity are celebrated.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** We will enhance downtown vibrancy through historic preservation and mixed use and pedestrian friendly development, by strategically implementing the National Main Street Four Point Approach of: Design, Organization, Promotion and Economic Restructuring

### More Information Online & Social Media

[www.elgintx.com](http://www.elgintx.com)

[www.downtowntx.org](http://www.downtowntx.org)

@VisitElginTX Instagram & Facebook

### CONTACT

Kristina Alvarez, Main Street Manager  
512-229-3232

**National Accreditation Main Street City since 1999**

# HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD



## HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD

The primary goal is to maintain the historic integrity of structures within the district thereby preserving this living piece of history. Board members are appointed by the City Council to serve a 2-year term and participate in informal training related to historic preservation and architecture 1 to 3 times per year.

The Texas Historic Commission Main Street Center is frequently utilized for expert advice. Elgin Main Street is Nationally Recognized for Performance (Washington, D.C. recognized annually since 1999).

### Meetings

- 4th Wednesday of each month
- 7:30 AM
- Elgin Public Library Annex at 404 N. Main St.

Time, date, and location are subject to change, see the current agenda on the website to confirm this information <https://www.elgintexas.gov/168/Historic-Review-Board>

### MORE ABOUT THE HRB

The Historic Review Board (HRB) meets monthly to review applications for alterations to buildings, including signs within the historic district in downtown Elgin.

The HRB is responsible for reviewing all proposed changes within the district. Storefront restorations, sidewalk replacement, and new signs are examples of projects that require review. Anything that alters the appearance of a building that is visible from the street or the public right of way must be reviewed by the Historic Review Board.

Submit your application by the 10th of each month to ensure it is on the agenda for the monthly meeting. Applications are accepted at any time.

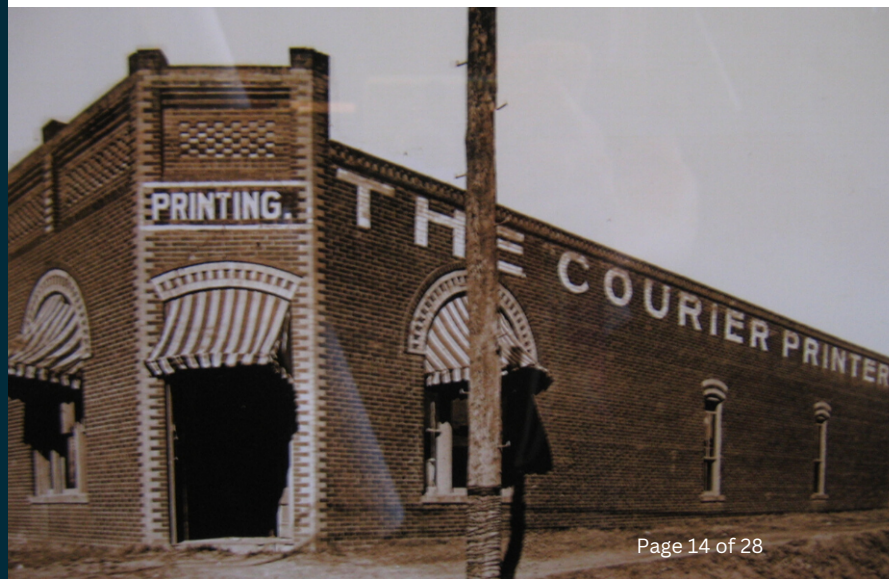
Visit the Historic Review Board's website here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/168/Historic-Review-Board>

### QUESTIONS ON HRB REVIEWS?

#### Contact for assistance

Amy Miller at (512) 229-3213

Email: [amy.miller@elgintexas.gov](mailto:amy.miller@elgintexas.gov)





# ELGIN HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD

## APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF MODIFICATIONS TO HISTORICALLY DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

The Elgin Historic Review Board meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. Applications must be submitted ten (10) days prior to the meeting date.

