



Historic Landmark Commission - Regular Meeting

September 11, 2025 - 5:30 PM

Council Chambers

1200 E. Broad St., Mansfield, TX 76063

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

25-1197 Minutes - Approval of the August 14, 2025, Historic Landmark Commission Meeting Minutes

Attachments:

1. 08-14-25 Meeting Minutes

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Citizens wishing to address the Commission on non-public hearing agenda items and items not on the agenda may do so at this time. Once the business portion of the meeting begins, only comments related to public hearings will be heard. All comments are limited to five (5) minutes.

4. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

25-1201 HLC#25-001: Consideration and Possible Action on Measures to Assist with the Maintenance of Historic Landmarks and Resources

Attachments:

1. Draft Report on Historic Building Maintenance

25-1199 HLC#25-005: Consideration and Approval of the 2024 – 2025 Annual Report of the Mansfield Historic Landmark Commission

Attachments:

1. Draft 2025 Annual Report

5. PRESERVATION EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

25-1198 Minutes - Approval of the August 20, 2025, Preservation Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments:

1. 08-20-25 Sub-Committee Minutes

6. HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT

7. COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

8. ADJOURN

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the above agenda was posted on the bulletin board next to the main entrance of City Hall on September 4, 2025, prior to 5:00 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

Art Wright, Historic Preservation Officer

This building is ADA compliant. Accessible parking spaces are available. Requests for sign interpreter services must be made 48 hours ahead of the meeting to make arrangements. Call 817 473-0211 or TDD 1-800-RELAY TX, 1-800-735-2989.



**City of Mansfield
Staff Report**

Item ID: 25-1197

Agenda Date: September 11, 2025

Title

Minutes - Approval of the August 14, 2025, Historic Landmark Commission Meeting Minutes

Description/History

The minutes of the August 14, 2025, Historic Landmark Commission meeting are in DRAFT form and will not become effective until approved by the Commission at this meeting.

Strategic Initiative

Recommendation

N/A

Funding Source

N/A

Prepared By

Art Wright, Planning Manager - (817) 276-4226



**Historic Landmark Commission - Regular Meeting Minutes
August 14, 2025 - 5:30 PM
Draft**

Council Chambers
1200 E. Broad St., Mansfield, TX 76063

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall, 1200 East Broad Street, with the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting, giving date, place, and subject thereof, having been posted as prescribed by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.

Staff present:

Art Wright, Planning Manager/HPO

Jessica Baber, Museum Manager

Commissioners:

Present: *Jennifer Johnston, Bob Klenzendorf, David Littlefield, Robert Smith, Mark Walker, Anne Weydeck, Thomas Leach*

Absent: *None*

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

25-1110 Minutes - Approval of the July 10, 2025, Historic Landmark Commission Meeting Minutes

Attachments:

1. 07-10-25 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Smith called for a motion on the minutes of the July 10, 2025, meeting.

Commissioner Johnston made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Commissioner Leach seconded the motion, which carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 Jennifer Johnston, Bob Klenzendorf, David Littlefield, Robert Smith, Mark Walker, Anne Weydeck, Thomas Leach

Nay: 0 None

Abstain: 0 None

3. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Citizens wishing to address the Commission on non-public hearing agenda items and items not on the agenda may do so at this time. Once the business portion of the meeting begins, only comments related to public hearings will be heard. All comments are limited

to five (5) minutes.

None.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIR

Chairman Smith announced his retirement from the Historic Landmark Commission at the end of his term in September 2025.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

25-1124 HLC#25-006: Public Hearing and Consideration of a Heritage Tree Designation for a Post Oak Tree at 604 West Broad Street

Attachments:

1. Location Map
2. Heritage Tree Nomination
3. Landscape Administrator Evaluation

Mr. Wright made a brief presentation on the proposed Heritage Tree designation and was available to answer questions.

Chairman Smith closed the public hearing and called for a motion on the request.

Vice-Chairman Littlefield made a motion to approve the Heritage Tree designation. Commissioner Weydeck seconded the motion, which carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 Jennifer Johnston, Bob Klenzendorf, David Littlefield, Robert Smith, Mark Walker, Anne Weydeck, Thomas Leach

Nay: 0 None

Abstain: 0 None

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

25-1114 HLC#25-001: Discussion and Possible Action on Measures to Assist with the Maintenance of Historic Landmarks and Resources

Attachments:

1. McKnight Building Photographs
2. Buttrill House Photographs

Mr. Wright made a brief presentation regarding the conditions of the McKnight Building at 102 N. Main Street and the Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House at 302 E. Broad Street. Jessica Baber, Museum Manager, explained that a professional assessment was needed for the McKnight Building to determine what repairs were necessary. Mr. Wright said that the city may be eligible for a Texas Historical Commission grant to cover some of the costs of the assessment.

After discussion, the Commission requested that Ms. Baber provide an estimate of the cost of an assessment. Chairman Smith directed Mr. Wright to determine the best way to bring these buildings to the attention of the City Council, and to report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

25-907 HLC#25-005: Discussion on the 2024 – 2025 Annual Report of the Mansfield Historic Landmark Commission

Mr. Wright made a brief presentation on the Commission's annual report. After discussion, the Commission decided no changes were necessary, and Chairman Smith directed Mr. Wright to schedule the report for the Commission's formal approval at the next meeting.

7. PRESERVATION EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Commissioner Leach, chair of the Sub-Committee, gave the Commission a brief report on the Sub-Committee's activities.

