

revitalizing Historic Galveston

For the second consecutive year UTSA College of Architecture graduate students have completed a three week long historic preservation focused field school in Galveston under the direction of faculty member **James “Rick” Lewis**. In collaboration with the **Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF)**, student researchers were assigned to one of three projects emphasizing building documentation, urban contextual studies, and historic building adaptation investigations.

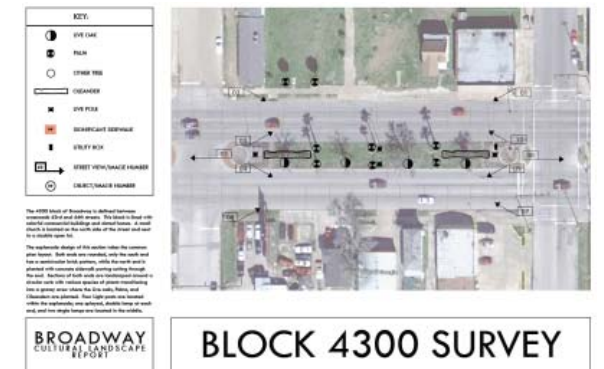
Among the properties engaged by students, the Bishop’s Palace, owned by the Houston/Galveston Catholic Dioceses and managed by the GHF as one of the Island’s most visited historic attractions, was examined from the perspective of improving public access to the building relative to the standards of the Americans With Disabilities Act by Team A.

The second project undertaken by Team B was the documentation of the historic Martini Theater. Despite this beautiful Art Deco structure’s recognized identity at the edge of the Strand/Mechanic Row National Historic Landmark District, the building has been neglected for years and is at risk of being demolished to make way for new development. Special attention was paid to painting a positive image of how the Theater might look once restored and adapted for a contemporary function. As a result of planning and fundamental design determinates, the students felt that an Alamo Draft House type of establishment would be a viable option for the building’s reincarnation.

As the Field School’s “big picture” initiative, toward invigorating the Island as it continues to recover following Hurricane Ike, the Broadway Cultural Landscape study was mounted. Team C was tasked with evaluating the character and historic integrity of Galveston’s main boulevard toward creating a vision for a revitalized linear park stretching the length of the City. Recommendations stemming from the students’ efforts involved reintroducing trolleys to Broadway as well as enhanced pedestrianism and designated bicycle lanes to reinforce proposals to diminish vehicular pressures facing the Island.

The Field School’s findings and recommendations were presented to over fifty representatives from the community on the final day of the program. The outcomes of the students’ efforts were well received with discussions surrounding proposals continuing throughout a luncheon honoring the students for their hard work. Lewis complemented the students by stating “everyone of the students who came to Galveston this May set forth an effort to make a difference in people’s lives. Working closely with professionals on the front lines of protecting and rehabilitating the kinds of places that give meaning to a unique setting like Galveston, students come face to face with what it means to become involved at positively influencing the built environment.”

Participants by no means worked alone in their endeavor. The Galveston Historical Foundation’s Director **Dwayne Jones** collaborated closely with Lewis to provide staff, office space, and housing in support of the students’ work. Meals for the Field School were provided by **Cathy Townsend of Galveston Connections**. The 2010 Galveston Field School team will be making a presentation of accomplishments to the College of Architecture early in the Fall Semester.



- Team A: George A. Barrera, Nancy Bryant, Andy Castillo, Anly De La Cruz, Edgar I. Zarate, Kathryn M. Zey
- Team B: John Pedersen, Casey Johnson, Jeremy Kreusel, Andrew Mendez
- Team C: Sara Luduena, Matthew Tompkins, Adekunle Lufadeju, Andrew Mendez, Laura Carrera