

COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONES

A Quarterly Update of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program

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Welcome to *Courthouse Cornerstones*, the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) quarterly update on the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

This groundbreaking program exists because people love historic courthouses and understand the benefits of restoring them to their original grandeur. The THC is very excited about the tremendous response we've received from preservation partners like you around the state, and is more convinced than ever of the importance of preserving these Texas treasures for future generations to enjoy.

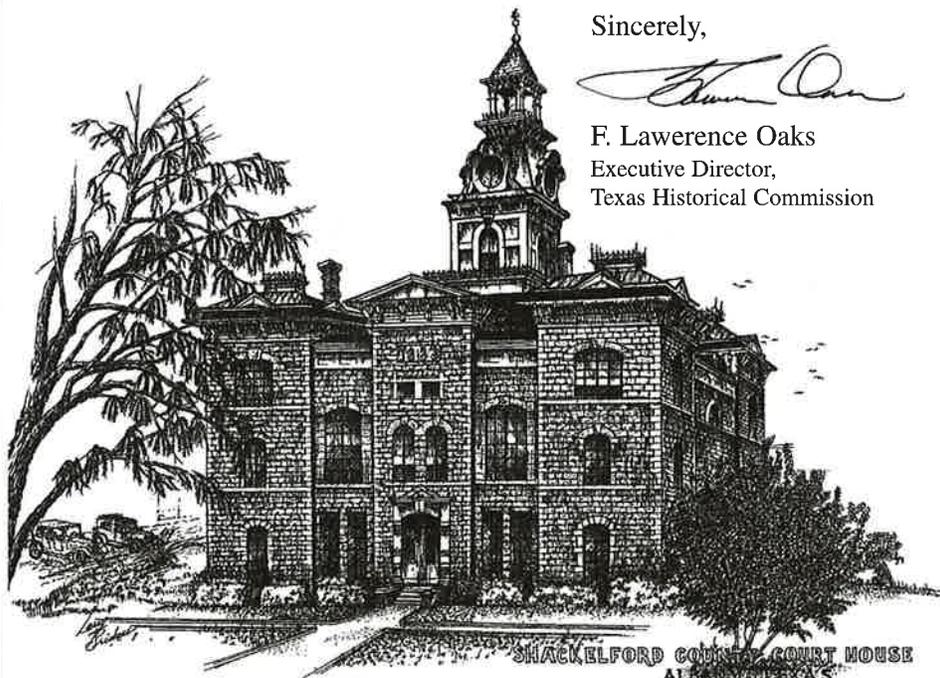
I invite you to visit our web site at www.thc.state.tx.us for additional information on historic Texas courthouses. If you have questions about the program, please call the THC's Architecture Division at 512/463-6094 and we'll be happy to help.

We appreciate your support and interest in the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program and look forward to bringing you many success stories as the grant money is put to work, construction begins and we bring Texas history back to life, one courthouse at a time!

Sincerely,



F. Lawrence Oaks
Executive Director,
Texas Historical Commission



SHACKELFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE
ALABAMA, TEXAS

Illustration by Larry Bridges, see page 4

Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program Awards First Grants

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recently awarded matching grants to 19 Texas counties to restore and preserve their historic courthouses as part of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

The THC announced the first round of grant recipients at its quarterly commission meeting on May 4, 2000 in San Antonio. Matching grants were awarded to Atascosa, Bexar, Donley, Ellis, Erath, Gray, Grimes, Hopkins, Lampasas, Lee, Llano, Maverick, Milam, Presidio, Rains, Red River, Shackelford, Sutton and Wharton counties. Grant amounts ranged from \$250,000 for emergency stabilization repairs to more than \$3 million for more involved renovations. The grant recipients will submit architectural plans and specifications for courthouse improvements to the THC and construction will begin by the end of the year.

