



CITY OF CORSICANA, TEXAS

March 20, 2012

Brick Street Commentary

A guest commentator in last Sunday's *Daily Sun* stated that brick streets in Corsicana are not included in the National Register of Historic Places. In fact, the brick streets in the Corsicana Historic Commercial District are registered as contributing to the character of the district, thus affording the same protection as any other contributing feature downtown. So, the brick streets in the downtown area are listed in the NRHP. Removing brick streets in the Historic District would send the wrong message to downtown property owners. The City has always encouraged the preservation of historic structures and the downtown area. The National Register dates Corsicana's downtown brick streets to 1915. That means they have been in service for over nine decades! Even after 90 years, turn at any point onto Commerce Street and see a street that has served the Citizens longer than any other street in town and still looks good.

Several years ago, the Council decided to preserve the streets that are currently brick in this Historic District. This includes the area bounded by 2nd Avenue on the north, 7th Avenue on the south, Main Street on the west and Commerce Street on the east. The Council will attempt to preserve the streets that are currently brick and repair them as necessary. All other brick streets outside this area will eventually be removed and replaced with asphalt as funding allows.

Earlier this month a budget amendment was passed to provide funding for brick street repair in the downtown National Historic Register District. The repair will remove only the center section and replace the area damaged by the interurban track on Main Street in front of the Post Office and one block on Beaton Street between 2nd Avenue and 3rd Avenue. In addition, spot repairs will be done on Main Street and 5th Avenue. The Council researched the options and compared cost before making a decision. Due to the width and the condition of the street, repair of the brick is the most economical method in these locations. There is not one solution to all street repairs. The best fix depends on the street, the condition of the curb and gutter and the expected traffic. Each aspect is always evaluated prior to making a decision. The total cost will be approximately \$150,000. This amount represents the extent of the repair to be done downtown for the foreseeable future and will extend the life of the streets significantly. It is a good investment and contrary to the statements made in the paper is cheaper than removal of those particular streets. In addition, questions have been raised as to why the street cannot be simply overlaid with asphalt. An asphalt overlay would only be a temporary cover up of the structural problem causing the bricks to settle and delay the inevitable. The Council voted to repair the brick streets knowing that while brick streets are durable, the ride is not the same as asphalt or concrete.

In closing, I would like to assure the citizens that the Council is evaluating the street program to make effective, long lasting repairs to streets. More street conversation will be in the next letter. I continue to be proud to be your Mayor.

Sincerely,

Chuck McClanahan
Mayor