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

 Applicant is:

Building Owner  Business Owner  Contractor

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### BUILDING INFORMATION

Name of Building \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date Approved \_\_\_\_\_

### BUSINESS INFORMATION

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Bus. Owner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Bus. Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Bus. Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Contr. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contr. Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contr. Phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

### SIGN APPLICATION INFORMATION

Sign Type  Projection  Flat Mount  Window

Temporary Banner

Sign Dimensions \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft

Projection Sign (sq ft x 2) Total sq ft \_\_\_\_\_

Building Front Linear Feet \_\_\_\_\_ meets standards  yes  no

Window Dimensions \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ sq ft  
\_\_\_\_\_ % Coverage; meets standards  yes  no

*Intended and desired starting and completion date of alteration or repairs.*

Start \_\_\_\_\_ Complete \_\_\_\_\_

*Description of proposed external alteration or repair (use additional paper if needed)*

*Drawing/ sketch of the proposed external alteration (use additional paper if needed).  
Please provide current photos of property.*

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Approved  Rejected  Modified

(Building Permit Attached)

Chairman/Vice Chairman Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Building Official or Designee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Reviewed by Board \_\_\_\_\_

City Of Elgin Code Chapter 1 Section 5, page 42, states in part "...violations shall be fined \$2000 per day," Each day a violation occurs is a separate violation. Failure to have projects reviewed and failure to follow an approved application constitutes a violation.

**Application fee \$50**  
**Temporary Banner fee \$25**  
**Payable to The City of Elgin**  
**P.O. Box 591**  
**Elgin, TX 78621**

For questions call (512) 281-0119 or email  
[amy.miller@elgintexas.gov](mailto:amy.miller@elgintexas.gov)  
[david.harrell@elgintexas.gov](mailto:david.harrell@elgintexas.gov)



# ZONING OVERLAY

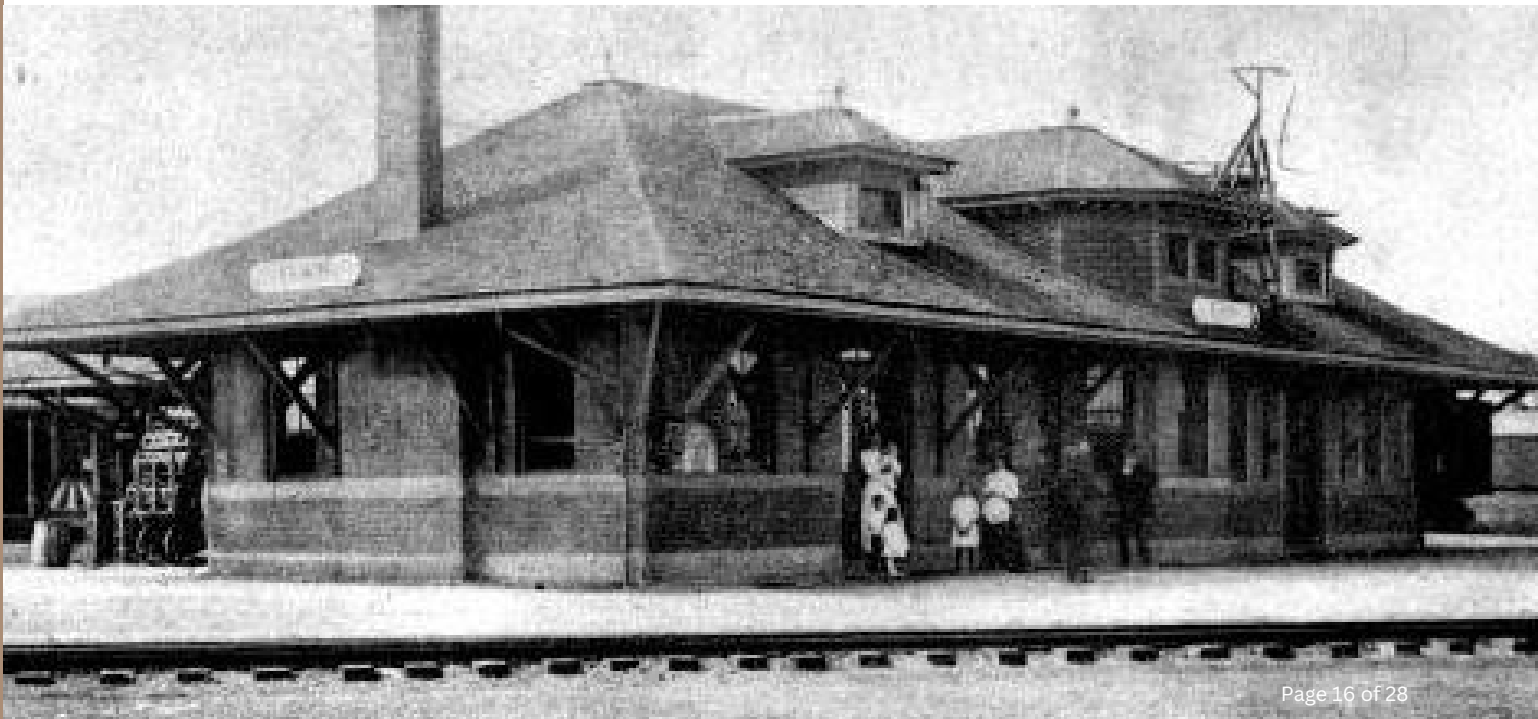
In September 2015, the City of Elgin City Council approved a zoning overlay for the Downtown Historic District creating 2 areas with mixed uses.

