

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS**  
**AGENDA ITEM DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: Community and Human Development

AGENDA DATE: August 30, 2005

CONTACT PERSON/PHONE: Chris Cummings #4500

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All

**SUBJECT:**

**APPROVE** a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? **OR AUTHORIZE** the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.

Approve a resolution to submit application for "Preserve America Community" designation.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

**Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?**

Preserve America is a White House initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities.

This program recognizes and designates communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Since the program began, Mrs. Bush has designated 247 communities as *Preserve America* Communities.

Benefits of designation include White House recognition; a certificate of recognition; a *Preserve America* Community road sign; authorization to use the *Preserve America* logo on signs, flags, banners, and promotional materials; listing in a Web-based *Preserve America* Community directory; inclusion in national and regional press releases; official notification of designation to State tourism offices and visitor bureaus; and enhanced community visibility and pride.

The ultimate benefit of the designation is eligibility for historic preservation and heritage tourism funding. The budget for *Preserve America* grants has been growing steadily (to \$12.5 million in FY 05) and is expected to continue to grow.

This month the *Preserve America's* Neighborhoods initiative was launched. This program is directly aligned with the city's current development of neighborhood services and will allow the many historic neighborhoods in the city to apply for funding directly thereby facilitating the capacity building efforts envisioned for El Paso neighborhoods.

The application highlights the Plaza Theatre as the main historic preservation project in El Paso. Other assets such as Locomotive "Engine #1", Keystone Heritage Park, and the new History Museum are also discussed. The Application packet contains all known brochures related to heritage tourism within the city limits. Also included are over 20 letters of support from a diverse cross section of the community including Congressman Reyes and Adair Margo.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

**Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?**

No

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

**How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?**

No funding is required. \_\_\_\_\_

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

Enter appropriate comments or N/A

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**LEGAL:** (if required) *[Signature]* **FINANCE:** (if required) \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** *Nathaniel Price*

(Example: if RCA is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

*Information copy to appropriate Deputy City Manager*

**APPROVED FOR AGENDA:**

**CITY MANAGER:** *Jayme G. Jackson*

**DATE:** *8/22/05*

# RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, *Preserve America* is a White House initiative developed in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Department of Commerce that focuses the President's efforts to preserve our national heritage, support the economic vitality of our communities, and increase local participation in preserving the country's irreplaceable cultural and natural heritage assets; and

**WHEREAS**, this initiative is compatible with El Paso's interests and goals related to historic preservation; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of El Paso, Texas, is a city with multiple historic resources and designated historical sites and assets that has demonstrated a commitment to the protection of our community's heritage and the development of Heritage Tourism, particularly through efforts to preserve the historic Plaza Theater, located in Downtown El Paso; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of El Paso has shown its commitment to such efforts through the pursuit of historic designations, grant funds, and recognition at the State and federal levels for these assets and others throughout the city; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of El Paso, Texas:**

**THAT** the Mayor be authorized to sign an application and related documents on behalf of the City of El Paso to apply for the designation of El Paso as a *Preserve America* Community; and be it further resolved

That El Paso will protect and celebrate our heritage, use our historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

Approved this 30<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2005.

CITY OF EL PASO

\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Cook, Mayor

ATTEST:

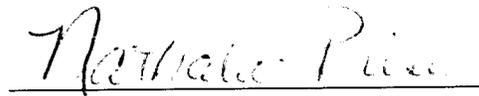
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



John F. Nance  
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:



Nathalie Prise  
Director, Community and Human Development

## Preserve America's Communities El Paso Designation

### Executive Summary:

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JOHN F. COOK  
MAYOR



CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

Preserve America Communities  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 809  
Washington, DC 20004

August 30, 2005

Attention: Preserve America's Communities

Dear Sir or Madam:

The City of El Paso is eager to join the 247 already designated communities around the nation as a Preserve America Community. Enclosed in our application you will find an account of El Paso's vast inventory of heritage assets and programs.

As the highlight of our application, the Plaza Theatre represents the height of public/private partnerships for the city. The interior of the theater is extraordinarily unique and is well worth the investment that the city and the El Paso Community Foundation have made.

Our application should reveal the commitment we have made to heritage and culture in El Paso. The new History Museum and Library expansion, Keystone Heritage Park, and many other facilities are being completed and will become a source of great pride to all El Pasoans and a source of inspiration to all who visit our city.

Please feel free to contact Chris Cummings (915)541-4500 in our Grants Office if you should have any further questions regarding the application.

