

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

AGENDA
COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

October 27, 2020

10:30 a.m.

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

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 October 27, 2020 meeting of the Community Heritage Development Committee will be held by videoconference as authorized under Texas Government Code section 551.127. Zoom meeting access link (registration required): <http://bit.ly/octcommittees> or audio only access via telephone at 1-346-248-7799; Webinar ID: 999 5778 8643. Agenda and meeting materials will be available at www.thc.texas.gov/teleconferences after October 19, 2020. 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. Roll call for committee members
 - B. Roll call for other participants
 - C. Establish quorum
 - D. Recognize and/or excuse absences
2. Consider approval of the June 16, 2020 committee meeting minutes —*Committee Chairman Peterson*
3. Consider approval of designations of 2021 Texas Main Street Cities (item 11.2) —*Committee Chairman Peterson*
4. Report and discussion on the Main Street designation signs —*Patterson*
5. Community Heritage Development Division update and committee discussion —*Patterson*
 - A. Update on Real Places 2021 online conference
 - 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
6. 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 Garza 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
Teleconference Meeting
June 16, 2020

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 2:00 p.m. He announced that “pursuant to the Governor’s March 13, 2020 proclamation of a state of disaster declaration due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and March 16, 2020 suspension of certain provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, the June 16, 2020 meeting of the THC Community Heritage Development Committee will be held by video conference meeting, as authorized under Texas Government Code section 551.127. Members of the public will have access to the toll-free videoconference at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7945595896575660303>, (web ID 653-577-475) or by calling via telephone 1-562-247-8321 (code 305-277-040) for audio-only access. A copy of the agenda and meeting materials are available at www.thc.texas.gov/teleconferences. An audio recording of the meeting will be available after June 17, 2020. To obtain a recording, please contact Virginia Owens at 512-463-6006. The members may discuss and/or take action on any of the items listed in the agenda.”

A. Roll call for committee members

Chairman Peterson of Alpine welcomed everyone. Members in attendance in addition to the Chair, included Commissioners Monica Burdette of Rockport, Lilia Garcia of Raymondville, Wallace Jefferson of San Antonio, Renee Dutia of Dallas, Garrett Donnelly of Midland, and Daisy White of College Station.

B. Roll call for other participants

Other participants available on the call included Mark Wolfe, Director, Sarah Page, Heritage Tourism Coordinator, and Brad Patterson, Division Director.

C. Establish Quorum

Chairman Peterson reported a quorum was present.

D. Recognize and/or excuse absences

Chairman Peterson noted that all commissioners were in attendance.

2. Consider approval of the May 8, 2020 committee meeting minutes —*Committee Chairman Peterson*

Commissioner Burdette moved, Commissioner Garcia seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the May 8, 2020 Community Heritage Development (CHD) committee meeting minutes.

3. Consider adoption of TAC, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 19, section 19.3 related to the Texas Main Street Program, without changes to the text as published in the March 6, 2020 issue of the Texas Register, 45TexReg 1525-1527 (item 6.5E) —Committee Chairman Peterson

Mr. Patterson explained that this was a rule amendment approved in January of this year for first publication and is needing final approval before going on the commission’s consent agenda. The amendment adds a

definition for Main Street Program Area that was not previously in the administrative code. This will give the agency some oversight of the local program area boundaries in consultation with the community since the area impacts THC program services and resources. No comments were received after publication.

Chairman Peterson moved that the committee send forward to the Commission and recommend adoption of the amendment of Section 19.3 of the Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 19, related to the Texas Main Street Program without changes to the text as published in the March 6, 2020 issue of the Texas Register, 45TexReg 1525-1527. Seconded by Commissioner Burdette. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consider Amendment of January 2020 CLG Grant Awards and Reallocation of Available FY 2019 Grant Funds (item 11.2) —Committee Chairman Peterson

Mr. Patterson reminded the committee that at the January 2020 meeting, the \$45,000 returned by the City of Dallas was reallocated into various projects including funds toward travel stipends for National Alliance of Preservation Commissions FORUM20 in Tacoma, Washington. However, due to COVID-19, the conference has moved to a virtual platform eliminating the need for travel stipends. Staff is now recommending that the money that would have been used for travel stipends be used to cover registrations and to fully fund the City of Plano project which did not receive their initial full request. Because COVID-19 has placed unexpected stress on local governments, staff was concerned that some of the projects could be negatively affected so staff is also requesting that the remaining funds be used to increase the FY2020 projects by 15 percent. Staff is requesting that the Commission waive any additional match requirements for the additional funds given to the projects.

