

# TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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## CHC Outreach Program—Sample Discussions

### Discussion 1B: Evaluating Organizational Capacity—How can we improve existing efforts?

**Discussion 1A** will help your appointees evaluate efforts within your organization—projects, partnerships, or services provided by your CHC. After identifying your most productive contributions, your CHC can use **Discussion 1B** to consider improvements or additions to enhance efforts that have already proven to be quality investments of time and money. **Discussion 1C** will evaluate the existing resources—time, money, and manpower—of your organization and consider what can realistically be accomplished to improve or enhance existing projects.

*Note to discussion leader: For the first question, go around the room and have each participant provide an answer; for subsequent questions do your best to let everyone comment rather than one or two individuals to monopolize the conversation. As a discussion leader your role is to keep the conversation on track, rather than serve as the main contributor of ideas. Have someone in your group take notes so that you know who said what. Make sure that in note taking that a participants words are recorded accurately rather than paraphrasing, which may change the meaning of the comment.*

**Discussion 1B Questions** (Allow 1-1/2 to 2 hours for this discussion.)

Provide typed notes to participants that cover the information provided from Discussion 1A. Allow about 5–10 minutes for participants to look over the information. If able, send notes to participants prior to meeting for review.

1. From the notes of Discussion 1A (question 6), what are some of the reasons our efforts had positive results?
2. From the notes of Discussion 1A (question 7), what are some of the projects that most directly contribute to the mission of our organization?
3. In what ways did the success of these projects surprise you or were you confident throughout the planning process and event?
4. What are some ways to improve or enhance the projects/efforts that directly contribute to our mission?
5. What skills do our appointees/members possess that may complement these new ideas?
6. What skills and resources do our partners possess that may complement these new ideas?
7. To get a realistic idea of how much time, money, and labor would be necessary to accomplish each new idea, let's form groups of 3–5 people; each group will take one idea and outline an estimate of time, money, and labor.

*Allow about 20 minutes for each group to rough out an outline for each idea. If 20 minutes is sufficient to prepare outlines, then have a representative of each group read their findings aloud. If the groups need more time, set a deadline for gathering all required information prior to date of Discussion 1C of this organizational discussion series; outlines will be used during Discussion 1C.*

8. While outlining time, money, and labor for our new ideas, did you have any concerns that keep you from completing these outlines? What are those concerns?
9. If you are able, have a representative from each group present their outline to the group. Ask the participants if there are any other items to be considered for these outlines to be accurate estimates of time, money, and labor. Have groups add to outline if necessary.
10. Our next discussion will address if our group has the means to pursue these ideas. Until then, what are the ideas about which you are most excited?

