

COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA
COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center

Grand Salon ABC

1900 University Avenue

Austin TX 78705

April 26, 2021

10:30 a.m.

(or upon the adjournment of the 10:00 a.m. Architecture Committee, whichever occurs later)

This meeting of the Community Heritage Development Committee has been properly posted with the Secretary of State's Office according to the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551. The Committee may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

Pursuant to the Governor's March 16, 2020 suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the April 26, 2021 meeting of the Community Heritage Development Committee will be held by videoconference as authorized under Texas Government Code section 551.127. The presiding officer and a quorum of the Community Heritage Development Committee will be present at the above-posted physical location. The public is invited to attend via Zoom using the registration link provided or in person in accordance with the instructions below.

To attend by Zoom, registration is required: <http://bit.ly/april26thcmeeting>

For audio only access via telephone: 1(346) 248-7799 Webinar ID: 914 0970 3244

To attend in person: In accordance with policies of the meeting facility, facemasks are recommended to enter the building and remain on while in the common area. The THC strongly recommends mask use and social distancing throughout the property and during the meeting. The THC encourages any person experiencing symptoms of illness to attend by videoconference instead of in person.

Digital copies of the meeting materials will be available at www.thc.texas.gov/videoconferences after April 20, 2021. To obtain a recording of the meeting please contact kimberly.klein@thc.texas.gov after April 30, 2021. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.

1. Call to Order — *Committee Chairman Peterson*
 - A. Committee member introductions
 - B. Establish quorum
 - C. Recognize and/or excuse absences
2. Consider approval of the February 2, 2021 committee meeting minutes — *Committee Chairman Peterson*
3. Community Heritage Development Division update and committee discussion — *Patterson*
 - A. Update on Real Places Conferences
 - B. Update on the Texas Main Street Program activities including staffing, and DowntownTX.org
 - C. Update on heritage tourism activities including Texas Heritage Trails Program
 - D. Update on the Certified Local Government activities including grants, training, and prospective CLGs
4. Adjournment

NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, large print or Braille, are requested to contact Esther Brinckley at (512) 463-5768 at least four (4) business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MINUTES
COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Videoconference Meeting
February 2, 2021

Note: For the full text of action items, please contact the Texas Historical Commission at P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711 or call 512.463.6100.

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) Community Heritage Development Committee was called to order by Committee Chairman Pete Peterson at 10:47 a.m.

A. Roll call for committee members

Chairman Peterson welcomed everyone. Members in attendance in addition to the Chair, included Commissioners Monica Burdette, Garrett Donnelly, Renee Dutia, Lilia Garcia, and Daisy White.

B. Roll call for other participants

Other participants available on the call included Mark Wolfe, Executive Director, Debra Drescher, Texas Main Street Program State Coordinator, Lorelei Willett, Certified Local Government Program Coordinator, and Brad Patterson, Division Director.

C. Establish Quorum

Chairman Peterson noted a quorum was present.

D. Recognize and/or excuse absences

Chairman Peterson noted that Commissioner Jefferson were absent. Commissioner Burdette moved to excuse his absence seconded by Commissioner Garcia. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consider approval of the October 27, 2020 committee meeting minutes — *Committee Chairman Peterson*

Commissioner White moved, Commissioner Dutia seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the October 27, 2020 Community Heritage Development (CHD) committee meeting minutes.

3. Consider approval of the application ranking and funding recommendations for the FY 2021 Certified Local Government Grants and reallocation of available FY 2019 grant funds (item 11.2) — Committee Chairman Peterson

Mr. Patterson explained that the agency is required to pass through at least 10 percent of the federal Historic Preservation Fund appropriations as grants to CLG communities and referred the committee members to the evaluation criteria that the interdisciplinary committee follows when making its recommendation. Usually, the agency receives about \$154,000 each year and anticipate receiving about \$165,000 in FY2021. This year staff put out two grant application calls for FY2021, one for traditional projects with the second being for a community to host a National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) CAMP virtual training using the last of FY2019 funds. Eleven CLGs applied for a FY2021 CLG grant and Mr. Patterson referred members to the materials outlining this year's grant recommendations and funding amounts. The

recommended funding totals approximately \$147,000, which will be less than we will be required to allocate, so staff will return to the Commission to allocate additional funds in the future. Special consideration is given to projects and programs that directly support the goals of the Texas Statewide Preservation Plan and those projects and programs that encourage diversity and inclusion in the preservation community. Patterson noted that staff was not comfortable recommending funding the last two applications based on the specifics of those applications.