Chairman Peterson asked if the money could be used in any way the agency chose. Mr. Patterson replied the only requirement is that the money must be awarded in the form of grants to local CLGs and confirmed what has been proposed is not in conflict with state or federal requirements. The CLG match is a state requirement not federal, giving the Commission the authority to waive the match requirement.

Commissioner Burdette moved that the committee send forward to the Commission and recommend amending the January 2020 CLG grant awards and accept the reallocation of Fiscal Year 2019 grant funds, without requiring increases in local matching, and waiving the match requirement for the registration grants. Seconded by Commissioner Donnelly. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consider adoption of the Strategic Plan for the Texas Heritage Tourism Program and Texas Heritage Trails Program (item 11.5) —Committee Chairman Peterson

Mr. Patterson reminded the committee that one of the directives from the Texas Sunset Commission was to develop a new strategic plan for the Texas Heritage Trails Program. A facilitator/planner was hired who held multiple listening sessions with each region and its board, agency staff, and other THC program staff. In February 2020 program staff and representatives from the regions attended a planning meeting in Round Rock to develop the content. The report provided in the packet is in final draft form with two appendices still in development. Staff is awaiting feedback from the regions that might necessitate a change in the document before publication. Because of these potential last revisions, staff recommends that authority for final document approval be delegated to the Executive Director. Time constraints would make it difficult to bring the document back before the committee and still be able to execute new contracts with the regions by September 1, 2020. Mr. Patterson gave a quick overview of the four strategic priorities and the goals that tie into them pointing out that the strategic priorities match both the Texas Government Code and the Texas Administrative Code relative to the heritage tourism directives.

Commissioner Donnelly asked if any feedback had come from the regions. Sarah Page explained that she and Teresa Caldwell have conducted online meetings with 9 of the 10 regions, going through the plan and getting feedback. So far, all the regions have been very receptive and have found no issues with the plan.

Commissioner White moved that the committee send forward to the Commission and recommend adoption of the Strategic Plan for the Texas Heritage Tourism Program and Texas Heritage Trails Program and to delegate approval of the final plan to the Executive Director. Seconded by Commissioner Burdette. Motion passed unanimously.

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

A. Update on Real Places Conference

Staff is continuing to move forward on the online Real Places 2021 event, arranging speakers and sessions. The Doubletree Hotel agreed to apply the cancellation fees towards the deposits on the hotel for the 2022 and 2023 conference at their hotel and those contracts have been signed. If we hold those two events as planned, we will not lose any funds due to the cancellation for 2021.

B. Update on the Texas Main Street Program activities including staffing, DowntownTX.org, and relationship with Texas Downtown Association.

Cara Lowrimore joined the Main Street Program as the Assistant State Coordinator. This year Main Street will be hosting two preservation scholars. The Texas Downtown Association has shifted their annual conference online this fall.

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

Staff has begun working on the annual contract with the regions and almost finished with the procurement process for the website redesign. Proposals will be coming in shortly.

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

CLG staff has shifted trainings and four-year evaluations online. Brown County has been certified by the National Park Service as a Certified Local Government.

7. Adjournment

At 2:31 p.m. the committee meeting was adjourned.

Quarterly Report

Community Heritage Development (CHD) Division
June–September 2020

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 mid-March with travel restrictions also in place. In a typical 2- or 3-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 June through September, staff provided measurable assistance to all 10 trail regions and 34 communities. Assistance, or in some cases multiple incidences of assistance, was provided to **Bastrop, Canton, Carthage, Clifton, Corpus Christi, Cuero, Dallas, Denison, Eagle Pass, Elgin, Ennis, Farmersville, Florence, Gonzales, Hamilton, Harlingen, Henderson, Hico, Houston, Kilgore, Livingston, Mesquite, Mineral Wells, Mount Pleasant, New Braunfels, Paris, Royse City, San Augustine, Seguin, Tarrant County, Temple, Texarkana, Weatherford, and Winnsboro.**

ANNUAL MAIN STREET REINVESTMENTS REPORTED

The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) revitalizes Texas’ historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts through economic development and historic preservation. The program provides personalized outreach and assistance with planning, economic and small business development, architectural, urban, and graphic design services, as well as organizational expertise.