25-1109 Minutes - Approval of the July 16, 2025, Preservation Education Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes

Attachments:

1. 07-16-25 Sub-Committee Minutes

Commissioner Leach called for a motion on the minutes of the July 16, 2025, Sub-Committee meeting.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Commissioner Johnston seconded the motion, which carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3	Jennifer Johnston, Mark Walker, Thomas Leach
Nay: 0	None
Abstain: 0	None

8. HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT

Mr. Wright reported on the following items:

- *The Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association selected the Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2035 for a Silver Award in Historic Preservation.*
- *The Commission has two upcoming events in October, the Founders' Day Festival on October 4, and Haunt the Block on October 16. The Commissioners were encouraged to volunteer at these events.*

9. COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

10. ADJOURN

With no further business, Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Dr. Robert A. Smith, Chair

ATTEST:

Art Wright, Historic Preservation Officer



**City of Mansfield
Staff Report**

Item ID: 25-1201

Agenda Date: September 11, 2025

Title

HLC#25-001: Consideration and Possible Action on Measures to Assist with the Maintenance of Historic Landmarks and Resources

Description/History

At its August meeting, the Commission reviewed needed repairs at the McKnight Building, located at 102 N. Main Street. Jessica Baber, Museum Manager, recommended obtaining a professional assessment to identify the necessary repairs. In June 2023, Ms. Baber obtained an estimate for a conditions assessment from McCoy Collaborative in the amount of \$52,200. The museum staff is seeking a current estimate for the assessment, as prices may have increased since 2023, as well as potential grant funding to help cover expenses. The Commission also discussed the condition of the Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House at 302 E. Broad Street, noting the need for roof repairs.

The purpose of this discussion is to develop a plan for reporting these issues to the City Council along with recommendations for their preservation. Staff believes that a formal report, voted on the Commission and sent to the Council, is a possible approach. A draft report has been attached for the Commission's consideration.

Strategic Initiative

Recommendation

N/A

Funding Source

N/A

Prepared By

Art Wright, Planning Manager - (817) 276-4226



Report on the Maintenance of Historic Landmarks and Resources

The Mansfield Historic Landmark Commission

September 11, 2025

To the Honorable Mayor and City Council of the City of Mansfield

The mission of the Historic Landmark Commission is to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the City of Mansfield through the documentation, protection, and advocacy of historic resources. In fulfillment of this mission, the Commission has identified maintenance concerns regarding two City-owned historic properties: the McKnight Building, located at 102 North Main Street, and the Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House, located at 302 East Broad Street. The purpose of this report is to formally present these concerns to the City Council and to provide corresponding recommendations for consideration.

The following sections outline the background, specific issues identified, and recommended actions for each property.

McKnight Building – 102 North Main Street

As part of its duties under Section 155.116(I) of the Mansfield Code of Ordinances, the Historic Landmark Commission periodically reviews the condition of designated historic landmarks. A recent review of the McKnight Building, located at 102 North Main Street, indicated structural concerns related to the building's foundation and water infiltration through the masonry. These issues are causing visible damage to both the exterior and interior walls.

Designation

The McKnight Building is a designated Mansfield Historic Landmark.

Importance of Preservation

The McKnight Building is a cornerstone of Mansfield's historic downtown. Preserving the structure not only safeguards a tangible link to the city's commercial heritage but also supports the ongoing vitality of Main Street by maintaining the character and authenticity that contribute to Mansfield's sense of place. Preservation of this building demonstrates the City's commitment to stewardship of public assets and sets a standard for the private sector.

Recommendations

- After consultation with museum staff, the Commission recommends that the City Council authorize staff to obtain an updated estimate for a professional conditions assessment of the McKnight Building. The most recent estimate, prepared by McCoy Collaborative in June 2023, was in the amount of \$52,200; however, costs may have increased since that time. A conditions assessment will identify the scope of necessary repairs and the sequence in which they should be addressed.
- The Commission further recommends that Council direct staff to pursue potential grant opportunities to assist with funding the assessment and subsequently seek grants to support repair costs. Preservation grants that fund construction typically require an easement to ensure the long-term preservation of the property, generally ranging from 10 to 30 years depending on the grant amount.

Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House – 302 East Broad Street

Under Divisions 155.116(D) and (F) of the Mansfield Code of Ordinances, the Historic Landmark Commission is charged with identifying properties eligible for local landmark designation and recommending such designations to the City Council.

The Commission has reviewed the condition of the Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House, a recently acquired city property located at 302 East Broad Street. The house is among the five highest-rated historical properties remaining in Mansfield and represents one of the largest intact historic homes along Broad Street. Despite its significance, the building is suffering from “demolition by neglect,” with the most urgent concern being the deteriorated roof.

The core of the house, built from cedar, oak, and pine, remains in relatively sound condition. Much of the water damage and rot appears confined to newer wood products used in later repairs. The Commission believes that if done with care, much of the damage can be repaired without loss of the house’s historic materials and character.

Designation

The Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House is an Officially Recognized historic resource of the City of Mansfield.

Importance of Preservation

The Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House embodies Mansfield’s residential and community history, reflecting the city’s development and the lives of its early families. Its preservation would protect one of the few remaining historic homes of its scale and type, providing cultural, educational, and heritage value to the community. By stabilizing and preserving this landmark, the City demonstrates leadership in conserving one of its most important historic assets for future generations.

