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TexasTejano.com, in conjunction with other community organizations, is pleased to present this proposal for the Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas, a project we believe will champion the true lives and legacies of Texas Tejanos.

Descendants of the first Spanish, Mexican and indigenous families of the Texas frontier, Tejanos have been part of this state since its early beginnings. They created the first roads, towns and ranches, and established the first laws. Yet, very little has been done to celebrate this unsung heritage and history.

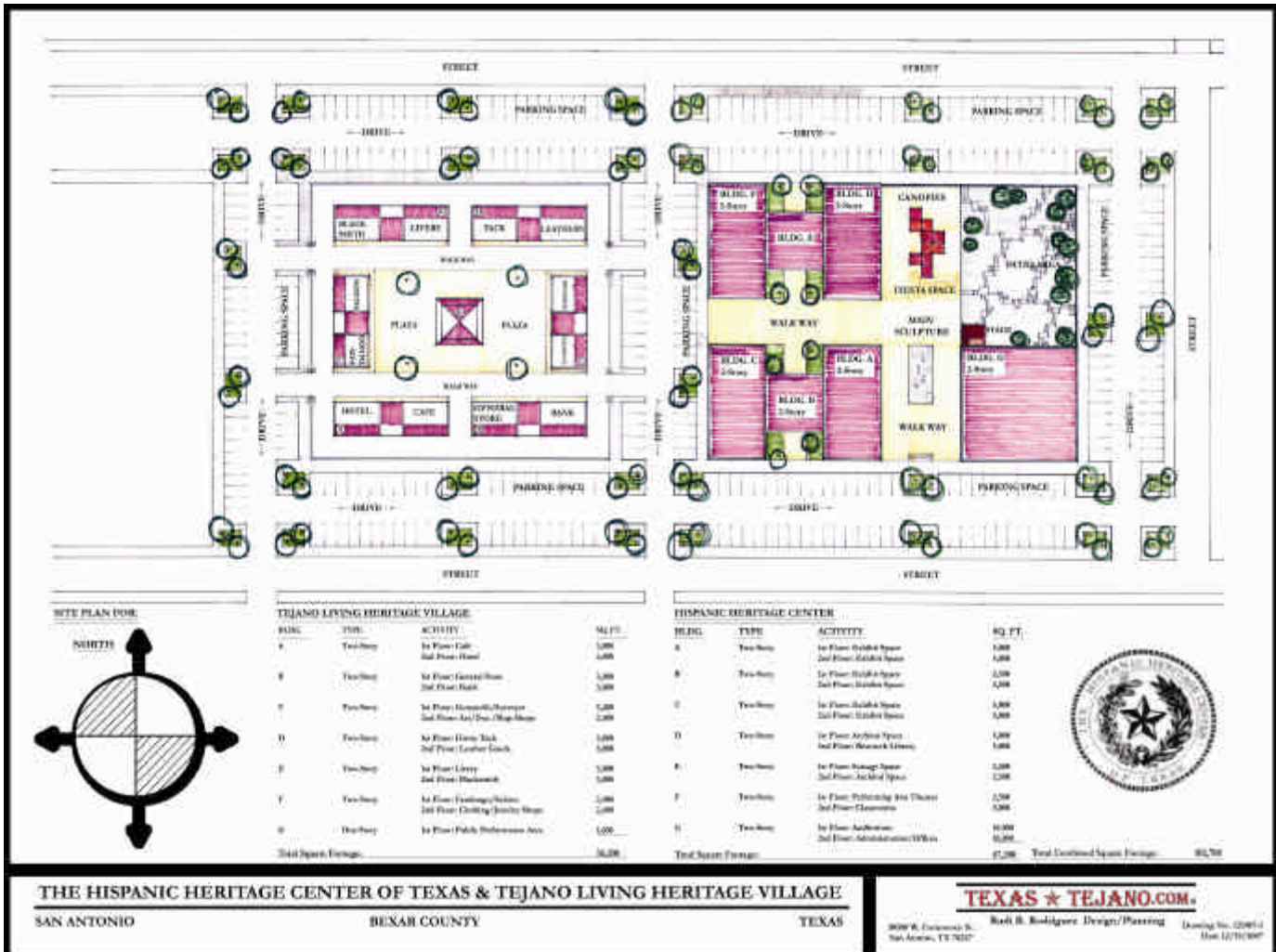
For over five years, TexasTejano.com has been spearheading an effort to create a eight to ten acre venue that would serve as a historical center responsible for researching and capturing the lost legacies of Tejano heritage. In addition to a museum, auditorium and outdoor celebration spaces, we envision the center to include a reference library and media center so that the complete story of Texas and Tejanos can be told. Our hopes are that varied program offerings will encourage interactive participation with the Hispanic community.

