



Buda Finalists Announced for the 2020 Texas Downtown Association President's Awards Program

Finalists for the 2020 President's Awards Program were recently announced in Austin. The City of Buda had four businesses/projects advance to the finalist category for communities with a population of 50,000 or less. For over 30 years the awards program, sponsored by the Texas Downtown Association (TDA), has recognized outstanding projects, places, and people of Texas downtowns.

Downtown Business of the Year Finalist: A Snowball's Chance

The Downtown Business of the Year category recognizes an exceptional downtown business that positively promotes the downtown or commercial district as a destination for locals and tourists alike and actively participates in the revitalization efforts and supports the downtown promotional events. From the beginning, owner Jake Akers knew he wanted to give something back to the community and become a permanent fixture in Buda. A Snowball's Chance in downtown has created a uniquely artistic edible shaved ice experience that surprises and delights each customer that visits.

Best Renovation/Rehabilitation/Restoration Finalist: Buda Mercantile Co.

This category recognizes excellence in rehabilitation or restoration of interior or exterior of an existing building. The Buda Mercantile Co. was originally constructed in 1898. In choosing to rehabilitate the oldest commercial building in Buda, the owners were able to bring modern aspects of today's society that complement the historic nature and natural beauty of the building. The result is a representation of everything that is Buda: strong, community-driven, pioneering, and lovely.

Best Promotion by Traditional Event Finalist: Cocoa Jingle and Downtown Lighting Ceremony

This category recognizes excellence in the creation and execution of downtown or commercial district promotional events, including festivals. The Cocoa Jingle was introduced in 2018 as part of the Small Business Saturday celebration, launching the official start of the holiday season with lights, a comforting family favorite – hot cocoa, pajamas, and Santa. The event created a family-friendly experience with neighbors and friends that bolsters small business and brings the community together to kick off the holiday season.

Best Public Improvement Finalist: Main Street & 967

The Best Public Improvement category recognizes excellence in public projects and planning in downtowns or commercial districts that should be compatible and complementary to the existing downtown or commercial district. The Main Street & RM 967 improvement was identified in the Buda 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Master Plan as a vital adjustment necessary to facilitate turns for traffic heading west and to establish the



intersection as the center of town. The project was led by TxDOT, broke ground in fall 2019 and was completed by Spring 2020.

TDA was established in 1985 to connect and serve communities that are committed to downtown vitality. The organization is an independent, statewide nonprofit that represents cities and towns of all sizes, economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, local associations, small businesses, and individuals.

“This is the fourth year in a row that at least one Buda nominee has advanced to finalist for the TDA President’s Awards,” said Monica Mills, Buda Main Street Program Chairwoman. “To have all four nominees advance to finalist is a true testament to the commitment our community has made to our historic downtown.”

One hundred and four entries were submitted in eleven different categories from communities across the state. Due to the number of entries, the entries were divided up into two categories – Design and Achievement – with separate judging panels for each group.

The judges for design entries were: Bill Hidell, Hidell and Associates Architects; David Newman, MESA Design Group; Marie Oehlerking-Read, Komatsu Architecture; Lynn Osgood, Civic Arts; and Chance Sparks, Freese & Nichols, Inc.

The judges for achievement entries were: A. J Fawyer, Verdunity; P.A. Geddie, County Line Magazine; Lynda Humble; and Julie Kunkle, Open Sky Media, Inc.

Winners will be announced virtually, on the TDA Facebook page, in a series of Award Announcement Videos as follows:

- Design Awards: Tuesday, October 27th at noon
- Achievement Awards: Wednesday, October 28th at noon

The award announcements will lead to the kick-off of the virtual 2020 Texas Downtown Conference from November 9-12. For more information about the President’s Awards, Conference, or other programs of the Texas Downtown Association, please visit www.texasdowntown.org. Applications for the 2021 awards program will open in the spring.

For more information contact:

Maggie Gillespie
Buda Main Street Program
mgillespie@ci.buda.tx.us
512.523.1075

Catherine Sak
Texas Downtown Association
catherine@texasdowntown.org
512.472.7832