

TEXAS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

## CHCs and Historic Cemeteries: A Framework for Preservation

### Part 2: Connect

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TEXAS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

### A Suggested Framework for County-Wide Cemetery Preservation

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graph TD
    A[Identify all cemeteries in county.] --> B[Determine who is working with each cemetery.]
    A --> C[Determine what each cemetery needs.]
    B --> D[Determine how the CHC can help preserve the cemetery itself or help others preserve the cemetery. Take action accordingly.]
    C --> D
  
```

www.thc.texas.gov/chc-cemeteries

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TEXAS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

### CONNECT: Suggested Activities

**CHCs know who (if anyone) is responsible for each cemetery, or who's already working with the cemetery, and how to contact them.**

- Identify responsible party for each cemetery; keep current contact information for each.
- Regularly contact these people to keep tabs on upcoming activities and meetings.
- Encourage posting signs at each cemetery with contact information.
- Conduct deed or other research to determine ownership/authority of abandoned or neglected sites.

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party

Identify responsible party for each cemetery; keep current contact information for each.



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party

**Municipal Cemeteries**

- Dedicated Department, or not
- Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Community Services Dept.
- Support Organizations, "Friends"






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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party

**County Cemeteries**

- Rarely has a distinct department or division
- Precinct Office
- County Clerk
- County Judge





By Bill Kruever <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=83619>

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party



**Religious Cemeteries**

- Individual congregation
- Or a conference, diocese, etc.

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party



**Private Family Cemeteries**

- Board of Directors
- Point Person

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party

**Cemetery Associations**

- Incorporated
- Unincorporated
- May or may not have federal tax-exempt status



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Identify responsible party



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Make regular contact

**Regularly contact them to keep tabs on upcoming activities and meetings.**

- Connect them with one another
- Communicate CHC's willingness and capacity to assist
- Connect them with preservation resources



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

**CONNECT:**  
Make regular contact

**Remember! Their priorities might not be the same as yours—and that's okay.**

- Introduce yourself
- Show interest in their work
- Educate about local history
- Be an advocate and resource for preservation
- Facilitate connections



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

**CONNECT:**  
Make contact info available

**Make it easier for stakeholders to make connections:  
Post signs with contact information (and more).**

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

**CONNECT:**  
Post a sign with contact info

**Posting contact info makes it easier for people to:**

- Donate
- Volunteer to help
- Report a problem
- Connect with others who care

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Post a sign with contact info

- Name of Cemetery
- Contact Person
- Contact phone or email or website
- Address – physical and mailing
- Hours of visitation
- Dates – meetings, clean-ups, etc
- Rules
- Updates

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Post a sign with contact info

- Easy to read
- Readily visible
- Appropriate scale
- Clear message
- Regularly maintained
- Sensitive design

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Make contact info available

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Or not?

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**CONNECT:**  
 Determine authority of abandoned sites

**Conduct deed or other research to determine ownership or authority of abandoned or neglected sites.**



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**CONNECT:**  
 Determine authority of abandoned sites

**Sources to Research:**

- DEEDS – *everything else should lead you back here*
- Appraisal district records
- Secretary of State (incorporated associations)
- County Clerk (early or unincorporated associations)
- Probate records and wills
- General newspaper research, local history books, oral histories, etc.

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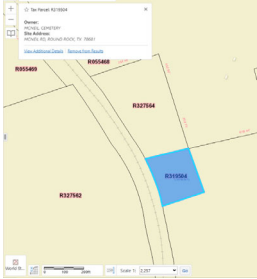
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**CONNECT:**  
 Determine authority of abandoned sites

**CAD shows separate parcel:**

- It was set aside or dedicated specifically for cemetery purposes at some point in the past, or
- It was never formally set aside, but it was left out when all the other land around it got sold off, or
- It means neither of these things



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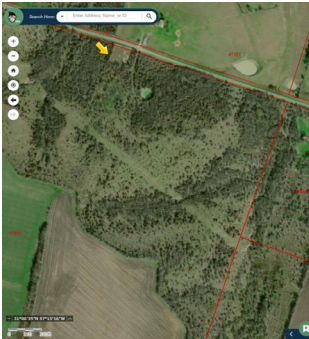
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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

**CONNECT:**  
Determine authority of abandoned sites

**CAD shows integral within a larger parcel:**

- It was never separated from the larger parcel; conveyed from one owner to the next
- It was set aside at some point in the past, but subsequent deeds lack that reference



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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Determine authority of abandoned sites

**Researching Deeds:**

- Index – Direct/Reverse; Grantor/Grantee
- Special index for cemeteries in some counties
- “Save and except” clause
- Trace forward or backward; be thorough



traviscountyhistory.org

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TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
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**CONNECT:**  
Determine authority of abandoned sites

**Possible Owners:**

- Current land owner
- Past land owner(s)
- Church
- School district
- County judge
- “Community”
- Cemetery association
- Others



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      C --> D
      style C stroke:#00FF00,stroke-width:2px
      style A stroke:#00FF00,stroke-width:2px
      style C stroke:#00FF00,stroke-width:2px
  
```

*Next: Assess!*

[www.thc.texas.gov/chc-cemeteries](http://www.thc.texas.gov/chc-cemeteries)

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**Cemetery Preservation Program**

[www.thc.texas.gov/cemetery](http://www.thc.texas.gov/cemetery)



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