

## **MHSHS Suggested On-Site Activity**

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Learning Level**

### **The Race to Incorporate**

#### **Courtyard Introduction**

Before facilitating the guided tour of the home, divide the visiting class(es) into three groups to rotate between the front of the home (architecture/construction), the central hall (family history), and the courtyard (Magoffin, civic leader and businessman).

In the courtyard, direct attention to Joseph Magoffin's city hall cornerstone. Share with students that while the Magoffins lived in their home, El Paso went through a boom in population and industry. The Magoffins were an important leading family in early El Paso.

#### **City Hall Cornerstone**

An unusual artifact in the courtyard of the Magoffin Home is the cornerstone of the 1899 City Hall. A typical cornerstone would only have a single panel with the names of local dignitaries. Josephine Magoffin Lucker, Joseph Magoffin's great-granddaughter, writes of a story recounted to her by her grandmother, Josephine Glasgow, about the cornerstone. "The Judge requested that his name not be placed on the cornerstone, but the planners followed his instructions in form only and not in spirit. When the Mayor saw the completed cornerstone, to his surprise, his name in large letters was placed on a separate stone immediately above the cornerstone! When the City Hall was torn down in 1960, the cornerstone was given to Octavia Magoffin Glasgow." This separate stone is one of the few material pieces of the old city hall still in existence anywhere.

Focus on a few of Joseph's occupations and leading roles:

- In 1873, while Joseph Magoffin was Justice of the Peace, he swore in the first councilmen for the newly incorporated City of El Paso.
- Between 1880 and 1900, Joseph was elected and served as the mayor of the City of El Paso four times.

Discuss some of the other elected offices that Magoffin held: county commissioner, county judge, and city councilman.

Ask students why it is important that citizens get involved in local government. [The actions and responsibilities of local government impact us more in our everyday than those of the state or federal government. By getting involved, you have the power to influence positive change on people's everyday lives.]

## Hands-On Activities

### Courtyard

Consider having students make rubbings from Magoffin's cornerstone with charcoals or crayons.

### Visitors' Center

Activity sheet and sources below might be used in an on-site activity in the multi-purpose room to further student engagement in building early El Paso. Print the 1921 El Paso County map in large scale for student reference. A high resolution format is available for download on the Portal to Texas History website:

(<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph493182/?q=el%20paso%20county%201921>).

Ask students to imagine that they are moving to the frontier in 1876, when Joseph Magoffin was serving as the El Paso County Judge. They have the opportunity to organize their community and incorporate a new town/city, so that they might begin to collect taxes and provide services.

What will they choose to name their newly incorporated town? Would they name it after themselves, like James Wiley Magoffin named Magoffinsville? How would they go about collecting the 50 signatures on the petition required with the application? Would they run for a city office like mayor or alderman once their city is incorporated?

(Open to other suggestions, additions, and amendments from site.)

**Commented [CF1]:** If you like this idea, please test to see if "Magoffin" would fit on a standard 8x10 sheet of paper. I'm envisioning having paper printed with "#" so that the rubbing would read "# MAGOFFIN" when complete. Students could take small group photos and selfies and post with a fact they've learned while on site.

APPLICATION FOR ELECTION OF INCORPORATION

As a Type A General-Law Municipality

TO THE HONORABLE Joseph Magoffin, COUNTY JUDGE OF  
El Paso COUNTY.