The core area of downtown from 2nd Street to Central Avenue allows for 50% residential on the 1st floor in the rear of a structure. The remaining areas allow up to 100% residential use.

Commercial uses include a variety of options in C-1 and C-2. The zoning overlay added uses such as wineries, breweries, cabinetry making, metal smithing, food processing, and glass blowing.

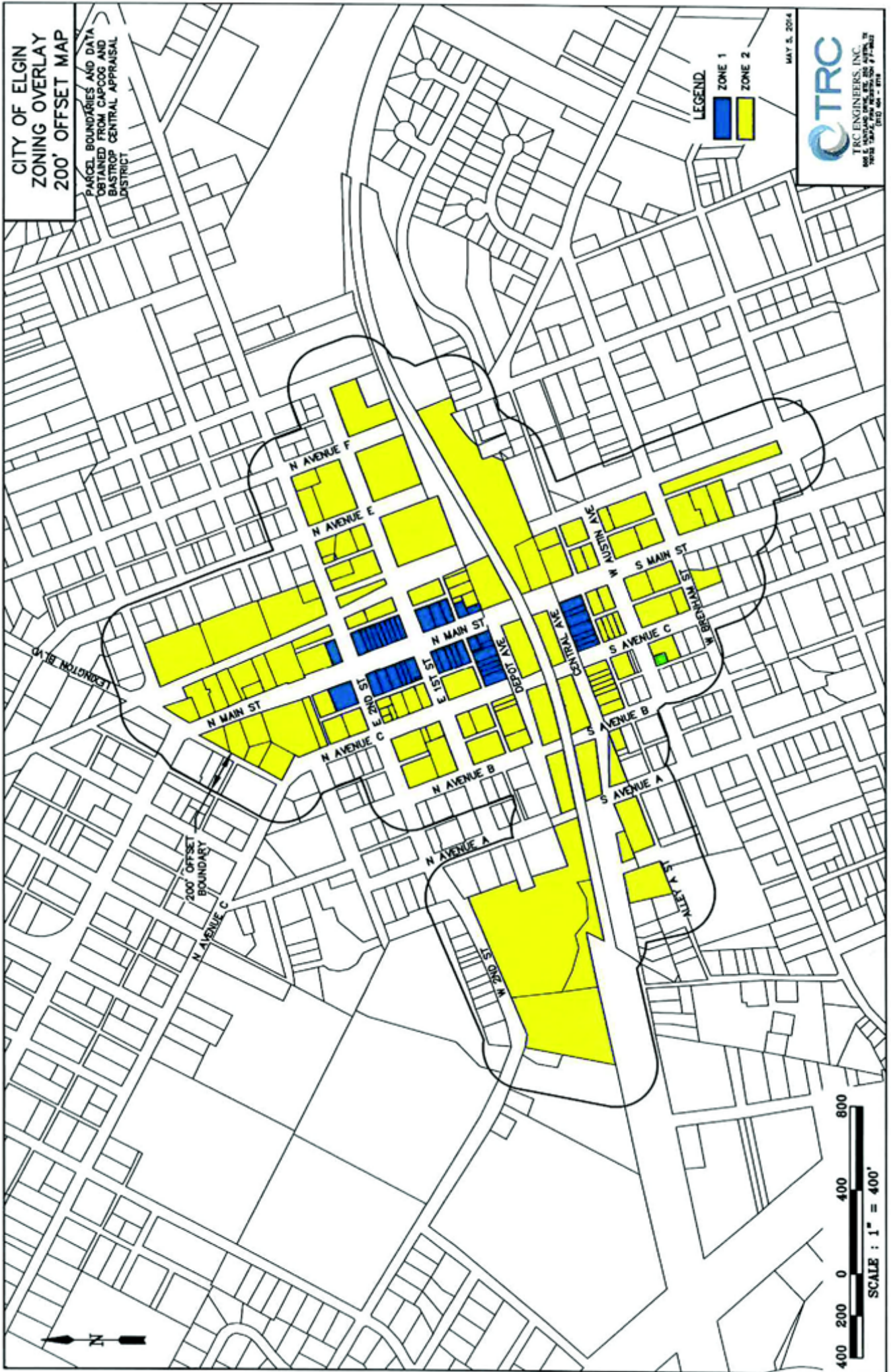
Additional information regarding the Sustainable Places project and the implementation of the Zoning Overlay can be found in the Sustainable Places report here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/DocumentCenter/View/248/Sustainable-Places-Final-Report>.