Recommendations

- The Commission recommends that the City Council designate the Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House as a local historic landmark to ensure that future repairs and alterations respect and maintain the house’s historic character.
- The Commission recommends that the City Council authorize staff to obtain professional estimates for roof repairs. Roof repairs should be considered an immediate priority to stabilize the structure and prevent further deterioration.
- The Commission further recommends that Council direct staff to identify and pursue available grants or other funding resources to assist with the cost of repairs.

Preservation Grants

Two potential funding sources for these projects include the Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grant and the Certified Local Government Grant, both administered by the Texas Historical Commission. These programs may reimburse up to 50% of eligible project costs.

Eligibility requirements include listing, or eligibility for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, and a determination of eligibility by the Texas Historical Commission would be necessary. Also, a preservation easement must be placed on the building to ensure long-term preservation. The duration of the easement is based on the grant amount:

- Less than \$10,000 – 10 years
- \$10,000 to \$30,000 – 15 years
- \$30,001 to \$50,000 – 20 years
- Greater than \$50,000 – 30 years

Strategic Initiative:

Focus on the Future

Preservation Plan Goals:

This program supports the following goal of the Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2025:

- *GOAL (General Goals)*
Enhance the historic preservation ordinance through a proactive commission role, preservation incentives, and mitigation measures.

1B. Establish mitigation measures when significant resources need repair or will be demolished, removed or irrevocably altered.
Identify historic resources in disrepair and work with property owners to encourage rehabilitation and prevent further deterioration or demolition by neglect.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Robert Smith
Chair, Historic Landmark Commission

Attachments

Information Sheets on the properties

MCKNIGHT BUILDING INFORMATION



McKnight Building, 1895

This 2-story commercial brick building reflects elements of Renaissance Revival design, derived from 16th century Italian architecture. This can be seen from the arched windows on the second floor and the parapet detailing at the top. The Renaissance Revival design was used from between 1890 and 1935.

The building was constructed for Dr. William B. McKnight in 1895. Dr. McKnight maintained an office on the mezzanine at the rear of the first floor. A drug store occupied the front commercial space until 1938. The Knights of Pythias Lodge occupied the second floor from 1899 to 1940. The building is currently home to the Mansfield Historical Museum and Heritage Center.

This building is a designated Mansfield Historic Landmark.



These photographs show the effects of water damage and foundation shifting on the building.

BUTTRILL-NIFONG-BARNETT HOUSE INFORMATION



Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House, 1904

The Buttrill House is the most prominent residence in historic downtown Mansfield due to its size, design and conspicuous site. It is also Mansfield's most architecturally developed historic dwelling, designed in the Classical Revival style, with an impressive two-story colonnade which extends along the two principal facades.

The house was designed and built by local contractor Jay Grow around 1904 for David B. Buttrill, a farmer and owner of a general merchandising business who came to Mansfield from Alabama in the 1890's. Subsequent owners included George Casstevens, Dr. Harry D. Nifong, and Celia Barnett.

This building is an Officially Recognized historic resource of the City of Mansfield.



These photographs show the water damage to the house, primarily caused by the failure of the roof.



**City of Mansfield
Staff Report**

Item ID: 25-1199

Agenda Date: September 11, 2025

Title

HLC#25-005: Consideration and Approval of the 2024 – 2025 Annual Report of the Mansfield Historic Landmark Commission

Description/History

One of the Commission's annual preservation goals is to highlight its work through an annual report of activities. The report serves to inform the public about the Commission's role and the importance of historic preservation.

At the August meeting, the Commission reviewed the draft report and did not recommend any changes. Unless further revisions are requested, the Commission will need to approve the report for release to the City Council and Mansfield residents in October.

Strategic Initiative

Recommendation

N/A

Funding Source

N/A

Prepared By

Art Wright, Planning Manager - (817) 276-4226



2024 - 2025 Annual Report

MANSFIELD HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION

Message from the Chair

The Historic Landmark Commission had a very successful year. It is our mission and pleasure to help with events to acquaint the citizens of Mansfield and visitors with Mansfield's rich history. We enjoy our collaboration with the Mansfield Historical Society in these endeavors.

The Historic Landmark Commission's Preservation Education Subcommittee, chaired by Commissioner Tom Leach, organized activities throughout the year which encouraged people to engage with our city's history. The planning for these events takes a lot of time and coordination, and the subcommittee never fails to deliver a first-class product.

Our Preservation Plan Advisory Committee, chaired by Commissioner Jennifer Johnston, developed goals and recommendations to update our Historic Preservation Plan. This much-needed update was subsequently adopted by Mansfield's City Council, and I thank them for their work.

As always, I must recognize Amanda Brown (Museum Education and Engagement Specialist), Jessica Baber (Museum Manager), and Art Wright (Historic Preservation Officer). These three individuals never fail to put long hours, effort, and dedication into preserving the history of Mansfield and bringing it to life for all of us.

On a sad note, we continue to lose historic structures in the City of Mansfield. This year saw the end of the Thomas residence on Kimball Street. Dr. Thomas was a prominent Mansfield physician in the mid-1900s, and his home, built in 1908, was torn down for development. The Buttrill-Nifong house, built in about 1904, continues to deteriorate at an increasing pace, and, if repairs are not made, it could be lost as well. Historic preservation is a worthwhile goal but, for it to succeed, it must be treated as an important factor in decisions about development and use of property in the City.

It has been my honor to serve on this Commission since its inception, but it is time to pass the torch. One of the few remaining jewels left in Mansfield is the one-block area of downtown. It survives as the oldest intact Central Business District in Tarrant County. The homes and buildings that surround this form a hub of history. This area, in my opinion, must be protected for Mansfield to develop as a historic tourist destination. This will require some hard decisions when it comes to lowering the speed limit, reducing the traffic flow to the extent possible, and making it a safe and comfortable place for visitors to walk.