Main Street follows a state-supported, self-help model in which the success or failure rests on the efforts of the local community. The educational, technical, and organizational support the THC provides makes the

local reinvestments possible, but key factors in success are the skill, expertise, and tenacity by which the local manager and community apply the program principles.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the program, with the initial cities entering in 1981. Since its inception, the TMSP has helped generate more than \$4.5 billion in reinvestment in Texas downtowns and urban neighborhood commercial districts, created more than 42,000 jobs, and established more than 10,500 new businesses across 180 communities.

At the beginning of FY 2021, there are 88 official Texas Main Street communities, including urban and rural programs, serving more than 3.2 million Texans. The focus of the Texas program is smaller, rural communities, with 81 percent of the participating communities having populations below 50,000 and a median population of 15,716. During a reporting period roughly encompassing FY 2020, more than \$253 million of private and public funds were invested in the downtowns of official Main Street communities. This represents a modest 10 percent decline from FY 2019 and part of a two-year decline from a historical peak in fiscal years 2017 and 2018. These figures are reported through the end of June, so the last quarter of the reporting period included the pandemic.

In total, more than \$135 million of private funds were reinvested in TMSP communities during the period roughly equivalent to the fiscal year. Other totals reported by the local programs and tracked by the agency for the 2020 period include: nearly 850 rehabilitation projects worth over \$89 million; more than \$16 million in new downtown construction; the sale and purchase of \$34 million of downtown real estate; net gains of 387 business starts and nearly 1,400 new jobs in Main Street districts; and a gain of approximately 270 downtown residents and 201 housing units. Local Main Street communities also

reported more than 125,000 volunteer hours committed to historic Texas downtowns during the biennium, a value of \$3.1 million.

CONFERENCE PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR REAL PLACES 2021 VIRTUAL EVENT

Considering the pandemic and economic uncertainties, the Real Places 2021 Conference is being converted to an online-only event. The traditional in-person conference is anticipated to resume in February 2022 and 2023 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Austin near I-35 and US 290.

The online event for February 2021 will continue to provide training and networking opportunities for a broad array of our constituents and programs, but in a condensed and streamlined format. The event will continue to incorporate specialized training and education for courthouse stewards. The public call for session proposals resulted in 28 submissions being considered and awaiting finalization of the overall event capacity, schedule, and format.

Pending final agreements and arrangements, the invited and anticipated keynote speakers include: Dr. Rex Ellison, former Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs in the National Museum of African American History and Culture; wood scientist Ron Anthony; and Linda Norris, Director of Global Networks for the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

DOWNTOWNTX.ORG EXPANSION CONTINUES

The TMSP has been hard at work expanding DowntownTX.org, a groundbreaking website developed by the agency to serve the state's Main Street and Certified Local Government communities. This is the public version of the downtown online inventory project that has been supported by the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission and the Still Water Foundation.

Onsite training and orientations have been delayed due to the pandemic, but work continues on the administrative portions of the site and training has shifted online. Legal work with Austin intellectual property firm, Cronin PLLC, is ongoing. They completed the research and due diligence phase of trademark/wordmark considerations and drafted terms of use agreements necessary for the site. The

process for filing an application for the wordmark is in process, though the outcome is not assured as both "downtown" and "TX" pose complications for marking, though they did not find that we were likely to be encroaching on someone else's marks. These services are paid from private funds.

Building inventories, resource surveys, appraisal data, incentive information, available real estate, and historic districts are mapped and displayed on DowntownTx.org for 56 Texas communities.

To date, 19,559 properties have been inventoried, including 553 locally designated landmarks, 2,608 properties that contribute to local districts, 339 National Register-listed properties, and nearly 2,800 parcels that contribute to National Register districts.

