

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## Preserve buildings and sites that contribute to Round Rock's history.

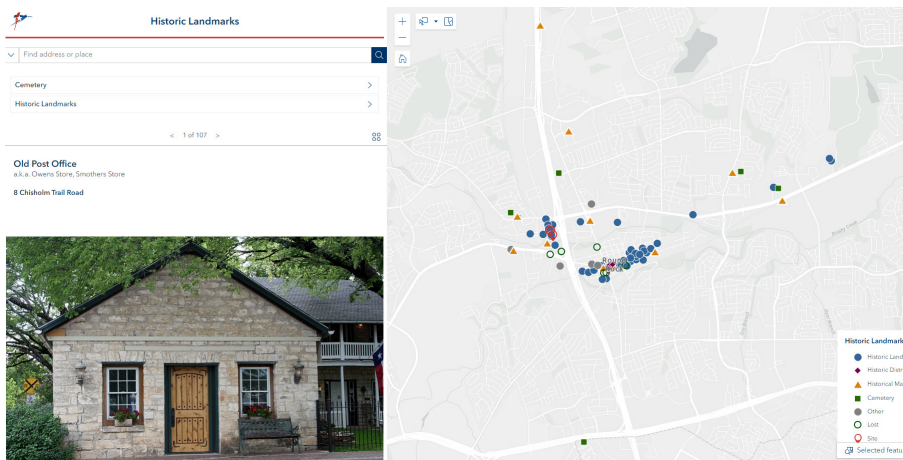
Historic assets play an essential role in shaping the identity of a place. Historic buildings, neighborhoods, and other important vestiges of the past define a unique and special sense of character in a community. As Round Rock continues to grow and mature, its historic resources remain an important part of the community's identity. Historic preservation encourages the continued use of older properties, safeguards the existence of significant historic elements, and contributes to community development objectives such as quality of life, sustainability, and economic development. Over the past year, PDS has hosted events and partnered with local preservation advocates and allies to educate the community about Round Rock's history and preserve the city's historic resources.

**The Historic Preservation section of Round Rock 2030 is a standalone Historic Preservation Plan. This section of the annual report serves as the update to the Historic Preservation Plan.**

**Implementation Strategy: Increase stakeholder and public awareness of the city's historic preservation program by providing training opportunities, hosting public events, and creating educational materials.**

## HISTORIC LANDMARK EXPLORER

Preservation staff created an interactive map showcasing the city's historic landmarks. The explorer was launched during Historic Preservation Month and is published on the city website. The explorer highlights historic sites including landmarks, markers, cemeteries, and more. Viewers can search by specific address or select points on the map to view photos and learn about the landmarks.



*Historic Landmark Explorer*



*Historic Downtown Walking Guide*

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WALKING GUIDE was

reformatted by the Communications Department and preservation staff. The new guide was released during Historic Presentation Month. 453 guides were distributed in May 2023. Staff continue to distribute guides at the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Library, and City Hall.

**PLACES IN TIME** is a video series created by the Communications Department to highlight impactful locations in Round Rock's history. Two videos were added this year, showcasing the Immortal 10/Mays Street Bridge and the Round Rock Public Library. These videos can be found on the city's YouTube channel.

**NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH** was celebrated in Round Rock in May 2023. Preservation staff and local preservation organizations, including Round Rock Preservation (RRP), hosted preservation programs to educate and engage the public on historic preservation. Activities included:

- April 27: City Council proclaim May as Historic Preservation Month;
- May 3 & 17: Preservation education booth at Music on Main;
- May 5: Chuckwagon Dinner at Old Settlers Park;
- May 6: Pioneer Day at Old Settlers Park;
- May 9: Lunch & Learn "William Walsh and the Round Rock White Lime Company;
- May 20: Historic Downtown Walking Tour for 19 attendees;
- "This Place Matters" social media campaign with the hashtags #roundrock, #downtownroundrock, #artsandculture and #nationalhistoricpreservationmonth. 5 posts received 68,971 impressions and 5,850 interactions;
- The BACA Center Art Club historic art exhibit at the BACA center;
- RRP historic art exhibit at the new Round Rock Public Library.