Heritage sites are a non-renewable resource, and their loss is not unlike the extinction of a species. Once destroyed, they do not come back. Thank you to the volunteers, city staff, and professionals who have worked for decades to keep intact the Mansfield which enticed us here. History is worth the effort.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Smith, O.D.



DR. ROBERT A. SMITH, O.D.

*Chair
Historic Landmark Commission*

OUR MISSION

is to celebrate and protect Mansfield's heritage by documenting, preserving, and advocating for historic buildings. We support landmark status, oversee the Preservation Plan, review proposed changes, and promote incentives for preservation.

OUR VISION

is to use the power of preservation to save our cultural landscapes and living heritage, create a sense of place, and protect and promote the unique identity of Mansfield through education.

OUR COMMITMENT

As Mansfield grows, the Historic Landmark Commission is committed to preserving both its rural heritage and modern character, ensuring that historic buildings are protected through the preservation program.



Commissioner Walker engages the public at the Historic Downtown Mansfield Car Show

COMMISSIONERS

Dr. Robert Smith, Chair

David Littlefield, Vice-Chair

Jennifer Johnston

Bob Klenzendorf

Thomas Leach

Mark Walker

Anne Weydeck

CITY STAFF

Clayton Comstock

Executive Director of Planning and Development

Arty Wheaton-Rodriguez

Assistant Director of Planning

Art Wright

Historic Preservation Officer

Additional support for the preservation program is provided by the Mansfield Historical Services Department:

Jessica Baber

Museum Manager

Amanda Brown

Museum Education and Engagement Specialist

ON THE COVER: A child learns about period music at the Mansfield History Hunters Scavenger Hunt, May 2025.

Historical photographs used in this report are courtesy of the Mansfield Historical Society.

Preservation Month brings Mansfield's

May marked the celebration of Historic Preservation Month in Mansfield, with the Commission hosting a variety of events to honor the city's rich heritage. The Commission was fortunate to have a team of volunteers who generously donated their time to make these events a success.

The month kicked off with the Chalk the Walk on Historic Mansfield competition. Twelve artists participated, each showcasing their unique chalk art. To add a special touch, a special 3-D artwork by artist Jan Riggins was commissioned, inspired by a 1907 photograph of Main Street. The piece, titled Murry the Mule, depicted a mule pulling a cart, offering a nostalgic glimpse into the past.

Next, the Mansfield History Hunters Scavenger Hunt invited eight teams to explore Main Street, guided by costumed characters. Participants solved puzzles and completed challenges to experience what life was like during Traders Day, an event that once brought the community together.

The third annual Historic Downtown Mansfield Car Show on Walnut Street was another highlight. A stunning collection of 52 vehicles, spanning from the 1930s to the 2000s, was on display, offering a visual timeline of the cars that once lined Main Street. Over 500 visitors turned out to admire the cars.

Throughout the month, the This Place Matters - 31 Days of May campaign brought attention to 31 historic sites around Mansfield. With the support of the Mansfield Historical Society, signs were placed at each site, and a brief history was featured daily on the city's website. The campaign reached more than 833 people, connecting the community to its historical roots.

Together, these events helped showcase the importance of preserving Mansfield's unique history and fostered a deeper appreciation for the landmarks that make this city so special.



Clockwise from left: volunteers at the scavenger hunt; an artist has fun with Murry the Mule; a family works on a sketch at Chalk the Walk

s history to life



ule; visitors vote for their favorite vehicle at the car show;

City Council Greenlights Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan

After over a year of planning and public engagement, the Mansfield City Council officially adopted the *Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2035* on May 12, 2025. This new blueprint for the future aims to safeguard the city's historic and cultural legacy while addressing the evolving needs of a rapidly growing community.

The city's previous preservation plan, adopted back in 1999, provided the initial framework for maintaining the unique architectural character of Mansfield. But since then, the landscape of the city has changed dramatically. Over the past 26 years, Mansfield has experienced impressive growth, particularly in the Historic Downtown area, where new development has begun to reshape the very fabric of the community. As older buildings make way for modern constructions, the need to preserve the city's historic identity has never been more urgent.

The *Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2035* serves as a guide, outlining updated goals and policies to steer Mansfield's preservation efforts well into the future. The plan was developed by the Preservation Plan Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from the Historic Landmark Commission and the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Public feedback also played a crucial role, with surveys and direct engagement allowing community members to voice their concerns and ideas.



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As the city moves forward, the *Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2035* will be the cornerstone for future preservation initiatives, helping to ensure that Mansfield's rich history remains an integral part of the city's evolving narrative. Whether it's through the preservation of historic buildings or the careful integration of modern design, the plan sets a clear vision for maintaining the city's charm, character, and community pride.

Preservation in 2024-2025

Here are highlights of the Historic Landmark Commission's activities in 2024-2025.

PRESERVATION EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Founded in 2022, the Preservation Education Sub-Committee initially focused on organizing events for Historic Preservation Month. In 2024, its role expanded to encompass all aspects of the Commission's preservation outreach program. Current projects under development by the sub-committee include:

1. A history video series for the Social Studies students in the Mansfield Independent School District. The sub-committee is working with Jada McClure, a MISD student and member of the Mansfield Youth Council on the concept.
2. Programs to support the Founders' Day Festival in October 2025.
3. A new annual heritage tourism festival, Decade Days, celebrating different eras of Mansfield's history. The first festival is tentatively scheduled for 2027.
4. An escape room at the Mansfield Historical Museum for Haunt the Block, October 2025.
5. Historic Preservation Month events for 2026.