The Downtown Overlay Zoning Ordinance is described in detail in a link on Municode that can be found on our website here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/214/Zoning-Overlay>





# ZONING ORDINANCE OVERLAY MAP



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



## Elgin is Perfectly Situated!

Elgin is the right place to create jobs and communities in Central Texas. Elgin is a small town that's growing in touch with its past. Economic Development in the context of historic preservation makes this growing, dynamic downtown district flexible and a variety of resources and programs are available to support your future investment. Elgin means business! We look forward to working with you to locate your business in our community or to facilitate the growth and expansion of your existing business.

The EDC board administers the 1/2% sales tax for economic development for a 4B Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

The Elgin EDC owns and operates the Elgin Business Park on Highway 290. For information, visit the EDC website here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/161/Elgin-Economic-Development-Corporation>

## Meetings

- 2nd Wednesday of each month
- 5:00 PM
- City Hall Annex
- Time, date, and location are subject to change, see current agenda to confirm this information.

## MORE ABOUT THE EDC

### What is Economic Development?

- Wealth is created through mobilizing human, financial, capital, physical, and natural resources.
- Job creation and retention
- Grow the economy and enhance the quality of life for all residents

The EDC is currently offering the Downtown Building Enhancement Grant Program.

The principal purpose of the grant is to enhance the economic sustainability of the City of Elgin by assisting property owners and business enterprises located within the Downtown Overlay District.

All projects must be approved by the EDC Board prior to starting work to be eligible for this grant.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EDC?

### Contact for assistance

Kaley Frye at (512) 281-5724

Email: [kaley.frye@elgintexas.gov](mailto:kaley.frye@elgintexas.gov)





## SECTION 06

# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### Inspections

The City of Elgin utilizes the services of ATS Engineers, Inspectors, and Surveyors to perform all plan reviews and inspections within city limits. See more information here:

<https://www.elgintexas.gov/1041/Inspections>.