Chairman Peterson asked what the discomfort was with the two projects not recommended for funding. Mr. Patterson explained that the second City of Houston project was for a phased survey across the city, but neighborhoods weren't defined, and they would be using existing staff to conduct the survey. There was concern that local staff would not have the time available to conduct the survey or possibly the expertise. The City of Arlington proposed a wayfinding project within a historic cemetery which had many elements not eligible for federal funding thereby significantly limiting the already small scope.

Mr. Patterson directed the Committee to the second grant for a NAPC virtual training, noting that staff received three applications. The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions is dedicated to supporting Landmark Commissions and these trainings are geared to our audience and staff has done these trainings very successfully in the past. Mansfield has been selected to host this training, if unable the next applicant will be asked. The training will be open to all constituents around the state.

Chairman Peterson moved that the committee send forward to the Commission and recommend acceptance of the reallocation of Fiscal Year 2019 grant funds along with the application ranking and funding recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2021 Certified Local Government grants based on the availability of federal funds, waiving the match requirement for hosting the online training. Individual recommended funding amounts may be adjusted as necessary to ensure efficient use of the available funds. Seconded by Commissioner Donnelly. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consider approval of a waiver for Texas Main Street Program training fees during the pandemic (item 11.3) — *Committee Chairman Peterson*

Mr. Patterson directed the Commission to the materials outlining the sections in the Texas Government Code and Texas Administrative Code about the agency's ability to charge fees and in particular section 19.5 which allows a \$500 training fee as it applies to the Main Street Program. This fee schedule was approved in 2012 by the commission and in 2018 that schedule was incorporated into the Texas Administrative Code. Since March, staff have been working remotely and have continued to actively support the local programs including providing trainings, consultations, and services via email, telephone, and video conferencing. However, the traditional in-person trainings provided to new managers, twice annually, have not been provided in 2020 nor is it anticipated for the first half of 2021. New managers have been provided orientations both collectively and individually, as well as personalized support, however staff does not consider this to be an equal substitution. Without the proposed waiver, 14 or more participating programs would be assessed the \$500 training fee on their 2021 contracts. It is staff's recommendation to waive this fee, for the duration of the current pandemic, until they can provide in-person training to new managers again.

Chairman Peterson moved to waive Main Street training fees for the duration of the current pandemic. Seconded by Commissioner White. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jefferson joined the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

5. Community Heritage Development Division update and committee discussion — *Division Director Patterson*

A. Update on Real Places 2021 online conference

Mr. Patterson reminded that the Real Places 2021 conference would be starting the following day and encouraged commissioner to participate. The conference will have 50 speakers, 26 sessions, and over 700 participants. New this year are the student and hardship scholarships categories. Robert Stanton provided scholarships for ten Houston Tillotson University students and other sponsors followed suit. There were also a few hardship scholarships given.

The cost for holding the conference will be about \$80,000 and the THC will provide \$50,000 in financial support. Overall, it is anticipated that the conference will be profitable leaving a surplus in the Friends account that will be utilized for future conferences. Almost all sponsors returned this year at nearly the same level of sponsorship. Mr. Patterson showed a slide comparing registrations and revenues from the last four conferences and noted several of the highlights for the conference schedule, including keynotes and award recognitions. Recordings of all sessions will be available for 60 days post-conference.

B. Update on the Texas Main Street Program activities including staffing, DowntownTX.org

There have been 13 new managers come on board since the pandemic started and staff has been working with them virtually. Downtown, TX now has 57 active communities, with 10 of those being launched in 2020.