One of the most important contributions made in this era will be the reality of this Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas. Everyone from all over the state and country will have accessibility to its services and products and will be able to be part of its continued success. We believe that it will be a public space to be enjoyed by all Texans and future Tejanos.

We hope you will also feel the importance and timing of this great effort and decide to join us as we make Texas Tejano history.

Sincerely,

Rudi R. Rodriguez
Founder, TexasTejano.com
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Mission: To provide the state and the community with an institution that will champion historical Hispanic legacy and heritage as well as educate, elevate and celebrate the Hispanic experience.

Goals: To create a world class Hispanic historical, archival, educational and publication venue centered on promoting and developing programs of Hispanic interest including research, publication, education, acquisition, communications, public works, awards and support issues.

Programs: The center will develop and support the following: educational classroom programs, research programs, acquisition and collection programs, exhibit programs, documentary programs, awards programs, markers program and other public works programs.



Background

Since the Battle of the Alamo in 1836, the history of Texas has not been told. The omission of various tales of those who were not Anglo have led to many ethnic groups in early Texas not being included in text books, academic curriculum or even Texas myth. Additionally, only Texas Anglo heroes and legends have been championed in scholarship and media. Books and films abound about Travis, Bowie and Crockett, Austin and Houston and yet heroes like Losoya, Esparza and Navarro are not mentioned.

Traditionally promoted from that year to the present, Texas history has been marginalized prior to that date. For the most part, Texas historians and authors have chosen Anglo figures, places, institutions and organizations to celebrate the story of Texas. Subsequently, Texas

publishers and others have readily published from this body of work. As a result, Texas schools and library shelves are full of this traditional scholarship.

Likewise, Texas historical agencies and associations have long produced publications, programs and exhibits that have filled Texas museums and institutions for generations. Countless other works such as documentaries, films, TV and radio programming, websites and artworks have re-enforced and deepened this single-minded Texas history.

Unfortunately, these acts of omission have resulted in excluding the heritage and legacy of Tejanos and, for that matter, other ethnicities. As a result, for over one hundred and fifty years, there have been very little Tejano publications, educational programs, museums and or institutions developed to complete the story of Texas.

We believe it is extremely important to understand that Tejano history begins in 1690 when Texas was first explored and established by Tejano ancestors.

For almost seven generations, more than one hundred and twenty years prior to the creation of the Republic of Mexico, Tejanos were responsible for the first Texas roads, towns, ranches and governments. Equally important, is that for one hundred and fifty years prior to the Battle of the Alamo, Tejanos had created a regional self-identity and reliance with their own ranching economy, capital and laws.

Despite the lack of past efforts, we believe it is time for the Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas to be created, a project that will accurately portray the heritage and legacy of Tejanos. The center's role will be to bring awareness, education and celebration of the rich Hispanic experience and true story of the Lone Star State and the American Southwest.

Organizational Structure

The Hispanic Heritage Center will be established as a 501c3 non-profit organization. An interim board will help guide and develop the initial organization. Once the foundation has been established, a permanent board, responsible for defining purpose, objectives and goals of the center will be created.

Committees will develop the various objectives for immediate and long-term proposals including a program of action, a proposed budget of operations and a proposed budget of goals.

An Executive Director (or President) and subsequent staff will administer the goals and activities of the center including the board's agenda, policies and responsibility for hiring appropriate personnel.



Once operational, an advisory board will be established to assist the board in developing agendas and goals, as the full board deems appropriate.

Awards and Markers Program

Because we believe that relevant work should be identified and praised, we plan on creating an awards program to help identify individuals and groups that are doing work to elevate and celebrate the stories of Tejanos in Texas history. Areas of interest will include research, publications, authorship, art, archeology and conservation.



A marker program will also be developed to publicly identify significant architecture and sites that are important Tejano landmarks. The marking of these places or events is necessary to apply official designation.