### Building & Fire Division

The Building and Fire Division ensures our buildings are designed and completed to standards that promote quality, safety, and efficiency in accordance with the City Code. For more information on what codes the City of Elgin has adopted: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/908/Building-Division>

### Planning and Zoning Division

Development Services is responsible for planning and zoning. Find more information on planning and zoning here: <https://www.elgintexas.gov/183/Planning-Development>. A summary includes:

- Building and Fire Permitting & Inspection includes Building, Fire, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Fuel-Gas, & Signs
- Construction Permitting & Inspections which includes Subdivision Construction & Site Development
- Zoning which includes Rezoning, Zoning Variances, Specific Uses, & Special Exceptions
- Platting which includes Concept Plans, Preliminary, Final, Re-plat, Plat Vacation, Amending Plat, Short Form, & Subdivision Variances
- Maintain & Insure Compliance with Planning Documents which includes the Comprehensive Plan
- Postal Addressing

### Code Enforcement Division

The Code Enforcement Division is tasked with enforcement of the [City Code of Ordinances](#). Enforcement of City Codes protects the community's life, safety, and welfare, ensures safe and desirable living and working environments, helps maintain property values, and works toward preserving the quality of life. Learn more about Code Enforcement here:

<https://www.elgintexas.gov/1170/Code-Enforcement>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Development Services

(512) 281-0119

Email: [planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov](mailto:planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov)

# CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

## What is a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) and why is it important?

A certificate of occupancy is a legal requirement. For example, if you've renovated a house, you won't be legally allowed to sell it without first obtaining or having a certificate of occupancy. The legal consequences can be particularly severe if you're building new construction, and you could potentially be fined for every day the property is in use without a valid certificate.

A certificate of occupancy guarantees that your building meets applicable Code standards and is safe enough to occupy through certain inspections that have been passed by the City.

## When Do You Need a Certificate of Occupancy

Certificates of occupancy don't need to be issued for every minor change to a property. For example, no certificate will be required if you're painting the walls or replacing the bathroom fixtures. That said, there are certain circumstances where you'll need to have one issued. This would need to be confirmed with the Development Services Department before the submittal of an application as it is based on individual circumstances (different codes and rules apply if the property is within the historic district). These include but are not limited to the following:

- The property is changing hands. Any change to any business name, business ownership, business tenant, or occupancy/use associated with a commercial building may require the issuance of another Certificate of Occupancy for the location.
- New construction.
- A renovation or addition to an existing building.
- The property use has changed.

## Where & How Do You Get a Certificate of Occupancy?

In order to obtain a certificate of occupancy, you'll need to fill out an application on MGO and pay a fee. Once the work is complete, you'll need to pass a series of inspections. Depending on the nature of the work, this could include but is not limited to:

- Mechanical inspection
- Electrical inspection
- Plumbing inspection
- Fire inspection
- Overall building inspection

### IMPORTANT

**Always verify if you need a permit to avoid enforcement action.**

Keep in mind that different individuals perform these inspections. If you need multiple inspections, they might not all happen at the same time.

The City of Elgin currently uses the online permitting software called My Government Online (MGO). The software provides the ability to submit and pay for all Building permits and inspections online. Applicants can track the progress of the plan review process, upload construction drawings and plans, view the required inspection sequence for a project, and request inspections online all from the convenience of a computer or mobile device. In addition, the software provides real-time inspection results via e-mail, automated telephone calls, and the online portal at [www.mygovernmentonline.org](http://www.mygovernmentonline.org).





## CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY CONTINUED

If you already have a My Government Online account there is no need to sign up again. Please select Elgin as the Jurisdiction. If you are new to the software, we encourage you to set up a free account at [www.mygovernmentonline.org](http://www.mygovernmentonline.org) and check out the My Government Online User Guide for help.

### **You must request a certificate of occupancy before any work can be performed.**

In your request, you'll have to describe the nature and scope of the work and provide documentation of this proposed work and the site itself. Then, when the work is completed, an inspection can be performed and provided there are no issues, your certificate can be issued.

### **What If You Do Not Pass the Inspection?**

If you don't pass inspection, don't panic. This is a normal part of the certification process. When you fail, you'll be given a list of items that need to be altered or fixed. You'll also be given a time frame in which to complete the repairs, typically 30, 60, or 90 days depending on the circumstances and the scope of work.