HERITAGE TOURISM

The strategic planning process for heritage tourism and the Texas Heritage Trails Program has been completed and identified the following priorities:

- Strategic Priority #1: Raise the Standards of Heritage and Cultural Attractions around the State
- Strategic Priority #2: Foster Heritage Preservation and Education
- Strategic Priority #3: Encourage Regional Cooperation and Promotion of Heritage and Cultural Attractions
- Strategic Priority #4: Foster Effective Local Tourism Leadership and Organizational Skills

Goals and implementation strategies for each of these have also been identified. The work plans for each region in the upcoming year have been modified to conform to the plan, and contracts have been executed. The contract language was revised by the Office of the Attorney General to conform with Sunset Commission requirements. Staff is finalizing new reporting tools and requirements to align with the adopted planning. The response from the regions for all these steps has been positive.

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Item 11.2
Texas Historical Commission
Quarterly Meeting
October 27-28, 2020

Consider approval of designations of 2021 Texas Main Street Cities

Background:

Currently 88 designated cities receive services from the Texas Main Street Program, which was begun under the Texas Historical Commission in 1981. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 2, Chapter 19, §19.4 (a): “Applications to the program are due annually on the last working day of July or other dates established by the Commission”. By August 31, 2020, applications were received from two communities for official Main Street designation: Freeport (Brazoria County) and Stephenville (Erath County). Both have less than 50,000 in population and are applying under city government. Freeport was in the Main Street Program from 2000-2012 so is applying to be a recertified city.

The Texas Historical Commission may designate up to five new or recertified official *Texas Main Street Cities* (§19.4(f)). Upon acceptance, new and recertified programs receive access to all Main Street services. Provisional programs may be accepted that attend Main Street training and receive limited assistance, but do not receive design services. They agree to apply again the following year.

Due to the pandemic and travel restrictions, agency staff did not visit each of the applicant cities between receipt of letters of intent and the first meeting of the Interagency Council. Staff did have communications and discussions with both communities prior to the application and several staff on the team have previously visited both communities as agency representatives.

The Main Street Interagency Council (IAC) convened and reviewed applications for designation as official Texas Main Street Cities (§19.4(e)). Voting members of the seven-person council is comprised of two staff members of the Texas Main Street program; the Community Heritage Development Director; one staff member from the Budget, Planning and Policy Division of the Office of the Governor; one from the Texas Economic Development and Tourism division of the Office of the Governor; and one staff member from the Texas Department of Agriculture Rural Affairs program. There is also one non-voting member of the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) who participates.

The criteria currently in use is as follows and is published in the application:

Evaluation Criteria: (110 Total Possible Points)

1. **Historic commercial fabric and historic identity:** The historic significance of the proposed Main Street area and the interest in and commitment to historic preservation. (35 Points)
2. **Organizational capacity:** Demonstrates community and private sector support for the program as well as the capability of the applicant to successfully implement the Main Street Program. (25 Points)
3. **Support and financial capacity:** Demonstrates the financial capability to employ a full-time manager, fund a local Main Street Program and support downtown-related projects. (24 Points)

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4. **Physical capacity:** The cohesiveness, distinctiveness and variety of business activity conducted in the proposed Main Street Program area. (10 Points)
5. **Demonstrated need:** The need for the Main Street Program in the city and its expected impact on the city. (10 Points)
6. **Geographic distribution & discretionary:** (6 Points)

The council ranks applicants as to their merit based on the evaluation criteria. Following individual scoring by council members, a collective average score is developed for each applicant. Staff of Main Street and the Community Heritage Development division director meet to discuss available resources as permitted by §19.4(f). The average scores of all 6 voting Council members were as follows:

Stephenville 87.3
Freeport 67.0

In January 2017, the Commission adopted a policy to not accept future Main Street Cities that score 70 or below in the evaluation. The Commission still has discretion to not approve those with scores above 70. The recommendation of the Main Street Interagency Council and staff is to accept Stephenville as a designated Main Street program. The applicants chosen by the Commission are designated as an official Texas Main Street City and will formally enter the program January 1, 2021.

The option exists to designate Freeport as a Provisional City, creating the expectation that they reapply next year. This could give them a rallying cry to organize a stronger application and foundation for the program. Alternatively, it could give them a false sense of having been approved. Their score did not rise above the minimum of 70 which was established by the Commission without specific regard for provisional status. In 2017 Emancipation Avenue in Houston was accepted as a provisional city, having scored above the minimum but not recommended for full status. They reapplied and received the highest application score in 2018.

Suggested motion:

Move to accept Stephenville as an official 2021 Texas Main Street City.