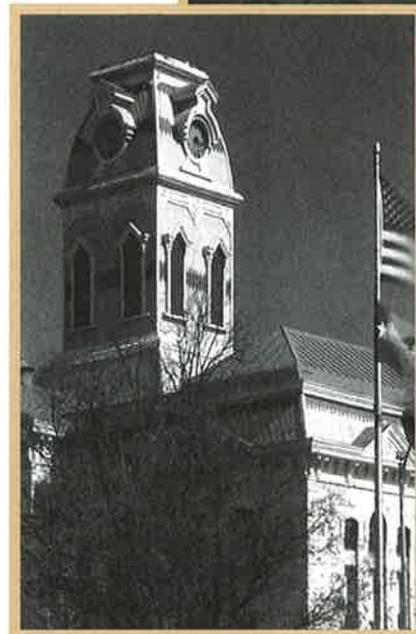
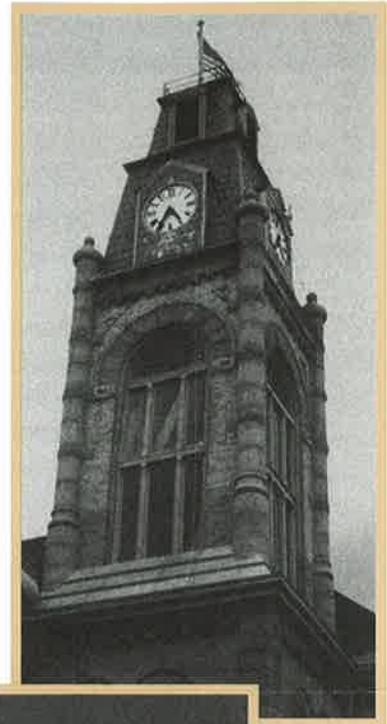
"Historic courthouses are a profound reminder of the spirit and vision of our ancestors," said THC Commission Chair John L. Nau, III. "Today, it is our responsibility to honor this irreplaceable legacy by empowering local communities to use preservation as a way to promote heritage tourism and revitalize local economies."

The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program was created in 1999 by Gov. George W. Bush and the Texas Legislature to distribute \$50 million in matching grants to Texas counties for the restoration of their historic courthouses. It represents one of the largest and most far-reaching historic preservation initiatives ever conceived by a state government.

Due to the extraordinary response and interest from the counties, THC commission members awarded a total of \$42.4 million in the first round of grants.

"The overwhelming response from the counties truly demonstrates the immediate need for this kind of preservation work," said THC Executive Director Larry Oaks. "Texas courthouses are some of the finest works of 19th- and early 20th-century public architecture in the nation. They illustrate a wide scope of architectural styles and represent the individualism of early Texans and their pride in their communities. The grants will help preserve the historical integrity of these structures for generations to come."

Unfortunately, \$50 million will only scratch the surface in meeting the needs of these Texas treasures. THC architects who have made broad assessments of the state's more than 220 historic courthouses estimate that the cost to make all necessary repairs could exceed \$750 million. Contingent on additional funding, the THC plans to continue the program for several more rounds to assist as many counties as possible. ★



Clock towers, common to many Texas courthouses, have served as stable landmarks and beacons of strength to communities for generations.

Above top: This stately tower stands atop the Llano County Courthouse in Llano.

Above bottom: A series of peaked window openings compliment the clock tower on the Lampasas County Courthouse in Lampasas.

ROUND I

COURTHOUSE GRANT RECIPIENTS

COUNTY/DATE	COUNTY JUDGE	GRANT AMT.
Atascosa/1913	Deborah Herber	\$2,650,138
Bexar/1897	Cyndi Taylor Krier	\$2,829,816
Donley/1891	Jack Hall	\$2,891,408
Ellis/1897	Al Cornelius	\$3,567,787
Erath/1892	Tab Thompson	\$1,835,619
Gray/1930	Richard Peet	\$3,825,773
Grimes/1894	Ira E. Haynie	\$1,547,748
Hopkins/1895	Cletis M. Millsap	\$3,663,661
Lampasas/1884	Virgel E. Lilley	\$2,355,422
Lee/1899	Robert Lee	\$2,339,835
Llano/1892	J.P. Dodgen	\$2,861,835
Maverick/1885	Rogelio Escobedo	\$250,000
Milam/1892	Frank Summers	\$2,902,492
Presidio/1887	Jack W. Brunson	\$2,191,230
Rains/1909	Robert Sisk	\$250,000
Red River/1885	L.D. Williamson	\$3,472,614
Shackelford/1883	Ross Montgomery	\$1,765,440
Sutton/1891	Carla Garner	\$998,348
Wharton/1889	Lawrence E. Naiser	\$250,000

Round II of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program Underway

More than 54 counties have submitted master plans for the second round of grant opportunities through the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. Master plans for Round II consideration were due on July 3. Once master plans are approved by the THC, counties may then submit a grant application for consideration. Grant applications are due Sept. 5, and Round II grant recipients will be announced in late October.

