

CORPUS CHRISTI PRESERVATION PLAN
Meeting #2 — April 8, 2021
Q&A Summary Report
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The following questions were received from the community via the City website, email, and Facebook. In some cases, similar questions have been combined. Questions and comments may have been edited for brevity.

- 1. I think it would be nice to have a Corpus Christi History App that you could download onto your phone. Then, wherever you go around town, it could give you info on what historical events happened at that spot or in that area. I guess that could also be like an interactive app where you could also listen to someone retell the historical events, etc. Tourists might like it as well.**

That is a great idea! Other cities are already doing this, so we can look at what they've used and find out how well it's working for them. Many different apps are available for this purpose, and we don't endorse any particular one. However, we do recommend one of our colleagues, Stasha Boyd at Q Media Productions (<https://www.qmediaproductions.com/>), who can help the City or a nonprofit organization figure out what they want to do and select a vendor to help them do it (as well as manage the process for you, if you'd like).

Here are some examples of this type of "history app." They often have a theme and are organized around a walking tour, but not always.

- Preservation Austin has a free series of self-guided tours available for download. <https://www.preservationaustin.org/historic-austin-tours>
- The Historic New Orleans collection offers eight themed tours of the French Quarter, or you can build your own! <https://www.hnoc.org/visit/apps/frenchquartertours>
- Lake Charles, Louisiana's historic tour app for the Charpentier Historic District can be downloaded in a variety of languages or with closed-captioning, and offers visitors a choice between a 30-minute tour, 1-hour tour, or Ghost Tour. <https://www.visitlakecharles.org/things-to-do/history/charpentier-district/>
- Historic Garland, Texas, has a mobile app that uses Augmented Reality (AR) to let visitors collect "clues" around town and then pick up a prize at the Landmark Museum. A printed map is also available so that a smart phone isn't required. <https://www.dallasnews.com/arts-entertainment/things-to-do/2021/04/06/augmented-reality-app-lets-users-explore-garlands-hidden-history/>

2. We need a Rails-to-Trails historical marker (train off of Highway 44).

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy creates trail networks to help communities promote healthy, safe outdoor activity. You can learn more about them at <https://www.railstotrails.org>. We checked to see where their existing trails are in Corpus Christi; the Corpus Christi Bay Trail runs along the seawall, and the Schanen Hike and Bike Trail connects Saratoga Blvd. to Yorktown Blvd. through Acushnet Park and Breckenridge Park. We're not sure exactly what the commenter means, because it doesn't look like Rails-to-Trails provides historical markers. However, the Texas Historical Commission, in partnership with the Nueces County Historical Commission, does provide state historical markers to identify places associated with important events and people in Texas history. You can learn more about these markers at <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/state-historical-markers> or contact the Nueces County Historical Commission: info@nueceshistory.com. If the commenter is interested in getting a historical marker for the railroad switch yard along the north side of Highway 44, for example, the NCHC would be the people to talk to.

3. Our neighborhood (Saxet Heights) is about to celebrate 100 years in 2026.

Congratulations! Historic neighborhoods like Saxet Heights have a few different options for being recognized for their longevity!

- You might consider nominating Saxet Heights to the National Register of Historic Places, which is a recognition program only – it does not create any regulations of any kind or protect your neighborhood, except that a neighborhood that's eligible for the National Register (it doesn't have to be actually listed) is subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. That federal law says that any project which involves a federal permit or federal funding must identify and take steps to avoid adverse effects to historic resources and also give the community the opportunity to have their voices heard. For example, if the Texas Department of Transportation was involved in widening a road through your neighborhood, that would probably trigger a Section 106 review.
- If you want to protect Saxet Heights from teardowns and new development, a local historic district designation is the way to go. Although owning property in a local historic district does mean that you have to follow some rules about what changes you can and can't make to the outside of your house, that's the only real way to ensure you're your neighborhood will be protected.
- You can also work with the Nueces County Historical Commission to get a state historical marker for your neighborhood. You can learn more about these markers at <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/state-historical-markers> or contact the Nueces County Historical Commission: info@nueceshistory.com.

The Corpus Christi Historic Preservation Plan will identify some of the different kinds of places and spaces that could be marked with state historical markers. Alternatively, the City of Corpus Christi could decide to create its own marker program. Here are some examples of Texas cities with their own municipal historic marker programs:

- College Station, Texas: <https://cstx.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=12410917&pageId=13470535>
- Irving, Texas: <https://www.cityofirving.org/1978/Historical-Markers>
- Mineral Wells, Texas: <https://www.mineralwellstx.gov/196/Historical-Marker-Program>

4. State historic markers are needed at Port Avenue and Staples Street.

The Texas state historical marker program is coordinated through County Historical Commissions across the state. Please contact the Nueces County Historical Commission at info@nueceshistory.com. You can learn more about these markers at <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/state-historical-markers/>

5. Did Old Bayview Cemetery get mentioned in the survey?

Yes! Old Bayview Cemetery (between Ramirez, Padre, Waco, and West Broadway Streets) was one of the historic sites mentioned in the survey as being a priority for some respondents. Old Bayview Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places last year. It is the oldest federal military cemetery in Texas and was established to bury the men who died in the explosion of the steamship Dayton, in the run-up to the Mexican War in 1845, when thousands of U.S. Army troops were stationed in Corpus Christi. The cemetery is owned and maintained by the City of Corpus Christi, with support from the Friends of Old Bayview Cemetery Association.

6. How could we learn about what other cities do as far as nonprofits supporting preservation? Are there ones who stand out?

Many cities are supported by local preservation nonprofit organizations. These organizations often have names like “Preservation (City Name)” or “Historic (City Name). You can find a list of some of these organizations in Texas cities on the Preservation Texas website: <https://www.preservationtexas.org/resources/links/>. Once you click through to a specific organization’s website, check out their About, Events, and Resources (or similar) pages to learn more about their mission.

Preservation Dallas has long been a leader in historic preservation. We especially would like to direct your attention to their Discover Dallas! historic resources survey, which documented all the pre-1965 properties in 28 neighborhoods, most of which were suggested by the community. This is something that would make a lot of sense in Corpus Christi, too. <https://preservationdallas.org/resources/for-historic-properties/discover-dallas>

We’ve previously highlighted the Plano Conservancy for Historic Preservation as an example of a nonprofit partner in a city with a population very similar to Corpus Christi’s. One of the Plano Conservancy’s programs designs and installs “wayside signs” around the City, with City funding:

<https://planoconservancy.org/wayside-signs>. That's a good example of a nonprofit being able to take on some of the work, so that City staff does not have to do it all.

Of course, the Galveston Historical Foundation is one of the oldest local preservation organizations in the United States, and they offer a lot of services to the community, including consultations on all kinds of topics related to historic properties! Want some guidance on genealogy or figuring out what color paint might be best for your historic home? They can help for a small fee. <https://www.galvestonhistory.org/preservation/online-consultation-services> GHF also manages several historic house museums, the Tall Ship Elissa, and other historic properties; runs a salvage warehouse; puts on a Historic Homes Tour every year; offers a revolving loan fund; and many, many more resources. They've been at it since 1871!