C. Update on heritage tourism activities including Texas Heritage Trails Program

Mallory Laurel joined the Heritage Tourism team on February 1st and will be contributing on a variety of heritage tourism activities and with the Texas Heritage Trails. She previously worked for The University of Texas at Austin, Latino Studies Program.

The agency currently stores the Texas Heritage Travel guide and other travel materials in a TxDOT warehouse for fulfillment and distribution. TxDOT is moving to a smaller facility next year and it is necessary for THC to remove our materials that exceed a one-year supply. Staff has been developing methods to get the materials into consumers hands, including sending almost 40,000 copies of the Heritage Travel Guide to the *Houston Chronicle* to be used as an insert. There are about 175 pallets of material that still need to be relocated or distributed. The added benefit is that stocks may decrease enough that it becomes feasible to consider updating some of the materials.

Chairman John Nau mentioned that TxDOT had given until the end of the year to remove our materials and that he had a warehouse in San Antonio that can be used to store the materials. Mr. Nau believed it would be wise for the committee to work with the staff to see how we can efficiently engage with schools and other types of organizations to distribute the material.

Committee Chairman Peterson asked what the takedown rate was on the inventory, and how much will be used by the end of the year. Mr. Patterson said that in a normal year about 35,000 statewide guides are distributed and varying amounts of the other products. Currently there are large quantities at the warehouse.

Chairman Peterson stated that maybe staff should analyze the cost of storage and the cost of making these large print runs and the potential of the material being out of date before they are expended.

Executive Director Mark Wolfe reminded the commission that in the past the opportunity to print products have been very limited, so when we are able to get appropriation to cover it we update the publication and print as many of them as funding allows, recognizing that it is a material that has a certain life. Mr. Patterson stated that while we do make our materials as evergreen as possible, changes occur, for instance the statewide Heritage Travel Guide does not reflect the newly acquired state historic sites.

The Texas Time Travel website redesign contract is being reviewed by the OAG's team and will then be executed. Staff is very excited about the vendor as they are very dedicated to the travel and tourism industry and the redesign will yield a dynamic, substantially upgraded site with new features but without abandoning current content. It will look fresher, handle photos better and have a better user interface, and tools. We are on track for the vendor to complete the work this fiscal year and relaunch the site in the fall when there will hopefully be a boon in travel.

Chairman Nau asked Executive Director Wolfe if this should be put on hold until there is an agreement of the minds between what Mr. Patterson just described and the travel app. Mr. Wolfe said these were two different efforts and separate projects, technologies, and needs and that it had taken a better part of a year to get to this point. What Mr. Patterson has been talking about is very different from a travel app. The agency has talked about the possibility of freeing up some funds next year for the app, and Phase I funding for a travel app it is on the latest LAR revision. Chairman Nau explained to the committee that he believed money from the sporting goods sales tax had been found to develop an advanced travel app. Chairman Nau directed that if these are two different issues, go ahead with the redesign and it is great news that we can also go ahead with a new travel app. Executive Director Wolfe agreed stating that if the agency got capital authority from the legislature during the session, we could move forward with the app.

Chairman Peterson asked Mr. Patterson if this website could be adapted to mobile friendly and Chairman if it would be open interfaced enough so that it could tie into the travel app. Mr. Patterson stated that this vendor has the mobile interface as a key component of their system and design. It will be inherently designed for use on mobile devices being mobile responsive, including geographic location and similar features. Mr. Patterson stated that this vendor recognizes the majority of access to websites is via mobile devices now.

Commissioner Dutia asked what year the scope of work was written. Mr. Patterson stated that most would have been in 2020, though it may have started in late 2019. Commissioner Dutia stated that any scope for technology prior to the pandemic probably had a different purpose, and the digital world is changing at a very fast pace and consumer search behavior has completely changed. Therefore, it might be a good idea to reevaluate the scope and determine what percentage is still relevant before we sign a contract. Mr. Patterson stated that staff has reviewed the scope multiple times along the way, and he feels very comfortable that the scope with this vendor remains appropriate. One of the advantages of this vendor is that they have 200 clients in the travel industry, and these are the only clients they work with. They use a content management system that our Communications team is very happy with and when a change is made for one of their clients as a response to a change in travel marketing environment, those changes will be made for all clients.

