The courthouse is on an Art Deco style that was popular in 1930, when it was built. Notice the streamlined metal cornices still intact in all three courthouses. The present owner restored this treasure to its original design.

Built by one of the most influential families in Brenham history. The building housed the first bank in Washington County. The first floor was the meeting place of the local Mason Lodge led by brothers J.D. and D.C. Giddings, the elegant Victorian building represents the high stature of the Giddings family, with an exquisite iron storefront.

This two-story building was once home of a fine opera house on the second floor, and a drug store on the first floor. The opera opens having a porte-cochere, a circular stairway with a wrought iron railing and a dated pediment over the entrance.

Historically known as the Greek-Revival Banking House, this building was originally built in 1870 as a mercantile store and was later converted to a theater. The second floor space is lit by an elongated, rectangular skylight above the second floor lobby area. An ornate, pressed metal ceiling graces the first floor retail space.

This three-story building was built to house a law, tile office and a cotton exchange. The original building was a wooden structural building, and was made of red cedar. A third floor with a skylight was added to provide the natural light needed to grade cotton - the longer the fiber, the more valuable the cotton. The brick detail work is also notable, as are the old garage doors. Skylights were used to light the long dark spaces that otherwise had limited street-front exposure for natural light.

The building was a hand-crank elevator to move vehicles between floors. In 1899, the Schmid Brothers Company built the massive two-story brick building east of the alley.

Originally built as the Winkelman & Bohne Drug Store, the business operated until 1932. It became City Food #1 and was later owned by R.L. Pemberton Company, when a gold aluminum sign covered the building locale. The current owners removed the sign, restoring the building to its original design.

The original bank building, law offices and a cotton exchange. The original building was a wooden structural building, and was made of red cedar. A third floor with a skylight was added to provide the natural light needed to grade cotton - the longer the fiber, the more valuable the cotton. The brick detail work is also notable, as are the old garage doors. Skylights were used to light the long dark spaces that otherwise had limited street-front exposure for natural light.

In 1847, John B. Wilkins arrived in the county seat, and the original family still operates today as Hermann Furniture Store.

The building was a hand-crank elevator to move vehicles between floors. In 1899, the Schmid Brothers Company built the massive two-story brick building east of the alley.

This grand building was originally used as a music store and a restaurant. A dated pediment over the entrance.

Originally built as the Winkelman & Bohne Drug Store, the business operated until 1932. It became City Food #1 and was later owned by R.L. Pemberton Company, when a gold aluminum sign covered the building locale. The current owners removed the sign, restoring the building to its original design.

This building was originally built in 1872, and then renovated for the Peyman Historical Foundation in 1997. The ground floor hosts a variety of permanent and changing exhibits. The building’s details were carefully crafted. A third floor with a skylight was added to provide the natural light needed to grade cotton - the longer the fiber, the more valuable the cotton. The brick detail work is also notable, as are the old garage doors. Skylights were used to light the long dark spaces that otherwise had limited street-front exposure for natural light.

An Art Deco style that was popular in 1930, when it was built. Notice the streamlined metal cornices still intact in all three courthouses. The present owner restored this treasure to its original design.

This building was originally built in 1872, and then renovated for the Peyman Historical Foundation in 1997. The ground floor hosts a variety of permanent and changing exhibits. The building’s details were carefully crafted. A third floor with a skylight was added to provide the natural light needed to grade cotton - the longer the fiber, the more valuable the cotton. The brick detail work is also notable, as are the old garage doors. Skylights were used to light the long dark spaces that otherwise had limited street-front exposure for natural light.

This building was originally built in 1872, and then renovated for the Peyman Historical Foundation in 1997. The ground floor hosts a variety of permanent and changing exhibits. The building’s details were carefully crafted. A third floor with a skylight was added to provide the natural light needed to grade cotton - the longer the fiber, the more valuable the cotton. The brick detail work is also notable, as are the old garage doors. Skylights were used to light the long dark spaces that otherwise had limited street-front exposure for natural light.
Simon Theatre & Washington County Visitor Center 1925
Architecturally important, this building was designed by the famous architect, Alfred C. Finn, in the early 20th century Classic Revival style. It was plush and popular in its time, with an upstairs ballroom used for events. The lower floor had a lobby, retail space, a vaudeville stage and movie theater with seating for 739 including the balcony. The handsome Simon Theatre will soon serve the community again as an entertainment and event venue.

Brenham Heritage Museum 1915
This stately, Classical Revival building was originally a Federal building that housed the United States Post Office. Several renovations through the years have kept it modernized, and it now belongs to the City of Brenham. Many museum displays tell the story of Texas and Washington County. Also part of the Brenham Heritage Museum complex are two buildings that were added later, to display Brenham’s antique fire trucks.

Toubin Park
Circa 1880
Beneath Brenham streets is a State Archeological Landmark, the only system of historic public cisterns found in Texas. Learn how they were built and supplied with water by private businesses. It’s a Wild West tale of an early railroad, a rough Boom Town, and inventive citizens who banded together in adversity.

Brenham Heritage Museum
1915
This stately, Classical Revival building was originally a Federal building that housed the United States Post Office. Several renovations through the years have kept it modernized, and it now belongs to the City of Brenham. Many museum displays tell the story of Texas and Washington County. Also part of the Brenham Heritage Museum complex are two buildings that were added later, to display Brenham’s antique fire trucks.

109 West Main
108 South Park
208 South Park
105 South Market

See a large private cistern and learn how it was used. Find out about present-day cisterns and how they can help you.

Downtown revitalization and historic preservation began taking shape in the 1980’s, through the efforts of Main Street Brenham working with property owners. Since that time, over $35 million has been reinvested in Downtown Brenham, and many historic buildings have been restored to their original grandeur.

Now a center for business, retail and entertainment, Downtown Brenham is again the heart of the community.

How History Shaped Downtown Brenham
The quaint, picturesque charm of Downtown Brenham is defined by its magnificent historic buildings. This fun walking tour will help you step back in time to a bygone era.

Downtown Brenham was platted around the Courthouse Square in 1844, when it was selected as the county seat of Washington County. In 1861 an early railroad was completed to Brenham, from Galveston and Houston, bringing a surge of people and prosperity. The community flourished during and after the Civil War, due to its new railroad and abundant supply of cotton, which was treated much like cash in those days.

Immigrants from Europe flooded into Washington County through the late 1800’s. They had industrial skills and began manufacturing popular products. Countless new homes and “business houses” were erected between 1880 and 1900, and Downtown Brenham was the heart of the community. Many buildings from that era still stand today.

During the early 1900’s, many Downtown buildings were remodeled. Store fronts were newly faced with marble or brick, and decorative owingns were added.

The 1950’s and 1960’s brought many more renovations. Some historic building features were actually covered for the sake of “modernization.” Shopping centers were built along the highways, so the Downtown area evolved to mostly a business and government center.

Downtown renovation and historic preservation began taking shape in the 1980’s, through the efforts of Main Street Brenham working with property owners. Since that time, over $35 million has been reinvested in Downtown Brenham, and many historic buildings have been restored to their original grandeur.

Now a center for business, retail and entertainment, Downtown Brenham is again the heart of the community.