TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

**CHCs and
Historic Cemeteries:
A Framework for
Preservation**

Part 4: Cultivate

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**A Suggested Framework for
County-Wide Cemetery Preservation**

Identify all cemeteries in county.

Determine who is working with each cemetery.

Determine what each cemetery needs.

Determine how the CHC can help preserve the cemetery itself or help others preserve the cemetery. Take action accordingly.

www.thc.texas.gov/chc-cemeteries

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**CULTIVATE:
Suggested Activities**

CHCs know how to address a cemetery's preservation needs and/or support the work of others.

- Connect cemetery trustees with potential partners to address needs.
- Identify and pursue opportunities to collaborate, when feasible.
- Cultivate new stewardship opportunities for abandoned or neglected sites by identifying and engaging existing and potential stakeholders.
- Raise awareness of preservation standards and best practices.
- Promote resources available from THC, CHC, and other relevant partners.
- Implement programs that foster an understanding of cemeteries as cultural landscapes.
- Generate public awareness and appreciation for cemetery preservation by publicizing and promoting success stories.
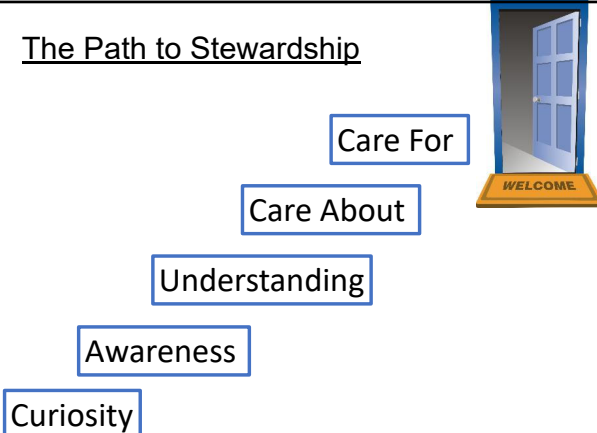
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Slide 4

CHCs know how to address a cemetery's needs and/or support the work of others.

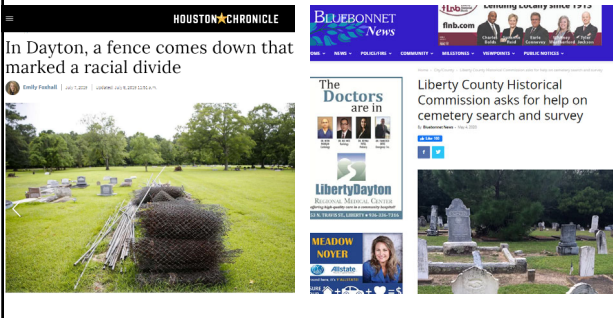Raise Public Awareness & Build Capacity

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Slide 5

The Path to Stewardship

Care For

Care About

Understanding

Awareness

Curiosity

Adapted from CIH Training, National Association for Interpretation

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Slide 6

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

In Dayton, a fence comes down that marked a racial divide

BLUEBONNET News

Liberty County Historical Commission asks for help on cemetery search and survey

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CULTIVATE:
Generate Public Awareness

NBCDFW | LOCAL | WEATHER | INVESTIGATIONS | VIDEO | SPORTS | ENTERTAINMENT

The Dallas Morning News

Why Oakland Cemetery, Where 127 Years of Dallas' History is Buried, Has Suddenly Been Abandoned

By Robert Wilonsky - The Dallas Morning News - Published at 5:27 pm on August 30, 2019

A new life for Dallas' 127-year-old Oakland Cemetery, if this plan comes to fruition

If all goes according to plan, the cemetery would have new life under a new board.

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CULTIVATE:
Implement or Sponsor Programs

- History
- Biography
- Genealogy
- Preservation

- Nature
- Photography
- Art
- Archeology

- Geology (gravestones are rocks!)

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CULTIVATE:
Facilitate Partnerships & Collaborations

Assist existing cemetery stewards with establishing partnerships and pursuing collaborations to address preservation needs

- Specialty service referrals
- Sharing services
- Group rates
- Program partners
- Funding requests

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CULTIVATE:
Stewardship Assistance (H&SC)

The Health and Safety Code allows for direct and indirect assistance from the County to preserve historic cemeteries.

Sec. 713.021* and 713.022*
- Establish a trust fund to maintain neglected cemeteries
- Accept gifts and grants to support the trust

Sec. 713.028*
- For purposes of historic preservation or public safety, a county can use public funds, county employees, county inmate labor, and county equipment to maintain a cemetery that is at least 50 years old

*laws are paraphrased; refer to statutes for full language

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CULTIVATE:
New Stewardship & Authority (H&SC)

The Health and Safety Code allows for municipalities and nonprofit organizations to gain control of an unkept or abandoned cemetery.

Sec. 713.009*
- A municipality can take possession and control and take steps to repair, restore and maintain cemetery

Sec. 715.002*
- A nonprofit organization can petition the district court for authorization to restore, operate, and maintain cemetery

*laws are paraphrased; refer to statutes for full language

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CULTIVATE:
Promote Best Practices

- Raise awareness of preservation standards and best practices.
- Promote resources available from THC, CHC, and other relevant partners.
  - NCPTT
  - AGS
- Implement programs that foster an understanding of cemeteries as cultural landscapes.

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CULTIVATE:
Promote Best Practices

CAUTION! AVOID THE ONE-TIME CLEAN-UP OF ABANDONED CEMETERIES

- It's not yours—permissions!
- It's easy to lose critical data or features

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CULTIVATE:
Promote Best Practices

CAUTION! AVOID THE ONE-TIME CLEAN-UP OF ABANDONED CEMETERIES

- It's a temporary solution
- It doesn't solve the real problem

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CULTIVATE:
Why Do Cemeteries Matter?

Photo: Florida Public Archeology Network

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Cemetery Preservation Program

www.thc.texas.gov/cemetery

Jenny McWilliams
Program Coordinator
512-475-4506
Jenny.mcwilliams@thc.texas.gov

Carlyn Hammons
Program Specialist
512-463-6044
Carlyn.hammons@thc.texas.gov

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