Commissioner Garcia asked if there will be Spanish translation or other languages in the future. Mr. Patterson stated that one of the scope requirements is the ability to translate pages into multiple languages. The downside is that you may not get the same translation as a human would. This is also not the same as developing content directly crafted for a specific audience. With the print Hispanic Heritage Guide we paid for a completely different print product and humans translated all the material. The current website has 4,000 pages and it would be cost prohibitive at this point to have them all translated by a human.

Commissioner Burdette agreed with Commissioner Dutia that this might be a good time to evaluate the difference between the app idea and the Time Travel idea and figure out what might be redundant and decide where our money would be best spent.

D. Update on Certified Local Government Program activities including grants, training, and prospective CLGs.

Staff has been developing an online Preservation Bootcamp to help provide CLGs and staff internally with the basic preservation knowledge they may need. It is designed so that are constituents can pick and choose topics they need to increase their expertise. It will include a variety of video presentations coming from different programs around the agency, making it applicable to CLG, Main Street Managers as well as other constituents. Staff will be soft launching an announcement of the program at the Real Places CLG session. A more significant promotion of the program will follow.

6. Adjournment

At 11:45 a.m. the committee meeting was adjourned.

Quarterly Report

Community Heritage Development (CHD) Division
January–March 2021

WORK IN COMMUNITIES

The communities participating in CHD’s programs rely heavily on our staff expertise and guidance, which normally must be delivered onsite. In response to the pandemic, all CHD staff have been exclusively teleworking since March 2020 with travel restrictions also in place. In a typical two- or three-month period, division staff would be expected to have visited 18–30 communities. Assistance from the division’s programs is being delivered remotely and online, with a scope and quantity comparable to traditional methods.

In January and February, staff provided measurable assistance to all 10 trail regions and 27 communities. Assistance, or in some cases multiple incidences of assistance, was provided to **Brownsville, Carthage, Clarksville, Corpus Christi, Corsicana, Cuero, Denison, Denton, Elgin, Ennis, Farmersville, Fort Worth, Hamilton, Henderson, Kerrville, Mesquite, Nacogdoches, San Augustine, San Marcos, Seguin, Stephenville, Socorro, Texarkana, Tyler, Waco, Weatherford, and Winnsboro.**

RESULTS IN FROM REAL PLACES 2021 CONFERENCE

The 2021 event ended with a total 787 registrants of all types, a clear record response for the conference. The conference software tracks who logs in to attend one or more sessions and that figure was 648, indicating lower actual engagement than the overall registration. This represents a similar but slightly higher participation than 2020 in-person attendance.

Post-conference survey of public participants for the 2021 event was conducted in late February. 90 percent of respondents rated the conference quality positively, with 62 percent rating it “excellent.” These results are very similar to the 2020 in-person conference, though the sample size returning surveys was significantly smaller in 2021.

Respondents were asked about their likelihood of attending the 2022 event, but the sample size is too small to draw reliable conclusions. The 18 percent who noted a future preference for attending virtually may still be relevant for future planning.

DOWNTOWNTX.ORG EXPANSION CONTINUES, WITH OPPORTUNITY TOURS RETURNING IN MAY

The Texas Main Street Program has continued expanding and improving the DowntownTX.org website. This is the public version of the downtown online inventory project that has been supported by the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, Certified Local Government Program, and the Still Water Foundation.

Staff continue working with the communities, undertaking parts of the inventory process, and training local officials on the system operations. Building inventories, resource surveys, appraisal data, incentive information, available real estate, and historic districts mapped and are displayed on DowntownTx.org for 58 Texas communities.