"County courthouses lie at the heart of Texas communities, serving as beacons to tourists and anchors of downtown business districts," said THC Architecture Division Director Stan Graves. "The preservation of these magnificent landmarks for future generations is a noble goal. We are excited to continue our involvement with Round II of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program."

For information about developing a master plan or for an application form and guidelines, please visit the THC web site at www.thc.state.tx.us or call the THC Architecture Division at 512/463-6094. ★



Presidio County Courthouse in Marfa

COMMON COURTHOUSE QUESTIONS

Q: Who makes the final decision about which counties receive matching grants from the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program?

A: The final decision is made by the 18 governor-appointed Texas Historical Commission (THC) members. Once a county's master plan and application have been approved, the courthouse is graded in several criteria categories including age, historic significance and degree of endangerment. To view the complete list of Grant Application Criteria and Scoring Values, visit our web site at www.thc.state.tx.us. After the Courthouse Committee assigns values, the results are turned over to the full commission for the final decision. The commissioners are citizen members who are appointed by the governor on a rotating basis to six-year terms. Their careful consideration and vote based on the assigned values determines which counties receive grants.

Q: Will there be a Round III or IV of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program?

A: We hope so! The original \$50 million appropriation from the Texas Legislature will be depleted when the Round II grants are awarded in October. Contingent on additional funding from the Legislature in the upcoming session, the THC plans to continue the program for several more rounds and assist as many historic courthouses as possible. If your county is interested in applying for possible future funding, we encourage you to visit our web site at www.thc.state.tx.us or call us at 512/463-6094 to learn how you can prepare. For information about advocacy issues, contact Preservation Texas at 512/472-0102.

To send a question to THC staff for possible publication in a future newsletter, please email it to: courthouse.cornerstones@thc.state.tx.us. Include your name and phone number. ★

Visit the THC web site at www.thc.state.tx.us.



**TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION**

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

P.O. BOX 12276 • AUSTIN, TX 78711-2276

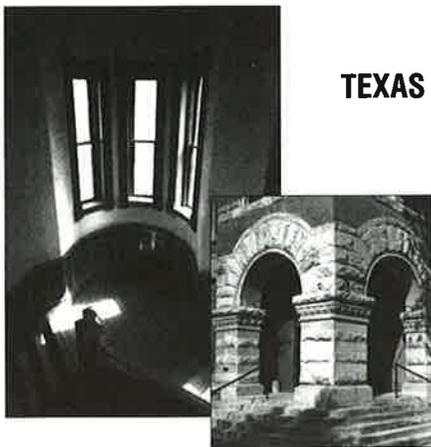
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**HELP SAVE OUR
HISTORIC
COURTHOUSES!**

Shown above: Bexar County Courthouse

**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
TEXAS HISTORIC COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION PROGRAM**



WORKING
Timeline
2000 - 2001



Shown: Donley County Courthouse in Clarendon

2000 | *2001*

**JULY
3**

**Deadline for
submitting
master plans
for Round II
applications**

**SEPTEMBER
1**

**Counties receive
confirmation
of approved
master plans for
Round II**

**SEPTEMBER
5**

**Deadline for
Round II grant
applications**

**OCTOBER
10**

**Deadline for
architectural plans
and specifications
for Round II**

**OCTOBER
27**

**Texas Historical
Commission
awards Round II
grants**

**DECEMBER
31**

**Deadline for
construction to
begin for Round I
grant recipients**

**APRIL
2**

**Deadline for
architectural plans
and specifications
for Round II**