Made up of three Commissioners, preservation volunteers, and city staff, the Sub-Committee is responsible for planning the Commission's educational programs. It also works closely with the Historical Services Department to support events hosted by the Mansfield Historical Museum and the Man House Museum.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recently completed a four-year evaluation of Mansfield's preservation program to ensure compliance with Certified Local Government (CLG) program requirements. The review concluded that "The City of Mansfield is strongly fulfilling its role and responsibilities in the CLG program."

The Historic Landmark Commission takes great pride in meeting its obligations to both the City of Mansfield and the State of Texas by maintaining the standards of the CLG program.

Mansfield is one of 83 cities and counties in Texas recognized by the THC as a Certified Local Government. This designation provides access to grants, technical assistance, training opportunities, and a network of preservation professionals across the state. In return, the Commission remains dedicated to supporting a strong and effective local preservation program.



The Historic Landmark Commissioners met with the City Council in a joint work session in April 2025.

Celebrating Living History: A New Heritage Tree Program Takes Root

The city's landscape is about to become a little more revered—and a lot more recognized. The Commission launched a new Heritage Tree Program designed to honor and encourage the preservation of trees that hold historical, cultural, or community significance.

Much like historic buildings receive official recognition, this program offers a formal designation for trees that have earned a place in the city's story. To qualify as a heritage tree, a tree must possess at least one of several notable qualities. These include exceptional size, age, or rarity; a meaningful connection to community identity; a presence on a historic site; local fame; or status as a beloved landmark.

Participation in the program is entirely voluntary and carries no legal or regulatory obligations. Instead, it focuses on recognition and support. Once designated, heritage tree owners receive expert guidance from the city's Landscape Inspections team, including a personalized care plan and tips for selecting qualified tree care professionals. As a lasting tribute, each honored tree will also be awarded a commemorative plaque.

Through this initiative, the Commission hopes to deepen appreciation for the living elements of our city's past and preserve these natural treasures for future generations.



Above, The city's first heritage tree is a post oak located on the grounds of the Man House Museum. The age of the tree is estimated at 280 years, well before the founding of Mansfield. When Ralph Man, one of the town founders, built his log house on the property in 1865, the tree was around 120 years old. The post oak became a heritage tree in August 2025.

Interested in a historic property? Have questions?

We have advice and incentives to assist with the rehabilitation of Mansfield's historic buildings. Contact the Historic Preservation Officer at (817) 276-4226 or planning@mansfieldtexas.gov for more information.

SIX REASONS TO SAVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS

- 1. Old buildings have intrinsic value.** Historic buildings tend to use better materials such as rare hardwoods and wood from old-growth forests that no longer exist.
- 2. You never know what's being destroyed when destroying a historic building.** Historic buildings have design elements that cannot be replaced, like hardwoods, bricks and glass.
- 3. New businesses prefer old buildings.** Businesses like bookstores, restaurants, neighborhood pubs and start-ups tend to thrive in old buildings.
- 4. Old buildings attract people.** Older architecture generates interest for residents and tourists.
- 5. Old buildings are reminders of a city's culture and complexity.** A city needs old buildings to maintain a sense of permanency and history.
- 6. Regret goes only one way.** Once a historic building is destroyed, it is lost forever.

Source: Julia Rocchi, "Six Practical Reasons to Save Old Buildings"
National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2015



Remains of the Citizens Bank just before its demolition in 2019

Leaving a Legacy:

Landmark Commission Chair Retires After 37 Years

Since 1988, when historic preservation took a back seat to booming development in Mansfield, one man quietly but powerfully shaped the city's relationship with its past: Dr. Robert A. Smith.

As the founding chairman of the Mansfield Historic Landmark Commission, Dr. Smith has been the guiding force behind some of the city's most significant preservation efforts for more than three decades. Now, after 37 years of public service, Dr. Smith is retiring from the Commission.

When the Commission was established in August 1988, historic buildings and neighborhoods faced uncertain futures. Dr. Smith stepped in with a clear vision and deep commitment to preserving Mansfield's architectural and cultural legacy.

Under his leadership, the city joined the Certified Local Government program in 1989, a milestone that opened the door for federal and state preservation partnerships.

He also oversaw the completion of major preservation documents, including the Historic Resources Survey Update (1998), the *Discover Historic Mansfield Action and Vision Plan* (2008), the *Design Guidelines for Historic Mansfield* (2023) and the *Historic Mansfield Preservation Plan 2035* (2025), which provides a roadmap for safeguarding Mansfield's historic resources.

A preservationist not just in title but in practice, Dr. Smith and his wife, Ann Smith, own two historic buildings, including the recently rehabilitated Board and Chorn Drugstore. His firsthand experience with rehabilitation and maintenance gives him a unique insight into the challenges and rewards of preserving historic structures.

Coupled with his deep roots in the community and extensive knowledge of local history, Dr. Smith brought an unmatched perspective to the Commission's decisions—whether evaluating

a building for landmark status or approving sensitive renovations.

Over the years, the Commission's impact has grown significantly. Thanks to the consistent efforts of Dr. Smith and his fellow commissioners, Mansfield has seen the designation of 33 local historic landmarks, the recognition of 49 individual historic resources, the first historic cultural landscape and the first historic neighborhood.

