



## May Historic Preservation Commission Monthly Update

### Planning and Development Services Dept.

#### Historic Tax Exemptions:

- The HPC will consider all applications and vote on its recommendation at the May 19 meeting. The City's historic property tax exemption program exempts 75% of the city portion of property taxes for historic property owners that apply.
- Applications will be considered by City Council at their meeting on June 11 instead of June 25.

#### Preservation Month:

- Preservation Month, an annual celebration held in May, is led by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to promote historic preservation and highlight the importance of protecting historic places and cultural heritage. In honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the National Trust's theme for Preservation Month 2026 is "All People Created Equal." The City joins the National Trust in celebration of their theme and has also identified a local theme, "Our History in Plain Sight."
- Preservation Month Upcoming and Ongoing Events:
  - **Center Art Club Exhibit Opening Reception** Thursday May 14, 4-6 p.m. Baca Center Lobby. Free.
  - **Volunteer Workday** Saturday May 16, 9 am-12p.m. The historic Round Rock Cemetery (1400 Sam Bass Rd.) Sponsored by the Round Rock Cemetery Association. Free.
  - **Music on Main** Wednesday May 6, 20, & 27, 7-9 p.m. Prete Plaza. Free.
  - **Center Art Club Exhibit** "Celebrate Round Rock" Baca Center lobby. Free month-long exhibit.
  - **"Pioneers of Palm Valley" Exhibit** Round Rock Public Library 3rd Floor. Free month-long exhibit.
- Completed Events:
  - **Preservation Month Proclamation** was announced at the City Council meeting on Wednesday April 23, at 6 p.m. City Council Chambers.
  - **Pioneer Day Field Trips** on April 30 and May 1. Old Settler Association Grounds. 910 students (RRISD and non-RRISD), 260 chaperones, and 79 teachers attended.
  - **Chuckwagon Dinner** was held on Friday May 1, 6-8 p.m. Old Settlers Association Grounds. Fundraiser dinner for Williamson Museum. 35 attended.
  - **20th Annual Pioneer Day** was held on Saturday May 2, 10-3 p.m. Old Settlers Association Grounds. 2,503 attended this free event.
  - **Lunch & Learn presented by Mark Mayfield** Tuesday May 12, 12-1 p.m. Baca Center. 44 attended.
- HPC goals update:
  - At the annual work session for FY2026, the HPC adopted a priority goal to determine how the City's Communication Department can assist with increasing awareness of the importance of historic preservation. Potential options include a social media campaign to promote the Local Legends program and the collection of oral histories.



- The Communications Department published a news item on May 7 on the City website for Preservation Month "[How did Round Rock get its name?](#)"

#### HPC Training:

- All Commissioners and staff have been registered for the upcoming NPAC webinar "Making the Case: Economic Impact Studies for Historic Preservation" on May 14 from 12-1:30pm CST.
- All Commissioners and staff have been registered for the upcoming Preservation Leadership Forum/American Planning Association webinar "Building Performance Standards and Historic Buildings" on May 29 from 12-1:30pm CST.
- Commissioners and staff are required to attend at least one training session per year as part of our Certified Local Government certification requirements. Please inform Kerstin as soon as you complete a training session so we can track your training for reporting purposes. Include the name of the training, host/organization, and time and/or send the certificate of completion if available.

#### Local Legends:

- 2026 Local Legends nominations are due by June 30. Updated information on the 2026 program can be found on the City website: <https://www.roundrocktexas.gov/city-departments/planning-and-development-services/historic-preservation-2/local-legends/>
- At the annual work session for FY2026, the HPC adopted a priority goal to become more involved in the promotion of the Local Legends program including the following:
  - HPC should be proactive in reaching out to organizations with a historical connection.
  - Each Commissioner to solicit new Local Legends nominations from local teachers, historians, librarians, and history clubs.
  - Create a scoring rubric for Local Legends selection. Promote National Preservation Month

#### Historic Design Guidelines:

- As discussed at the 2025 HPC work session, staff are currently developing an updated set of Historic Design Guidelines. A draft of the proposed new Guidelines will be presented during the September work session. The HPC will consider a recommendation for approval for the Guidelines at a following meeting before they are presented to City Council, with the goal of adopting the Guidelines by the end of the year.

#### Updates on CofAs for properties with H Overlay:

- **607 E Main St:** Addition of a balcony, window conversion into a door, and door grilles added over glass panes without a CofA or a building permit. Staff are working with the property owner to discuss how to proceed in order for the property to come into compliance with City code.
- **117 E Main St:** An administrative CofA application has been approved for proposed repairs and repainting the front of the building, the installation of a new awning. A separate project is proposed for a new pergola to be located at the rear of the site.



### Federal Reviews:

Staff complete Section 106 reviews. The Section 106 review process was established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and requires the evaluation of how federal projects may affect historic properties before project decisions are finalized.

### **Parks and Recreation Dept. (PARC)**

- PARC is revisiting restoration plans for the Sansom House/Cantina next to the Stagecoach Inn to assess whether they are still applicable should funding become available in the future. A set of plans for restoration was last reviewed by the HPC in 2013.
- Staff are finalizing interpretive signage for Heritage Trail West. Staff are working with PARC to complete final reviews of interpretive signage for the trail.
- The Town Green Project which includes enhancements to the area around the water tower and the Johnson Building (gas station) is under construction. Utility conflicts are in the process of being resolved. The building permit for the Johnson Building has been issued and construction has begun.
- Construction documents for the Downtown Park are being prepared and will be reviewed by staff. Heritage Trail East, which will be constructed on the north side of Brushy Creek, has gone out to bid. These two projects will have overlapping construction timelines and will require coordination between contractors.
- A new sculpture of a tree with lights will be installed in Memorial Park by the spiral. Site work is complete and the sculpture will be installed this spring.

### **General Services Dept.**

The restoration of the Palm House has commenced, and construction is expected to be completed by mid-July. Termite repairs continue. Stone for the foundation skirting has been delivered. Roof shakes have been ordered. The ceiling is being reinforced to support the AC unit. Foundations for the ramp have been dug. Since the front is the only handicap-accessible door, they will have to use a lever instead of a knob. Preservation staff will review plans as submitted and issue CofA amendments for any products not specified in the approved CofA issued by the HPC on April 15, 2025.



### Round Rock Preservation (RRP)

- The Old Settlers Association has constructed a display for the bars from the original downtown jail which was demolished in 1954, see photos below.
- RRP is considering how to protect the Ganzert Family Cemetery located off of S A.W. Grimes Blvd.
- RRP is publishing a monthly column about Round Rock history in the online publication, *Round the Rock*. Their column can be found at the link below:  
<https://roundtherocktx.com/round-rock-history-by-round-rock-preservation>.