Preservation Month Proclamation (top); Music on Main (bottom)



## Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

### About the HPC:

- Renders decisions on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, certifying that proposed alterations to a historically designated property will not diminish the property's historic integrity.
- Recommends designation of historic landmarks and districts.
- Reviews applications for historic property tax exemptions, and makes recommendations to City Council regarding approval.
- Administers the requirements of Texas' Certified Local Government program.
- Review, research, and report on requests to rename city facilities in honor of an individual in accordance with the city's naming and renaming policy.
- Selects Local Legends to honor individuals, groups, businesses, locations and/or publications that have had a positive and lasting impact on the culture, development and history of the city.

### Communication at HPC Meetings:

The public may address the HPC regarding any historic preservation matter during the "Citizen Communication" period at the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 3 minutes and the Commission cannot comment or take action on matters not on the posted agenda.

To speak during the meeting, please fill out a citizen communication card and hand it to the staff member sitting to the right of the dais. When your name is called, please move to the podium and state your full name and address. All discussions should be directed toward the Commissioners.



### Commissioner Requirements:

HPC members are appointed by the City Council. The seven members of the HPC serve staggered two-year terms. Members should have knowledge and demonstrated interest in architecture, history, archaeology, planning or community design, and historic preservation. Members must be registered voters and have been residents of Round Rock for at least twelve months.

### Contact HPC:

Contact: HPC Commissioners or Preservation staff through the Planning and Development Services Dept. at 512-218-5428. Send correspondence to 301 W. Bagdad Ave., Suite 210, Round Rock, TX 78664.

### Preservation Page:

Information about the city's historic preservation program

### Round Rock Replay:

Agendas, minutes, and videos for city meetings



### The City of Round Rock

The City of Round Rock operates under the laws of the State of Texas and within the framework of a Home Rule Charter adopted by the citizens in 1977 and amended by several Charter amendment elections. You can view the charter on our website at <http://roundrocktexas.gov/docs/charter.pdf>.

The Round Rock City Hall is wheelchair accessible. Requests for special accommodations should be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact 512-218-5404.

## HPC Brochure

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

### BROCHURE

Preservation staff created an informational brochure to distribute to the public during HPC meetings. The brochure describes the composition of the HPC and its purpose, goals, and responsibilities. The brochure instructs attendees on how to speak during a public meeting and where to find meeting agendas, minutes, and videos. The brochure also provides a QR code for information about the city's Historic Preservation Program.

**Implementation Strategy: Consider new incentive programs specifically to assist property owners and developers within maintenance and rehabilitation of historic properties.**

**MORTAR REPAIR RESOURCES** Preservation staff prepared an educational handout for historic property owners about the repair of historic mortar. The handout is published on the city website and discusses the difference between historic and contemporary mortar, signs of mortar deterioration, and steps to repair damaged mortar. Staff also developed a presentation that can be shared as a webinar or a workshop.



Repairing mortar in a historic property presents unique challenges. Although repairing a historic structure may be a time-intensive and expensive project, taking the time and money to ensure your building is properly repaired ensures that your historic structure will remain physically strong and true to its original character. This guide aims to educate historic property owners about when mortar repairs are necessary, how to properly repair their structures, and how to clean masonry.

### Definitions

- **Repointing:** The process of removing inappropriate or deteriorating mortar from the joints of brick or stone and replacing it with new mortar.
- **Masonry:** Stone, brick, terra cotta, and concrete block. Historic masonry can be found on entire buildings or can be limited to areas such as chimneys and foundations.
- **Tooling:** Compacting and shaping the face of a mortar joint with a specially shaped tool (e.g., trowel).
- **Efflorescence:** Crystalline white deposits that may appear on masonry after rainfall or excessive moisture.

### Signs Repointing is Necessary

Eroded mortar (¼ inch or more)



Crumbled mortar



Hairline cracks



What makes historic mortar different than modern mortar?

Historic mortar typically contains more lime and is softer and more permeable than modern mortar. These properties enable the mortar to repair its building by absorbing moisture and allowing it to dry out, preventing the mortar from cracking and crumbling.

Modern mortar is made of Portland cement and lime, which is a harder and less permeable mortar.

By the 1920s, most masons used a mix of Portland cement and lime, which is a harder and less permeable mortar.

Today, most masons use a mix of Portland cement and lime, which is a harder and less permeable mortar.

Using mortar that is too hard can cause cracking and crumbling of the mortar joints, which can lead to the deterioration of the masonry.

### Historic Mortar Repair: Step-by-Step

#### Step 1: Cleaning Your Masonry (Pre-repointing)

Reasons for cleaning masonry:

- Improve the appearance of a building by removing unsightly dirt or soiling materials (such as soot, mildew, or ivy).
- Remove dirt and debris from a building by removing soiling materials.
- Remove a stain or mark to accurately match repointing mortar or patching compounds.

