

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Statewide Preservation Plan THC Staff Brown Bag Meeting Minutes January 11, 2010

Twenty-five staff from the various divisions of the THC gathered for a brown bag forum about the development of the Statewide Preservation Plan for Texas. The group discussed the last Statewide Plan, ideas for the new plan, preservation issues and opportunities, and how this plan can be a tool for THC staff and preservationists across the state. The following summarizes the main discussion points.

1. What are your impressions form the last plan? What worked and didn't work? What can we learn?

- No or little analysis of what we accomplished
- Division contributions would go missing during planning process, never incorporated into plan or communicated about the reasons why they were left out
- Divisions couldn't fit work into the plan
- We don't do widgets—hard to count or measure what we do
- No idea what it says—no relevance
- Didn't address diversity (or anything) realistically
- No realistic plan for implementation
- Hard to layer plan tactics to existing work
- No buy in
- Not integrated to new employee orientation
- Never used plan to fully direct agency work or resources
- Some grants or programs tied to plan but not in a meaningful way
- Commissioners directives superseded what's in the plan
- Who is the audience for this plan?

2. How must the new plan be different? What intrigues you about the new plan?

- Need meaningful follow up
- Tie THC programs and services to goals of plan
- How did old plan relate to what THC does?
- How to address people without technology? Many people do not have computers, internet access, or the savvy to interact with an on-line plan.
- How to be relevant to diverse constituency?
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy to who we know and already work with
 - How can we change the way we do business and retool our programs to be relevant to more people?
- Think outside of 'preservationist'
 - Diversify who uses this agency
 - Educators included
 - Under 60 years old

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

- We need to be accountable in the plan and it needs to be very clear
- Use of case studies and people/players involved
 - Include successes and failures in case studies
- Need to address lack of professional education
- Tying into work plans and performance evaluations for staff
- How we'll use it in communications
 - How it will become concrete to our work
- How do we market this to the public?
- How do we tie the plan into work that we do locally?
- Why has nobody else approached an online format like this?
- Staff and partners must be implementation-driven
- Diversify staff team and include representation from:
 - 106
 - Federal programs
- On-line, but is there ever an end point?
- How to respond all the time to ever changing needs and how to keep the plan up to date with all of the needs?
- How to use plan to define our mission and stop culture of 'reaction'?

3. How do you see yourself using the plan? How do you want to use this plan?

- How do we accommodate new directives and directions?(that are not in plan)
- Where do we draw the line? Controversies, significance issues etc.
 - Would be good to use the plan as direction and back up
- Use it to justify existence (in regulatory jobs)
 - Especially in economic downturn
 - Context
- How far do you go before it gets unwieldy?
- We shouldn't de-emphasize our regulatory role
- THC needs to stop skirting property rights issue
- New reign of performance measures to justify HP/CRM
- Platform for locals to understand importance of 106 and that it is a shared responsibility and what they can do
- Look reflectively at what we do and putting it into context instead of creating new things
- Prioritizing between SWP and strategic plan and how to marry and coordinate both of these
- Identify needs externally and internally and keep open mind about/take a hard look at what we do and how effective our initiatives are
- Performance measures and how to make them meaningful and relevant?
- Commissioners giving contradictory direction to programs
 - How to address this through the plan?
- Use process and plan to identify companion programs and how everything fits together

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

4. How would you like to participate in the development of the SWP?

- Division discussions further down the road
- Smaller staff teams with expertise in goal area
- Mini planning sessions similar to Sunset
- Collect unique projects that illustrate key ideas

5. What are preservation issues that you see this plan addressing?

- Need for statewide survey and inventory
- Property rights
- Professional education
- No tracking of 106 surveys
 - Thousands of resources with eligibility info that we have no access to
- Records and info we have is not accessible or cross referenced
 - Need data to be centralized
- Atlas
- Define and simplify who we are
- Preservation easements—need to evaluate goals, process, language of program
- Preservation and law enforcement
 - System to inform and educate
- Demonstrate how HP contributes to quality of life
- Identify and clarify our agency standards and guidelines
- Engage educators in teaching history through HP
 - <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/index.htm>
- Helping people to understand responsibilities
 - Stewardship
 - Not just buildings but collections as well
 - Not always taking responsibility for others success

Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276
512.463.6100
fax 512.475.4872
thc@thc.state.tx.us



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

www.thc.state.tx.us