After you've performed all noted items, you can have the property re-inspected through scheduling via the My Government Online system. A re-inspection fee is required before scheduling this inspection through the My Government Online system. It stays in this format until all inspections are passed by the City. After successfully resolving all the issues, the certificate of occupancy will be issued.

### **What Happens if You Don't Get A Certificate Of Occupancy?**

If you don't obtain a certificate of occupancy, you could end up with legal issues. Depending on the circumstance, your local government could fine you (each day constituting a violation), disconnect utilities, or even pursue legal action in court.

### **Summary**

A certificate of occupancy is a legal requirement for property changes and real estate transactions. It's meant to ensure that the property is safe and able to be used for its intended use.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Questions** on obtaining your certificate of occupancy, sign permit, or permitting in general?

### **Development Services**

(512) 281-0119

Email: [planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov](mailto:planninganddevelopment@elgintexas.gov)

### **MyGovernmentOnline.org**

Set up a free account at [www.mygovernmentonline.org](http://www.mygovernmentonline.org) and check out the Online User Guide for assistance.

# HELPFUL FIRE INSPECTION INFORMATION

Visit this site for ideas of what will be checked at the annual inspection:  
<https://www.fieldinsight.com/blog/fire-inspection-checklist/>

The inspector will check the following plus a bit more:

1. Address clearly posted and visible from the street.
  - a. Numbers visible from the street, minimum 4 in. high and ½ in. wide lettering, and contrasting color, IFC 505.1.
2. Does the parking lot have painted fire lanes (This may not be applicable.)
3. Is there a Knox box installed within 10 feet of the front entry? The Knox box should contain building keys for emergency crews to enter the building.
4. Internally illuminated exit signs are required if the building is 1,000 square feet or larger. Is battery backup or emergency power provided for exit signs?
5. Are there exit signs at directional changes in the hallway and visible from any direction of egress travel?
6. Are fire extinguishers present and if so, have they been inspected? Fire extinguishers are required to be serviced annually. Check the tag on the extinguisher to find out the last time it was serviced. He will check that the correct type and size of extinguisher is present for the required area it is in.
7. Maintain 24” of clearance between the ceiling and stored items (do not stack things up to the ceiling).
8. Smoke detectors will be tested.
9. Carbon monoxide detectors are required if you have natural gas service.
10. Is there a fire protection system over the stove in the kitchen area? If not, he can counsel you on what to purchase and where to install (This may not be applicable.)
11. Replace any broken or missing ceiling tiles throughout.
12. Make sure no exits are blocked and there is a clear path for egress.
13. Make sure all junction boxes, breakers, and electrical receptacles have proper covers.
14. Eliminate extension cord wiring (extension cords are meant for temporary use and should not be in constant use). Appliances should be plugged directly into wall receptacles and not into extension cords or power strips).
15. Replace defective or improper wiring, and contact Development Services to verify if an electrical permit is needed.
16. Keep 36” clearance in front of the electrical panel.
17. The electrical room should be labeled.
18. Make sure no items are stored near your water heater and/or AC unit.

# VOLUNTEERING

## Reasons to Volunteer in Your Community

Volunteering allows you to connect with others in your community. It is the perfect way for you to make new friends and meet like-minded individuals with common interests. It can enhance existing relationships and can enhance personal and professional development. Volunteering is good for your mental and physical health and it allows you to give back to something that you feel passionate about.

### C O M M U N I T Y

Volunteers for the children's games playing at Music in the Park

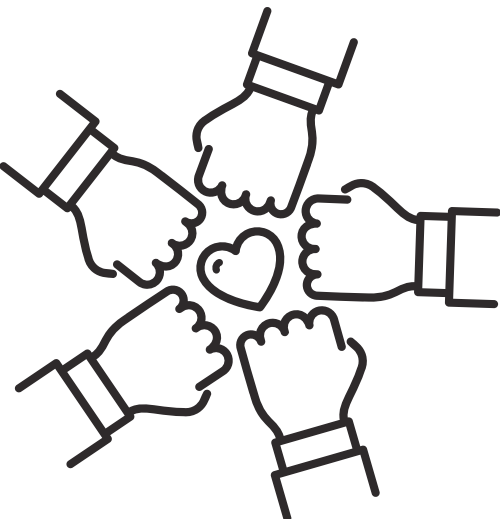


## Volunteer Opportunities

- Design Team
- Hogeye Festival
- Sip, Shop, & Stroll
- Special Events
- Promo & Tourism
- Office Support

Community volunteers are the heart of every Main Street program, and our work would not succeed without their dedicated and passionate contributions. There are a variety of tasks and events where we need volunteers. Volunteers are expected to work independently, as well as harmoniously with other volunteers, staff, and management.