Method:

- Cleaning should be done gently, initially with a brush and water or with low pressure water (400psi).

#### Step 2: Identify the Cause

Identify the root cause of the mortar problem.

A mortar analysis helps ensure that the new mortar duplicates the original mortar of the historic building.

A visual mortar analysis investigates the mortar's color, hardness, and permeability. An optional laboratory analysis provides more information about the original mortar's sand, water content, and cure time.

Common causes of deterioration:

- Time and weather
- Incompatible third joints
- Moisture penetrating the wall
- Poor workmanship
- Inadequate curing
- Different building

#### Step 3: Mortar Analysis & Selection

The new mortar should:

- Match the color and texture of the historic mortar
- Have sand that matches the sand in the historic mortar
- Be more vapor permeable and softer than the masonry units
- Be as repairable as possible

Proper repointing for historic buildings restores the visual and physical integrity of the historic structure.

Proper repointing is a time-intensive project. It may be more cost effective to repair a whole wall than to spot repair.

Repointing conditions:

- Wet temperature between 40°F-80°F prevent the water in the mortar from drying too fast.
- Windy, repointing should be done in the shade, such as that provided by scaffolding, to slow the setting of the mortar.

Joint preparation:

- Old mortar should be removed to a minimum depth of 2 to 2 1/2 times the width of the joint to ensure an adequate bond.
- Any loose or disintegrated mortar beyond this minimum depth should be removed.
- Through more labor intensive, removing mortar with hand tools generally results in better fitting joints.

Joint filling:

- When filling joints, mortar should be damp but with no standing water present.
- Several layers of mortar will be necessary to fill deep gaps, and the mortar must dry between each layer.
- For 1/4 inch or larger wide mortar, rounded edges, versus the flat type of mortar slightly from the side of the masonry to avoid the mortar being physically worn from the joint.

Joint tooling:

- Joints should be tooled to the original profile, especially when only portions of the mortar are being replaced.
- Failure to match tooling depth and mortar width between old and new sections can result in a prominent disjuncture.

## Mortar Repair Handout



**Implementation Strategy:** Consider expanding the number of historically designated properties. Review the designation criteria in the Round Rock Development Code to adapt the definition of historic significance. Identify structures recently annexed into the city and mid-century structures which are now, or will soon be, eligible for designation.

**HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY** Preservation staff have compiled an inventory of prior historic resource surveys to assess the age and condition of 860 recorded structures in the City Limits that are older than 50 years old. Currently, only 70 of these structures are designated as historic landmarks. The next step is to determine which of these undesignated structures meet the historic designation criteria in accordance with city code. Ultimately, the eligible structures would require property owner permission and city approval to become a local landmark.

**Implementation Strategy:** Complete the restoration of the Stagecoach Inn.

**STAGECOACH INN RESTORATION** The contract for the restoration of the Stagecoach Inn was awarded by City Council on April 13, 2023. The total project time is approximately 10 months following the execution of the contract. The contractor began construction in August 2023.



*Stagecoach Inn*

**Implementation Strategy:** Foster a network of preservation advocates and allies, like the nonprofit Round Rock Preservation, by collaborating with preservation partners at the local, regional, and state levels.



*Boy Scouts cleaning historic markers*

**BOY SCOUT PRESERVATION PROJECT** A local boy scout worked with preservation staff to complete his Eagle Scout project. With the help of his troop, the scouts cleaned or refinished historic markers ensuring that the markers are maintained for the public to enjoy.

**ROUND ROCK PRESERVATION (RRP)** is a close partner of the city's preservation office. RRP conducts public outreach and organizes preservation activities for the Round Rock community. This year, RRP co-sponsored four Lunch & Learns and a historic downtown walking tour, ran a preservation booth at Music on Main, supported the Williamson Museum Pioneer Day at Old Settlers Park, and raised funding for historic preservation projects.

**Implementation Strategy:** Continue administering the Partial Tax Exemptions for Historically Significant Sites program and guide property owners through the application review process.

**THE HISTORIC TAX EXEMPTION** program grants a 75% exemption of municipal property taxes to qualifying historic property owners. Money saved on taxes is used for regular maintenance and/or repairs to these historic structures. The HPC is responsible for reviewing applications and recommending to City Council whether a property should receive the exemption. This year, 51 applications were awarded an exemption totaling approximately \$144,000.