

May Historic Preservation Commission Monthly Update

Planning and Development Services Dept.

Chair Anderson resigned from the HPC effective March 10, 2025. Vice-Chair Whitaker has automatically become chair and Commissioner Parson was elected as vice-chair at the April meeting.

Preservation Month: May is National Preservation Month allowing local preservation and civic organizations to spotlight their preservation programs and heritage tourism. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's theme is *The Power of Place*. A summary of events through May 15 is included below. Additionally, a schedule of upcoming events and activities is presented below.



Volunteers are needed for Music on Main on May 21. Please inform staff if you are available to volunteer.

The Chuckwagon Dinner, a Williamson Museum sponsored fundraiser event, was held on May 2 at the Old Settlers Association.

Over 1500 people attended Pioneer Day on May 3 at the Old Settlers Association. The event was co-sponsored by the city and Williamson Museum.

HPC, staff, and members of Round Rock Preservation (RRP) hosted a Preservation booth at Music on Main on May 7.

City Council proclaimed May as Preservation Month at their meeting on May 8. Members of the HPC, staff, and RRP attended the meeting.

34 people attended the May 13 Lunch and Learn presented by Randy Michna from the Old Settler's Association.

A reception was held at the Baca Center on May 15 to celebrate the Center Art Club of Round Rock's monthlong exhibit, "Celebrate Round Rock," spotlighting local history.

Upcoming Events:

- May 21, 7 pm-9 pm, Prete Plaza – Preservation Month booth at Music on Main
<https://www.roundrocktexas.gov/event/music-on-main/2025-05-21/>

Monthlong:

- Center Art Club exhibit "Celebrate Round Rock" on display in the Baca Center Lobby.
- Round Rock Preservation antique embroidered handkerchiefs exhibit "Bygone Elegance" on display on the third floor of the library.
- Round Rock History Series banners on display at the library.

Awards: The City of Round Rock was the recipient of the 2024 Texas Historical Commission (THC) Award of Excellence in Media Achievement. The City was honored at the THC award banquet held at the *Real Places* conference on Thursday, April 24 (photo on right)



HPC Training:

HPC Training Tracking: As part of our Texas Historical Commission requirements as a Certified Local Government (CLG), staff and Commissioners are required to complete training every year. The state requires staff to submit records of all training completed. Please inform Kerstin immediately following training completion 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.

- NAPC is hosting the Virtual Summer Short Course, a two-day online training designed to explore emerging topics and preservation fundamentals, on August 20-21. Please let staff know if you are interested in attending.

Historic Tax Exemptions:

- The HPC will vote on its recommendation for all applications at the May 20 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 26.

Local Legends:

- Commissioners adopted a goal to each solicit a new nomination this year. The nomination form and more information about the program can be found on the city website: www.roundrocktexas.gov/locallegends. Please share this program information. Note that the deadline to submit nominations is June 30.
- A news item promoting the Local Legend video that was debuted at the announcement of the 2024 Local Legends at City Council has been posted. Watch the video by following this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U16z1kjTv4Y&feature=youtu.be>

Downtown Mixed-Use Zoning:

- The City is reevaluating its Downtown Mixed-Use zoning districts which include many historic properties. Staff are currently summarizing all of the public input collected. Updates will be posted on roundrocktexas.gov/downtownzoning.
- As part of this project, PDS reached out the 125 property owners whose properties are older than 50 years but are not currently designated. The outreach had a 12% response



rate. Staff are scheduling meetings with interested property owners to discuss the historic preservation program and designation process. As of 5/13, staff have met with 6 property owners and are coordinating meetings with an additional 5 property owners.

Updates on properties with H Overlay:

- **103 E Main St:**
 - An administrative CofA was approved by staff for the removal of the low stone wall at the rear of the property fronting the alley. The wall was installed in 2012 to enclose a barbecue pit. The new tenant has plans to turn the back area into a patio which required the removal of the the wall in order to remove the pit. Staff and the new tenant are discussing appropriate materials to screen the alley.
 - The applicant has also submitted an CofA application to install new lighting at the front of the building fronting E Main St. Staff provided comments to the applicant and are awaiting a response.
- **206 E Main St:** The HPC approved the conversion of a back window to a door in HP24-000003. The work was completed; however, staff did not believe the door that was installed met the conditions of the CofA. The contractor proposed replacing the door with a new, custom wooden door which staff has reviewed and approved.

Parks and Recreation Dept. (PARD)

PARD 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.

Heritage Trail West is now complete. The interpretive signage, which was originally included under this contract, will be placed under a new contract and will be completed in the near future. Staff are working with PARD to review the interpretive signage for the trail.

On February 8, 2024, City Council approved an agreement to continue the development of the Downtown Park (formerly Lawn at Brushy Creek). The Downtown Park agreement also encompasses the design and administration of the Town Green Project which includes enhancements to the area around the water tower and the Johnson Building (gas station). These improvements are included under the same contract as the Downtown Park but will be completed at a later time. Construction of the Town Green Project, including the Johnson Building, is anticipated to begin this summer. Staff has requested bids for the Town Green Project and anticipates to receive those bids on May 21.

General Services Dept.

The Palm House was relocated from 212 E Main Street to the Old Settlers Association grounds on January 30, 2024. The house has been moved onto its new foundation piers and the chimney has been reassembled. Heimsath Architects developed a preservation program and



restoration plan for the house which was reviewed by the THC. The HPC reviewed and approved the restoration plans with conditions at the April 15 meeting.

Round Rock Preservation (RRP)

RRP is co-sponsoring events and activities throughout Preservation Month.

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>