A total of 98 communities are either live or in the process of data integration. To date, 19,673 properties have been inventoried, including 552 locally designated landmarks, 2,596 properties that contribute to local districts, 343 National Register-listed properties, and 2,954 parcels that contribute to National Register districts. The DowntownTX.org website had 5,739 unique users in February 2021, an increase from January, despite abnormally low usage for the week of arctic temperatures and power failures across the state.

For the fifth consecutive year, in conjunction with Preservation Month (May), 26 of these communities have committed to host “Imagine the Possibilities” tours of their available downtown properties for lease

or sale. The tours are designed to raise awareness of DowntownTX.org and to connect real estate agents, potential investors, and business owners from across regions to downtown properties. In 2020 due to the pandemic, most of the locally organized tours were successfully converted to virtual tours, which opened new outreach opportunities. For 2021, most tours will likely return to in-person, socially distanced events. The ultimate decision-making on the events rests with the local officials; however, staff is requesting that events undertake planning to ensure participant safety. The agency will provide support for the events and will consider the design of each one before determining the appropriate level of promotion on THC channels.

The communities planning to host 2021 tours include **Amarillo, Beaumont, Beeville, Brenham, Brownsville, Caldwell, Corsicana, Elgin, Goliad, Hamilton, Harlingen, Kingsville, McKinney, Mesquite, Palestine, Paris, Pilot Point, Rio Grande City, San Augustine, Sherman, Temple, Texarkana, Tyler, Vernon, Victoria, and Winnsboro.** The steady tour participation is a testament to the impact of the site and the tours.

HERITAGE TOURISM

The Heritage Tourism team facilitated a series of social media workshops this quarter for representatives from the 10 trail regions. Participation in the workshops was also made available to relevant staff of the Historic Sites Division and a few agency programs.

This quarter, Heritage Tourism and Communications collaborated to strike a series of small but significant distribution deals with Certified Folder Display Services, Inc. (CF). CF maintains brochure racks in several thousand locations in Texas, primarily in hotels and restaurants but also in visitors centers and other public facilities across the state. Distribution plans were crafted individually for each of the travel guides to determine the most effective locations and amounts. The four remaining regional guides are being distributed within the specific region and their immediate surrounding area. Staff confirmed this would not duplicate existing distribution channels managed by the regions nor raise concerns of competition from the adjoining regions.

The distribution will take place over the next 6–12 months, and the guides covered by the plans have

already been moved from the TxDOT facility to CF's warehouses across the state. From there, they will be distributed regionally by CF personnel. Of note, the San Antonio warehouse also services the Austin area while Arlington services the entire DFW metroplex. The planned distribution is as follows:

Texas Heritage Travel Guide—75,000 among the Arlington, San Antonio, and Houston warehouses servicing 530 distribution points

The Chisholm Trail: Exploring the Folklore and Legacy—65,000 among the Arlington, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Harlingen warehouses servicing 1,178 distribution points, generally following the historic cattle trail routes from South Texas to Oklahoma

Texas and the Great War—25,600 among the Arlington and San Antonio warehouses servicing 523 distribution points

Forts Trail Region—37,600 among the Midland, Arlington, and San Antonio warehouses servicing 430 distribution points

Hill Country Trail Region—50,000 among the San Antonio warehouse servicing 631 distribution points

Pecos Trail Region—52,500 among the El Paso, Midland, Arlington, and San Antonio warehouses servicing 441 distribution points

Tropical Trail Region—30,000 among the San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and Harlingen warehouses servicing 305 distribution points

In separate actions, nearly 26,000 *Texas Heritage Travel Guides* were inserted and distributed into home editions of the *San Antonio Express News* in early March. At the end of the quarter, the insert of 28,000 guides into the *Dallas Morning News* was being completed. The Texas Lakes Trail Region assisted with the identification of those targeted North Texas zip codes.

In total, approximately 364,000 guides were part of these distributions this quarter and removed from the TxDOT warehouse. There are still 500,000 guides that need relocation or distribution this year.