Collections and Acquisitions Program

There has not existed a significant Hispanic archive of any

proportion defining the Hispanic experience, nor has there been any organized effort to create one. As a result, the Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas will concentrate on collections and acquisitions programs that document Hispanic history as printed materials, photographs, maps and artifacts. The items will be sought from individuals, families and organizations that can contribute to the creation of a prized archive.

Acquisition funding will be needed to acquire valuable items to help create and sustain a world class Hispanic archive. The collection of these items will help to provide exhibits and displays in the museum. In addition, they will provide invaluable images for publications and documentaries. Most images would be available for public use.

Documentaries, Plays and Artwork Program

Documentaries will be developed to utilize the medium of film. In today's teaching and public environment, we believe they are an excellent tool to tell exciting stories with actors and music in video and DVD formats. This center will include an in-house archive and research component that will make this program possible.

Playwriting will be encouraged to communicate the Hispanic experience. Selected productions will be presented to the public at the center and will also be available to schools and public venues.



Additionally, programs of art will be created to help ensure there is a record of art images that can be viewed by students and the general public. Works of art will be portraits and scenes of Hispanic ancestry. Also, juried competition can be created to develop this work.

Library Program

The research library will be a major resource for Tejano history and culture.

Holdings will include books, personal papers, periodicals, photographs, oral histories, vertical files, micro film documents and genealogy. The library will be open to the public but teachers and researchers will be encouraged to use the library to develop Tejano curricula and manuscripts. Research assistance will be given to students for special projects on Tejanos. Admission to the library will be free and open to the public, but materials must be used on premises.



Outreach Program

Programs of outreach will consist of staff or volunteers scheduling presentations to schools, seniors, churches and other organizations. Presentation kits will be developed to portray many different aspects of Tejano heritage and legacy. Teacher outreach will also be conducted through the use of workshops and materials to kindergarten through college faculties.

Family outreach programs will also be developed to provide the Hispanic and general community with cultural awareness and understanding including instruction on how to record oral histories and access documents and photography for future generations.

Publications and Exhibits Program

A program of authorship and publications will be developed to provide students and the general public with access to Hispanic history and true stories of Tejanos. Educational material will be available to provide schools and colleges with Hispanic literature.

Publications and literature acquired will help develop a first class research library.

An exhibit program will be created to display and communicate the story of the Hispanic experience. Permanent, temporary and traveling exhibits will be created to reach local and state wide audiences. These exhibits will target schools, colleges and the general public.

Research Program

Research programs will involve the collection of oral histories from the Hispanic and general community. This effort will assist in the compilation of genealogy and history data-bases. Programs will then be developed to define the demographics of ancestral Hispanics from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Research programs will obtain the Hispanic record of the 17th and 18th centuries to help to determine the extent to which Hispanics participated and contributed to the development of early Texas. These records will be pursued in state, national, international, religious and other pertinent archives.

The center will have available all important hard copy and digital archives for research and development. Center staff will provide assistance to the general public, researchers and others to access material. The general public will have easy access and the promise of their important ancestry.





Tejano Living Heritage Village

Mission: To augment the learning experience of Tejano history through living history interpretation and provide a substantial stream of revenue to the operational funding of the Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas.

Goals: To create a world class living history village that will excite and provide learning experiences for anyone who visits the center. The village will provide income streams through attendance, rental fees, sales of retail products and services.

Programs: The village will have similar programs as the center but will provide them through a living history environment. Programs will consist of classroom, exhibit, documentary and public works. Outreach programs will consist of staff scheduling presentations to schools, seniors, churches and other organizations. Presentation kits will be provided to teachers to provide educational workshops.

Products & Services: The village will develop a line of retail products that represent Tejano heritage. A combination of publications, crafts and perishable goods will be offered for sale. These products will be offered through multiple and diverse heritage shops and stores. Many items will be handmade by era craftsman and can be seen being created by visitors. Many items will be frontier era household, ranching and personal items.

Services offered will range from private to public living history interpretations presented on site or away at specified events and destinations. A schedule of fees will be determined for general and corporate public performances.

Revenue: The village is specifically design to capture visiting tourists and local residents to attend this entertaining and educational venue, which is estimated at over six million visitors every year. Many

of them are convention participants and families vacationing in our beautiful city. We believe that a significant percentage of tourists will help contribute to the revenue needed to sustain the village and provide operating funding to the center.

Management: The management of this enterprise will be a professional and experienced entertainment and theme park management team. This group will report directly to the board of directors of the Center. Their goals and activities will be separate from the center yet, still receive final approval from the center board.