PATHWAYS TO HISTORY

Aransas County Trails and Venues
Aransas Pathways is a system of trails in Rockport & Fulton that invites visitors to history, birding, hiking & kayaking sites.
Stated Purpose:
to conserve, develop and showcase the ecological, recreational and historic resources of Aransas County

in order to enhance tourism and to serve the citizens of the community.
Origins of the plan

- Visionaries in Preservation (VIP) program from THC – nine monthly community planning sessions
- Created historical signage to add to Historical Markers (CHC from THC)
- Promoted a History Center

- Green Corridors Committee
- Identified spaces to connect
- Proposed routes throughout the county
Over forty historical markers from THC were already in place.
More than 50 sites give visitors a sense of the history of the community.

2020 marker guide by CHC and the R. Pilot will add details.
Sites were added at the request of organizations that had complimentary venues.
Are you looking for an adventure... try Aransas Pathways.

See inside for History and Trails

- Trail Head
- Meeting Sites
- Historic/Heritage Sites
- Kayak Launch Sites
- Trails - Hike/Bike

Discover Aransas County
Birding • History • Trails • Kayaking

www.aransaspathways.com  www.fulton-texas.org
PAVILION

• SIGNAGE

• FOR all four areas of interest

• ON HIGHWAY 35 – major roadway
PATHWAYS to

history,

birding,

kayaking,

hiking/biking
Commissioner's Court

Steering Committee Members
- Chairman & Co-Chair
- City Representative
- County Representative
- Township Representative
- Chamber Representative
- Birding Chair
- History Chair
- Trails Chair
- At-Large Representative
- Hotel Representative

Venue Projects Manager
- Functions
- Engineering
- Legal & Contracting
- Budget & Plans
- Public Relations
- Construction
Legal Framework for

Funding Venues Under the

Texas Local Government Code Chapter 334
• **Venue Statute**

• Texas law authorizes cities to pay for a variety of civic buildings and sites with certain types of funding.

• These venue projects and the funding options are set out in Chapter 334 of the Local Government Code.
Some of the General Provisions: - Municipal

- “Active Transportation” – walking, running and bicycling.
- An arena, coliseum, stadium or other type of area or facility
- Professional or amateur sports events.
- Convention center, civic center hotel, museum, aquarium
- Tourist development area
- Municipal parks and recreation
Some of the General Provisions – Counties

• Park
• Aquarium
• Birding center
• History center
• Nature trail
• Museum
Process

• The legislature requires a county or municipality to follow specific and detailed process to approve venue projects.
• Commissioners court or council must act to formally start the process by resolution.
• If approved, the Texas Comptroller must review the project for negative fiscal impact.
• If the Comptroller okays the project, then commissions or council must order an election.
• Voters must approve both the project and the type of financing for that project.
Types of Venue Funding in Chapter 334

• Sales and Use Tax
• Short-Term Car Rental Tax
• Admissions Tax
• Event Parking Tax
• Hotel Occupancy Tax
• Facility Use Tax (for major league teams)
• Livestock Facility Use Tax (rodeo’s, etc)
• Aransas County venue funded with 2% Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT)

• In 2010 voters authorized to Commissions Court to provide for the planning, acquisition, establishment, development or construction of an Aquarium Education Center

• Feasibility Study/Market Survey – Consulting firms

• Construct Aquarium Education Center – 2,000 square feet; $120,000 cost
A second project was approved by voters in 2011 for Aransas County Commissioners’ Court to establish Aransas Pathways.
Legal Framework to Issue Debt

- Bonds were issued to establish a fund from which to develop the projects.
- The county or city must carefully follow the law on debt issuance for all of its bonds and other debts.
- Counties and cities must have specific state law authority to issue debt.
- The county or city must submit all bonds and similar obligations to the Attorney General for review before the bonds can be issued.
Summary

• Aransas County can pay for venues using the process set out in Chapter 334 of the Local Government Code.

• Aransas county has paid for two venues using this process.
  • The Aquarium Education Center
  • Pathways Project

• The definition of venue is broad, but counties and municipalities must match funding with appropriate type of venue.

• Critical to follow the statute to allow counties and municipalities to issue bonds to construct the venues.
PAVILION

• SIGNAGE

• FOR all four areas of interest

• ON HIGHWAY 35 – major roadway
Central kiosk highlights all the history venues in Aransas county.

The HISTORY CENTER is a venue supported by Aransas Pathways.
HISTORY CENTER
for Aransas County

• Grand opening in 2014

• After two years of planning, fund-raising and restoration
Portrayal of previous home owners

Vintage cars on site

Opening remarks
HISTORY CENTER for Aransas County

• Exhibit: Historic Texas Flags
• Texas flags and interpretive posters
• Docents at exhibit
• Scouts-flag raising
HISTORY CENTER
Exhibit: 
Annexation of Texas
• Coastal connections to the events in mid-century
• Poster, panels, artifacts, games
EVENTS and ACTIVITIES

To generate interest in the venues around town, frequent events are scheduled and promoted by the Chamber of Commerce as well as by the Friends of the History Center.
TOUR of HISTORIC HOMES

Inside views 5-7 private homes
Home-owners frequently allow CHC to nominate them for historical markers after this event.
HUMMERBIRD CELEBRATION

• Every September
• Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce
• History Center hosts breakfast
• Other venues host poker card game
YAK ATTACK

• sponsored by Leadership Aransas County
STROLL thru ROCKPORT

- Aransas Pathways map for route
- Maps available at all times at visitor center in downtown
COFFEE WITH CONNIE

• At Connie Hagar Cottage Sanctuary
• Scout benches for Eagle project
• Summer work day by Audubon leadership
• Monthly volunteer gardening led by Master Gardeners
MORE MARKETING & PROMOTION

Volunteers at regional marketplace event. Representatives for history and birding talk to participants and hand-out maps.
This rack card also has QR codes to promote the web site.
Paid advertising in regional publication
Yes – all this is available in Rockport, Fulton and Aransas County.

Aransas County and the Cities of Rockport and Fulton are rich in natural resources. Our wealth of historic sites, birding opportunities, water-based recreational opportunities and the dedication of the community to their preservation are self evident in the many organizations that have been established to preserve and enjoy them.
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Dear Friend of Aransas Pathways,

On behalf of the Aransas Pathways Steering Committee, I would like to extend this invitation to the:

"2nd Annual Aransas Pathways Volunteer Appreciation Party" Friday July 8, 6 p.m. at the History Center for Aransas County, 801 E Cedar street, Rockport

The Aransas Pathways Project has always been a grassroots, volunteer group. We hereby express our sincere appreciation to you for your outstanding efforts to conserve, develop and showcase the ecological, recreational, historic and aesthetic resources of Aransas County, Rockport and Fulton. We also wish to thank the Hotel and Lodging owners, who have been so cooperative. Thanks again to all of our valued volunteers.

Please make plans to attend this very important event for our Volunteers who have made Aransas Pathways the success it is today!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,
Sandy Jumper
Director of Tourism and Events
Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce
Aransas Pathways Steering Committee

For More Information:
John Strothman, Aransas County Project Manager:
\[361-760-0194\]
or
Sandy Jumper, Director of Tourism and Events, Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce:
\[361-729-6445\]

Rockport Fulton Chamber of Commerce
Volunteer Appreciation Event
June 12 – 20, 2021
– two weekends with activities -
Time for questions or comments