### E N G A G E



Volunteers rolling t-shirts for the Hogeye festival







## Interested in:

- Downtown Beautification
- Community Events
- Design & Public Art
- Business Outreach/Retention
- Promotion & Tourism



**SCAN QR CODE  
TO GET INVOLVED**

## SECTION 07



*A little history about our town*

# ELGIN, TEXAS

---

### **Railroad**

In 1885, a group of citizens met in Elgin to organize a new north-south railroad that would run from Taylor, the rail head for the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas ("Katy") Railroad 16 miles to the north-through Elgin to Bastrop- the county seat, 16 miles to the south. The Taylor, Elgin, and Bastrop Railroad was formed in 1886 and began building the line. That same year the "Katy" Railroad acquired the line and continued the construction in Houston. Thus, Elgin became the beneficiary of 2 major rail lines with 8 passenger trains daily.

By 1890, the population of Elgin had reached 831. While Elgin grew during the next few years, many new businesses were started. The construction business, brick-making, farming, and nearby coal mines brought many new citizens of diverse backgrounds to the area.

### **Cotton**

The year 1900 produced a bumper crop of cotton, and Elgin prospered. The population had increased to 1,258. The city was incorporated in 1901, electing Charles Gillespie, building contractor, Mayor; J.D. Hemphill, Marshal; W.E. McCullough, J. Wed Davis, Ed Lawhon, Max Hirach, and F.S. Wade Aldermen. Local law enforcement was established to enforce newly established civil and criminal codes. By 1910, Elgin was enjoying a period of great prosperity as families from out on the prairie and surrounding communities moved to Elgin and built homes- many of which still surround the Historic Downtown District.

Elgin rapidly became the most important agricultural center in Bastrop County. Five cotton gins and a cotton oil mill were in operation at the same time. Three manufacturing brick companies in the area named Elgin "The Brick Capital of the Southwest."



# HOW IT BEGAN

ELGIN WAS FOUNDED IN **1872**

## ROBERT MORRISS ELGIN

The City of Elgin owes its existence to a major flood of the Colorado River in 1869. Originally, the railroad was to have run from McDade, 10 miles east of Elgin, southwest to the Colorado River at a point somewhere between Bastrop and Webberville, then to Austin following the river. In 1871, the Houston and Texas Central Railroad built through the area and established a flag stop called Glasscock named for George W. Glasscock, a local resident and Republic of Texas soldier who lived in the area in the 1830s.

Glasscock was renamed on August 18, 1872, for Robert Morriss Elgin, the railroad's land commissioner, following the practice of naming new railroad towns after officers of the company. Elgin was established. The original plat placed the train depot in the center of a one-square-mile area. On July 24, 1872, the H&TC bought the 1,111 acre Jonathan Burleson 1/4th league "east of the Colorado and above the San Antonio Road". It was adjacent to the Thomas Christian grant of 4,428 acres and Elgin is located on both of them.

Many of the early settlers had been granted land in the little colony in what was then Mexico or they had received grants for their service in the Texas Revolution. A number of others were descended from slaves who were brought to plantations along the Colorado. Areas such as Sayersville and Littig had large African American populations, some of whom moved to Elgin. The new town on the rail line attracted people from the established settlements.

By 1885, there were 8 passenger trains passing through Elgin a day. There were 7 saloons— about 1 for every 16 adult males. The town attracted gamblers and prostitutes. Elgin's reputation was perhaps best illustrated by the manner in which the train conductor announced the stop as "Hell-gin, halfway to Hades, next stop!". The Bigger Inn was the site of one of these saloons.

