



HISTORIC SITES DIVISION

Historic sites are unique places where quality experiences educate visitors about Texas through the dynamic storytelling of each site's history. State historic sites preserve the stories, places, and material culture that document Texas heritage to benefit the public and future generations. They serve and support local heritage tourism, provide authentic sensory experiences, and enhance learning.

The Historic Sites Division's (HSD) business goals are to:

- Focus on mission-aligned programming as a source of quality learning and dynamic public engagement.
- Market the sites as a network of destinations connected by Texas stories.
- Strengthen the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) brand identity.
- Increase public interest to visit, revisit, and support.
- Build stronger partnerships and networks, and connect to educational and tourism objectives.
- Be the best example of historic preservation and museum operations in Texas.

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS: AUSTIN

HSD BUSINESS OPERATIONS

With a constant goal of building the business acumen of the historic sites network, the HSD deploys funds, reinforces the agency's brand identity, manages personnel, and establishes and maintains industry standards. HSD invests public resources in the care and stewardship of valued state assets. A major focus is to retain, develop, and promote talent and resources to grow business initiatives and expand market potential at each historic site. The operations of state historic sites has strengthened revenue streams annually and grown business investment by supporting innovative operational ideas and concepts as well as providing stewardship of valued state assets. HSD management coordinates funding needs with operating partners, the Friends of the THC, local friends groups, and service groups; identifies and invests in staff training; and rewards exceptional work and enhances leadership skills system-wide. Staff have built an operational model demonstrating the success of meeting the public's needs and maximizing a site's impact on the local economy through ongoing business operation, preservation, and care of state-

owned historic assets in concert with developing earned revenue activity through admissions, retail operations, events, rentals, and programming. This enhances customer learning and provides on-site amenities to complement the visitor experience.

COLLECTION AND CURATORIAL SERVICES

Stewardship of artifacts is a key responsibility of HSD staff in its coordination with site staff and operational partners. Collection management and registration of artifacts, archival materials, photographs, and textiles are ongoing projects under the chief curator and regional staff. The stewardship and conservation of valued and period-specific collections are managed in this program area and coordinated to support site staff and the operating partners' collections. The team works together and engages in the purchase of important collection items to enhance a site's story and exhibits. The collections preserve stories reflected in the material culture that document Texas heritage for the benefit of current visitors and future generations. The chief curator also provides oversight on the collection at the Governor's Office, which falls under the THC's stewardship.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SERVICES

THC state historic sites feature a variety of historic structures, cultural landscapes, archeological resources, and artifacts spanning 1,200 years of Texas history. Staff coordinates historic preservation, construction, and maintenance projects. Under the management of HSD's chief architect, scheduled stewardship projects improve, preserve, restore, and enhance a site's appearance, use, and access. Staff provide the best professional stewardship, standards, and training in the care of state assets. HSD uses innovative approaches to care for and establish interest in the THC's state historic sites. The scope of work addressed in this area includes new construction projects designed to complement the settings of the historic sites. There are 341 structures and 3,200 acres of land held in trust by the network of state historic sites.

EXHIBITS, EDUCATION, AND INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

HSD has improved the performance of programming through staff training and quality public engagement, emphasizing partnerships with local schools, aligning with the state-adopted TEKS curriculum, and integrating technology to better serve the public and enhance the visitor experience. New exhibits incorporate modern technology to meet the needs of the public. Program delivery includes utilizing webinars, Facebook, and YouTube. HSD educators and interpreters provide vital, informative, and engaging programming to build understanding, knowledge, and appreciation for Texas history. Programming includes innovative foodways and events that integrate science and cultural programming to expand a site's market demographics. HSD has worked with exhibit design partners to use technology that creates interest in the historic sites. Exhibits and facilities help support local identity, provide authentic sensory experiences, and enhance learning.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SERVICES

The ability to understand the past that is not recorded in text and photographs is held in its archeological resources. The archeological record can highlight the daily life of a site and shed new light on events and daily life patterns. The HSD chief archeologist coordinates all surface-disturbing activities with the division's architectural team. The position coordinates and oversees all needed contracting for services and permitting that is required. The chief archeologist serves as a resource for the exhibit and interpretive team as well as to the site managers regarding programming and resource management. The program area is vital to better understand the state historic sites' history. The development of public programs to engage the public in archeology is an objective of the program area. The new Levi-Jordan Plantation Learning Center provides a great opportunity to build partnerships with higher education institutions, archeological firms, and the public.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Of the THC's 38 state historic sites, many have active Friends groups that vary in organizational capacity, complexity, and activity level. Friends groups provide operational, programming, financial, and labor support to a site's operations and assist stewardship efforts. Local stakeholders are routinely engaged to provide insight and advice to the historic sites as new exhibits and programs are developed. This work fosters a deep-seated sense of pride and ownership. This program area is working to develop new Friends organizations and enhance existing local Friends groups.

HSD EXECUTIVE OFFICE

HSD comprises over half of the full-time employees and budget of the THC. As the agency's active cultural institution and destination business team, the HSD works to build its presence in many national and statewide markets. The operation is under the deputy executive director of historic sites. An assistant deputy, two museum directors, two executive assistants, director of earned revenue, and a financial analyst support the executive office. The management and leadership functions of HSD are conducted through regular communication and weekly meetings between Austin staff and site staff across the state. Work initiatives and project status reports are provided. Planning activities to coordinate project requirements and public needs are discussed. This office coordinates with THC divisions responsible for human resources, communications, accounting, procurement, permitting, and contracting, with staff funded through dedicated Sporting Goods Sales Tax revenue. Five state historic sites operate with partner organizations:

- National Museum of the Pacific War with the Admiral Nimitz Foundation
- San Jacinto Battleground with the San Jacinto Museum and Battlefield Association
- Port Isabel Lighthouse with the City of Port Isabel
- Presidio la Bahía with the Diocese of Victoria
- Iwo Jima Monument and Museum with the Marine Military Academy

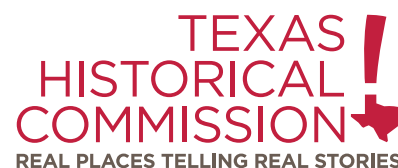
Texas has a unique history that sets it apart from other states in the union. HSD forges and reinforces the Texas identity through the personalities and stories presented at each site. Staff is dedicated to providing the best experience and learning opportunities for every visitor.

HOW TO REACH US

Staff members are available to answer questions and provide preservation assistance. Please contact us at:

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