Despite the inevitable changes in Commission membership over the past 37 years, Dr. Smith remained its steady anchor. His enduring presence ensured continuity and progress, helping the city evolve its preservation programs without losing sight of its past. His legacy is written not only in the policies and plans he helped create but also in the preserved facades of Main Street, the protected landmarks, and the living history of Mansfield itself.

In a city where change is constant, Dr. Smith stands as a remarkable example of the power of consistency, dedication, and deep local knowledge. His work ensures that Mansfield's rich heritage will continue to be celebrated for generations to come.



Dr. Robert A. Smith greets the public at an Arts Week Kids' Day event at the Mansfield Historical Museum.



Clockwise from left: Dr. Smith consults the Design Guidelines for Downtown Mansfield in 1991; Dr. and Mrs. Smith display the new historic landmark medallions at a ceremony in 2014; Dr. Smith chairs a Commission meeting in 1990; Dr. and Mrs. Smith unveil the City's newest state historical marker in 2024; Dr. Smith receives an Award of Merit from the Texas Historical Commission in 2023.



DEMOLITION REPORT FOR 2024-2025

Twelve historic properties listed in the Historic Resources Survey Update were demolished between October 2024 and September 2025. These buildings were identified as Selected Medium, Medium, or Low priority—categories that reflect their relative historical significance. Five of the buildings were rated Selected Medium, the second highest rank of historic value.

The number of demolitions more than doubled compared to the previous year, with most occurring in historic downtown Mansfield to accommodate new development.

Before demolition, staff conduct a historical review when possible, including research, documentation, and photographs to capture the building's condition and historical associations.

The loss or improper alteration of historic buildings can significantly impact the character of both the individual structure and the surrounding area. For this reason, demolition or modification of historic resources should be carefully evaluated. In many cases, preservation or rehabilitation remains a feasible and valuable alternative.

ADDRESS	YEAR CONSTRUCTED	PRIORITY	DEMOLITION REPORTED	NOTES
304 East Kimball St.	1950	Medium	10/23/2024	Side Gable Bungalow
115 Depot St.	c. 1957	Low	12/10/2024	Mansfield Feed Mill
115 Depot St.	c. 1957	Low	12/10/2024	Warehouse
213 Smith St.	c. 1940	Low	12/10/2024	Front Gable Bunaglow
200 South Waxahachie St.	1925	Medium	12/18/2024	Front Gable Bunaglow
500 East Kimball St.	1940	Medium	12/18/2024	Front Gable Bunaglow
106 East Kimball St.	1913	Selected Medium	3/3/2025	Dr. Raymond Thomas House, a modified massed pyrimidal house
106 East Kimball St.	1940	Medium	3/3/2025	Metal barn
3517 St. Paul Rd.	c. 1895	Selected Medium	3/14/2025	Modified L-plan farmhouse*
3517 St. Paul Rd.	c. 1940	Selected Medium	3/14/2025	Wood garage*
3517 St. Paul Rd.	c. 1940	Selected Medium	3/14/2025	Wood barn*
3517 St. Paul Rd.	c. 1940	Selected Medium	3/14/2025	Wood barn*

*These four structures were part of a historic farmstead in the St. Paul Community. With their demolition, St. Paul's Cemetery may be the last remaining physical trace of the community.



106 E. Kimball Street

The Thomas House was demolished to clear the property for a townhome project.



3571 St. Paul Street

The St. Paul Farmstead, consisting of this c. 1895 modified L-plan house and three outbuildings, was demolished for a new street project connecting Mansfield to Grand Prairie.



1940 Barn on East Kimball Street



304 East Kimball Street

ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES 2025

In Mansfield, historic preservation is a voluntary effort, so only properties designated as Historic Landmarks are safeguarded by the City's preservation ordinance. Without this landmark status, many of our historic buildings have faced incompatible changes, demolition, or neglect.

ENDANGERED: Historic Downtown Mansfield

Historic resources throughout the Original Town face threats from neglect, demolition, and alterations. These downtown resources are at risk:

- **Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House, c. 1904**

Although it appears to be structurally sound, the house at 302 E. Broad Street requires repairs to its roof, eaves, windows, and colonnade to prevent further damage. As a high-ranking historic resource in Mansfield, this city property is of paramount importance.



The Buttrill-Nifong-Barnett House is the last intact grand house in the historic downtown.

- **E.O. Driskell House, c. 1895**

The city recently acquired the E.O. Driskell House at 106 Pond Street. The house was previously a rental property. Plans to redevelop the property may impact the house.

- **Wallace-Hall House, c. 1878**

The Wallace-Hall House, located at 210 S. Main Street, is slated to be moved to Geyer Commons to allow for new development on its current site. If the relocation does not proceed as planned, the house may be demolished. The house is currently used as an art gallery and studios.



The Wallace-Hall House, built in 1978, is a two-story Queen Anne style house.

- **Jacob M. House, c. 1890**

The Jacob M. Back House is the oldest historic structure on Smith Street. Plans are in the works to replace the storage facility that surrounds the house to accommodate a mixed-use development. Without intervention, it is possible the house could be demolished as well.



Originally a one-room house, the Jacob M. Back House is an example of the process by which folk houses grew over time. The house was located near the railroad depot to facilitate the shipping of Back's livestock.

ENDANGERED: Cook Cabin, c. 1864

The City acquired the cabin with plans to move it to the Man House Museum. Delays stalled the project and it suffered significant deterioration. The new plan is to dismantle the cabin and reuse some of its materials at the Man House Museum.