Mr. Abe. S. Christian, a descendant of Mary Christian Burleson, the original pioneer in this area, bought the lot in 1897 for \$300 and built the present structure. Christian's Saloon was one of seven saloons in Downtown Elgin at a time when Elgin was known as "wild" with the best Western Traditions.

There was a large sign painted on the side of the building which read, "A. Christian Saloon" with a finger pointing to the location to attract customers from the eight daily passenger trains. Old-timers tell the story of a Bible salesman who got off the train, saw the sign, and headed straight for the saloon. He rushed in, with the intent to congratulate the proprietor on such a fine establishment. He very hastily retreated when he figured out the nature of the business.



# The Original Pioneer Woman of Elgin, Texas

## WHO IS MARY?

### Mary R. B. Christian Burleson (1795-1870)

Mary Randolph Buchanan Christian Burleson, pioneer settler, and daughter of John and Nancy (Wright) Buchanan. Mary was born in Wytheville, Virginia, on March 1, 1795. She married Thomas Christian in 1822 in Kentucky, gave birth to three children, and traveled to the Illinois frontier, where she had two more children. In Missouri, the family joined immigrants headed to San Felipe de Austin in Texas, where they arrived in April 1832. They settled in Mina (Bastrop), built one of the first houses there, and obtained a grant of a league in Austin's Little Colony. There Mary Christian gave birth to a daughter. In 1833 the Christians moved north to Webbers Fort on the Colorado River. Thomas Christian was scalped and murdered in the Wilbarger Massacre in August 1833. Christian and her children moved to Reuben Hornsby's fort, where in 1834 she married James Burleson, Sr. They had one daughter. At Mina in 1835 Mary Burleson and ten other women, including Cecilie, a slave of the Samuel Craft family, organized what some believe to be the second-oldest Methodist Church in Texas. Mrs. Burleson, by then a widow, fled in the Runaway Scrape with the Jenkins and Burleson families. In 1840 she moved with her seven children to a newly built log house on Thomas Christian's league. Their house at the edge of the settlement was the first at the site of present-day Elgin. They moved back to Bastrop, however, after their house was ransacked during an Indian attack. Mary Burleson returned to the area in 1847 and remained there until her death.

In the 1860s she and her stepson, Jonathan Burleson, granted a right-of-way to the Houston and Texas Central Railway route through their headright leagues and land for the townsite of Elgin (1872). A one-room log schoolhouse called Burleson Branch School operated between Bastrop and Elgin around 1870. Mary Burleson died on May 27, 1870, in Bastrop and was buried at Christian-Burleson Cemetery on the Christian league.

Join the effort to save Elgin's first homestead here: <https://www.mcb.info/>



# QUICK CONTACT DIRECTORY

## Community Services

Amy Miller

Director

512-229-3213

amy.miller@elgintexas.gov

Andrea Taylor

Administrative Assistant

512-229-3227

community@elgintexas.gov

Sonia Browder

Media Specialist

512-229-3230

sonia.browder@elgintexas.gov

Kristina Alvarez

Main Street Manager

512-229-3232

kristina.alvarez@elgintexas.gov

Heather Fowler

Interim Librarian

512-281-5678

heather.fowler@elgintexas.gov

Elizabeth Marzac

Parks & Rec Program Manager

512-229-3232

elizabeth.marzac@elgintexas.gov

## Development Services

David Harrell

Director

512-229-3254

david.harrell@elgintexas.gov

Melissa Lipic

Planning Technician

512-285-6641

melissa.lipic@elgintexas.gov

Charlie Navejas

Permit Clerk

512-229-3255

charlie.navejas@elgintexas.gov

## Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Owen Rock

Director

512-229-3226

owen.rock@elgintexas.gov

Kaley Frye

Project Manager

512-229-3240

kaley.frye@elgintexas.gov

## Utility Billing

Dodie Navejas

Utility Billing Supervisor

512-229-3220

dodie.navejas@elgintexas.gov



Thank you for investing in downtown Elgin, Texas