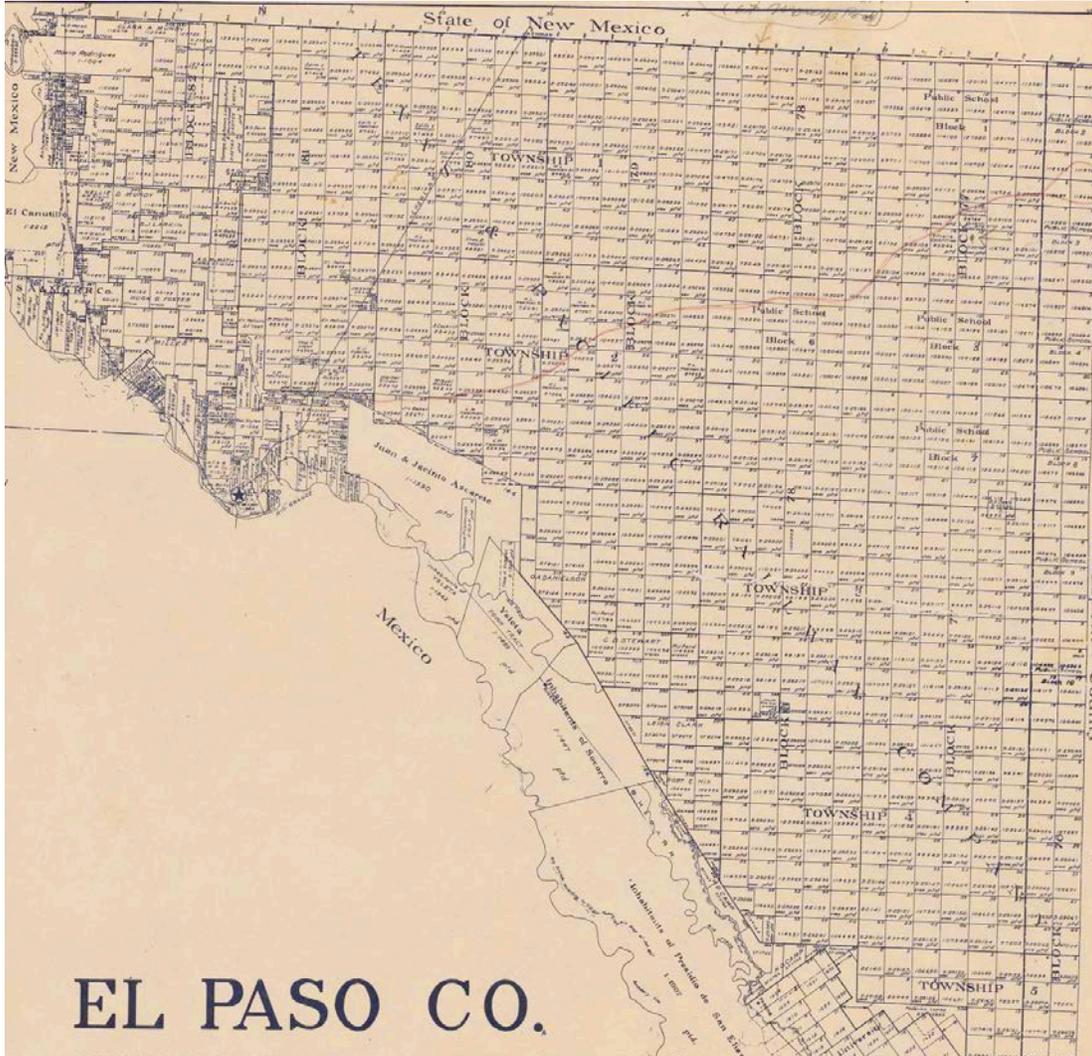
We, the undersigned inhabitants of the unincorporated community of \_\_\_\_\_, desire that the City of \_\_\_\_\_ be incorporated, and we pray that an election be ordered on the question of the incorporation of said City of \_\_\_\_\_ as provided in Chapter 6 of the Local Government Code and any other applicable Statutes of the State of Texas.

We certify that each of the undersigned is a person who has attained the age of 18 years and who has resided within the limits of the town of \_\_\_\_\_ for more than 30 days next preceding the date of this application and is a qualified elector under the laws of this state.

The boundaries of the proposed City of \_\_\_\_\_, when incorporated, shall be as follows [continued on back]:



[Sketch here the location of your town within El Paso County. You cannot incorporate an area including a land grant, labeled as owned, or marked as a township.]



The name by which the city will be known, when incorporated, will be the City of

\_\_\_\_\_.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1876.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