PRESERVATION PROGRAMS



The owner of the historic 1894 Post Office Building is now in the third year of a tax exemption that covers 25% of the building's improvement value. The tax savings can be used for rehabilitation projects, such as removing the slipcover from the building.

HISTORIC MANSFIELD FAÇADE GRANTS

The Historic Mansfield Façade Grant Program aims to safeguard the City's cultural heritage by supporting the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of historic buildings. Established in 2018, the program provides grants to owners of eligible historic properties to help cover the costs of exterior restoration work.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX EXEMPTION

Maintaining a historic building can be costly. The Historic Preservation Tax Exemption program helps support preservation efforts by offering tax relief to property owners who repair, restore, or maintain their historic structures. The program provides three levels of exemption: 1) for properties with a Historic Landmark designation; 2) for exterior work costing over \$5,000 on historic residential structures; and 3) for exterior work costing over \$5,000 on historic commercial structures.

OFFICIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Not all owners of historic properties wish to receive a Historic Landmark designation. The Official Recognition program provides a way for the Commission to acknowledge the owners of historic properties without granting them landmark status. Properties that receive Official Recognition are not subject to the landmark design guidelines, and owners do not need to seek Commission approval for changes. This program aims to raise awareness about the importance of preservation and may encourage property owners to consider applying for landmark status in the future.



The First Methodist Church Parsonage, built in 1945, was officially recognized as a historic resource in 2020. Following a request by the property owner, the building was designated a historic landmark in January 2025. This designation marks a successful outcome of the Official Recognition program.

HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

Launched in 2025, this new program encourages the preservation of trees recognized for their historical or cultural significance, known as heritage trees. When a tree is designated as a heritage tree, the City's Landscape Inspection team will offer the property owner guidance on its care and upkeep, including a recommended maintenance plan. The Historic Landmark Commission will present a commemorative plaque. Participation in the program is entirely voluntary and does not carry any regulatory requirements.

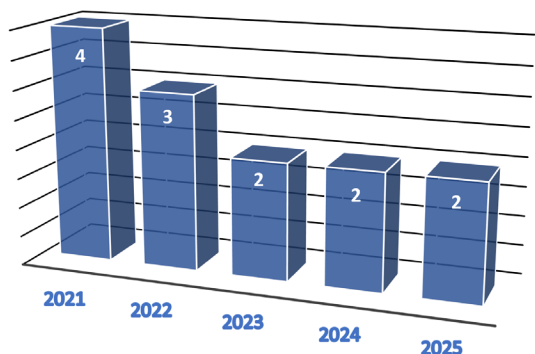
HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM

Identifying a local Mansfield landmark is simple. The City awards owners of landmark properties a distinctive medallion featuring the Man and Feild Mill. You can see these markers on many historic buildings and sites throughout town.

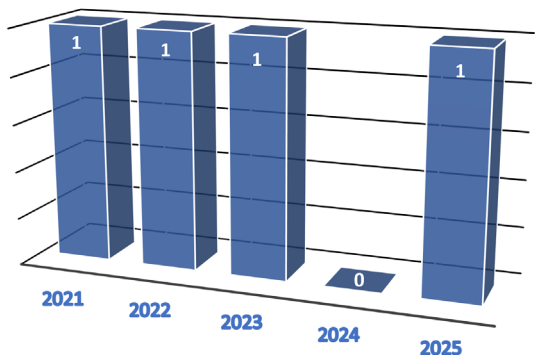


PRESERVATION BY THE NUMBERS

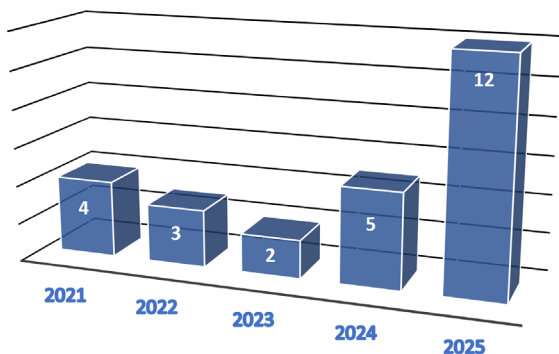
Design Review Cases



New Landmarks



Demolitions



Discover how Mansfield preserves its history! Scan the QR code to visit the city's Historic Preservation webpage, your go-to source for information, maps, and the Preservation Event Hub.

- *Mansfield has 33 designated historic landmarks, including the Historic Cemetery District.*
- *Forty-nine individual properties have been designated Officially Recognized historic resources.*
- *The Patterson Addition is the first Officially Recognized Historic Neighborhood.*
- *The Harrison property on North Street at the creek is Mansfield's first vernacular cultural landscape, once site of the Mansfield Gin.*
- *Six properties in Mansfield are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Ralph Man Homestead.*
- *There are ten Texas State Historical Markers in Mansfield. Two new markers for the Southland Ice Co. Building and the First National Bank Building were approved by the Texas Historical Commission in August 2025.*
- *Mansfield has one Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, the Nugent-Hart House.*
- *The Commission has reviewed 13 applications for Certificates of Approval since 2021.*
- *There have been four local historic landmark designations since 2021.*
- *Since 2021, 26 structures listed on the city's Historic Resources Survey have been demolished, with 12 structures demolished this year alone.*
- *The first nomination for a Heritage Tree designation was received in August 2025. The nominated tree is a post oak on the grounds of the Man House Museum.*

History is repeating itself on Main Street!

In Mansfield's early years, downtown was the heart of the city. However, as the city expanded, downtown's significance waned, especially in the 1980s when numerous businesses located to U.S. 287. Many historic downtown buildings were renovated to fit modern tastes, often obscuring, altering, or removing

their original features. In 1988, the value of historic preservation gained attention, prompting property owners to begin restoring their buildings. Since then, 13 downtown structures have been rehabilitated to restore their historic charm. Additionally, several newer buildings have become historic in their own right.



Top, Downtown in the 1920s; Center, in the late 1980s; Bottom, downtown today



View of the old 1906 railroad bridge. Originally built in 1885, the bridge was renovated in 1906. In 2021, Union Pacific replaced the wooden trestle bridge with a concrete bridge, but retained the 1906 iron truss.

Looking Forward...

Now in its 37th year, the Historic Landmark Commission is dedicated to its mission to protect and preserve Mansfield's historic resources. The Commission's work not only serves the educational and cultural needs of today but also lays the groundwork for future generations to enjoy Mansfield's unique heritage.

This past year, the Commission developed a new historic preservation plan, charting a course for the next decade. This plan defines the Commission's vision and priorities, ensuring that the preservation program remains focused on both immediate and long-term goals.

While this report reflects on the Commission's achievements from the past year, the Commission looks forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Here are some key initiatives for the future:

- **National Register Nomination:** We will submit an application to list the Historic Downtown Commercial District on the National Register of Historic Places, solidifying its status as a treasured historical landmark.
- **Updating the Historic Resources Survey:** We will update the 1998 Historic Resources Survey. The Texas Historical Commission recommends revisiting surveys every ten years to ensure they reflect current conditions.
- **Revamping Preservation Ordinance:** The 1988 preservation ordinance is due for an update. We plan to make it clearer and more adaptable to the needs of today's preservation efforts.
- **Expanding Community Outreach:** New events are in the works to expand our community outreach programs, fostering greater public engagement with our preservation efforts.
- **Heritage Tourism:** Promoting heritage tourism is another focus, inviting visitors to explore and appreciate Mansfield's historical sites.

As the Commission continues to build and refine our preservation program, we are excited to share our progress on these efforts and keep the community informed about the important work being done to safeguard Mansfield's unique history for future generations.



**City of Mansfield
Staff Report**

Item ID: 25-1198

Agenda Date: September 11, 2025

Title

Minutes - Approval of the August 20, 2025, Preservation Education Sub-Committee Meeting
Minutes

Description/History

The minutes of the August 20, 2025, Preservation Education Sub-Committee meeting are in DRAFT form and will not become effective until approved by the Sub-Committee at this meeting.

Strategic Initiative

Recommendation

N/A

Funding Source

N/A

Prepared By

Art Wright, Planning Manager - (817) 276-4226



HLC - Preservation Education Sub-Committee - Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2025 - 4:15 PM
Draft

Planning Department Conference Room
1200 E. Broad St., Mansfield, TX 76063

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Leach called the meeting to order at 4:20 p.m. in the Planning Department Conference Room of City Hall, 1200 East Broad Street, with the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting, giving the date, place, and subject thereof, having been posted as prescribed by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.

Staff Present:

*Art Wright, Historic Preservation Officer
Amanda Brown, Museum Education and Engagement Specialist
Theresa Cohagen, Director of Community Engagement
Rosalie Gilbert, Arts and Event Services Manager
Angie Henley, Special Events Supervisor
Ann Beck, Marketing and Communications Manager*

Preservation Volunteer:

Carolyn Wright

Commissioners:

Present: Jennifer Johnston, Thomas Leach, Mark Walker

Absent: None

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

25-1120 Discussion on the proposed Decade Days festival

Ms. Cohagen, Ms. Gilbert, Ms. Henley, and Ms. Beck were available at the meeting to provide advice and answer questions regarding the creation of a new heritage tourism event called Decade Days. The Sub-Committee discussed the following items:

- The tentative date of the main event will be Saturday, September 18, 2027, with lead-in events held during the prior week.*
- If the attendance at the event is greater than 200 visitors, it may be too large for Geyer Commons. The Sub-Committee discussed splitting the event between Geyer Commons and Walnut Street.*
- For the main event on Saturday, a shorter schedule is preferred, perhaps four to five hours. Some of the activities can be held during the prior week.*
- The Farr Best Theater can be booked to show 1940s movies.*

- *It was proposed to move the Historic Downtown Mansfield Car Show to September as a related event. As Music Alley is being moved to May in 2026, it was determined that it was best to leave the Preservation Month events in May as well, and to coordinate them with Music Alley.*

25-1121 Discussion regarding educational events and other programs

The Sub-Committee discussed the following events:

- *A History Talks event is scheduled for September 26, 2025, at the Mansfield Historical Museum.*
- *Several Haunt the Block events are scheduled for October, including the Museum Escapes! escape room at the Mansfield Historical Museum on October 16 and 17, 2025, ghost tours, the Victorian Picnic at the Man House Museum, and the Wallace-Howl Art House exhibit.*

25-1122 Discussion regarding the educational videos for the Mansfield Independent School District

Ms. Brown reported that she had contacted the animation instructor at Ben Barber Innovation Academy to request assistance with the video from the animation students. She was informed that the school has an internship program to help students gain experience in animation projects. Ms. Brown also presented the first draft of the Lantern Jack cartoon character that will be featured in the video.

3. ADJOURN

With no further business, Chairman Leach adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Thomas Leach, Chair

ATTEST:

Art Wright, Historic Preservation Officer