Sincerely,

John Cook  
Mayor, City of El Paso



## PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITIES 2005 APPLICATION

### BACKGROUND

**PRESERVE AMERICA** is a White House initiative developed in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, and Housing and Urban Development. It highlights the efforts of the President and Mrs. Bush to preserve our national heritage. It has several components, one of which is the designation of **PRESERVE AMERICA** Communities.

**PRESERVE AMERICA** Community designation will be granted to communities that meet three general criteria:

- The community has recently supported a historic or cultural preservation project that promotes heritage tourism or otherwise fosters economic vitality, and involves a public-private partnership between government entities and at least one civic association, nonprofit, and/or business enterprise.
- The governing body of the community has adopted a resolution indicating its commitment to the preservation of its heritage assets.
- The community meets at least five criteria specified in three broad categories: discovering heritage through historic places, protecting historic resources, and promoting historic assets.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Copies of the application form, a list of deadlines, and links to information on some previously designated communities can be found at [www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html). Requests for information or forms can also be made by calling the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at (202) 606-8503, or by e-mailing [PAcommunities@achp.gov](mailto:PAcommunities@achp.gov).

Applications are received and reviewed by ACHP staff for completeness. Complete applications are shared with the National Park Service (NPS), and sometimes other agencies, for their independent review. Communities with incomplete or unclear applications may be contacted by ACHP staff for additional information or clarification.

When an application is judged complete by the ACHP and the NPS, the name of the community is added to a list pending the next announcement of designated communities. Announcement of designated **PRESERVE AMERICA** Communities will take place several times a year and may be made at a public event or by press release. Designated communities will be informed in advance of the pending announcement so that they can arrange for appropriate publicity and local notification.

Attached to your application, please provide the name and title of the head of your local Convention & Visitors Bureau and of your State Tourism Office, as well as both mailing addresses. If your community is designated as a **PRESERVE AMERICA** Community, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will formally notify them of your designation.

## COMMUNITIES 2005 APPLICATION

### *Guidelines*

#### **HELPFUL HINTS FOR PREPARING SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS**

Communities should follow some simple guidelines in preparing their applications for **PRESERVE AMERICA** Community designation to ensure that their applications are complete and can be processed in a timely manner (item #s refer to sections of the application form):

**Item 1:** Be sure to consult with your State Historic Preservation Officer while developing your application.

**Items 3 & 7:** The application must be signed and submitted by the chief elected governing official of the jurisdiction. In most cases, this will mean a mayor, county executive, or tribal chairman. If someone else is designated to do this, there should be a clear authorization for this delegation included in the submission package.

**Item 4A:** The project you select to feature needs to be one that has been supported by the community within the last three years. Make sure the project description includes information on the public and private partners involved and their roles, and clearly documents how the specific project has promoted heritage tourism or economic vitality in the community. Any data you can share on the economic or other impacts of the project is desirable. Please note that a history of the community or a list of projects supported over the years does **not** meet this criterion. However, such information is welcome as supplementary material.

**Item 4B:** Resolutions of the local government should be recent and specific to the **PRESERVE AMERICA** initiative, or should be comprehensive and current enough (within the last five years) to show the community's present commitment to the preservation of its heritage assets and the goals of the program. Model resolution language is available at [www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html).

**Item 4C:** Communities should carefully read through the additional criteria for designation and ensure that they adequately document how they meet **at least** five of the criteria, including at least one from each of the three categories (discovering heritage through historic places, protecting historic resources, and promoting historic assets). If there is any question about how well the community meets one of the five selected criteria, then the community should provide information on more than five. Communities should feel free to contact ACHP staff if they have a question about how they fulfill and document specific criteria.

**Item 4C(5):** The "local governmental body, such as a board or commission, charged with leading historic preservation activities within the community" should be specifically authorized or established by the local government to carry out its duties. Non-profit or quasi-governmental organizations with ex-officio membership of a governmental representative do not meet this requirement unless they have a recognized role under governmental charter or ordinance.

**Item 4D:** Communities are asked to submit three to five color images, 4" x 6" or larger, or provide two digital color images on a CD with a resolution of 300 dpi or greater, that help illustrate their community's character and involvement with preservation. Please provide captions and credits for these images. The images may be used on the **PRESERVE AMERICA** Web site or for other publicity purposes, which will increase the visibility of the community.

**Item 5:** Additional materials are strongly encouraged, since applications will certainly be enhanced with a showing of community interest and involvement through letters of endorsement and illustrative materials. However, they are not required.

**Items 6 & 7:** Make sure to read the release authorization and sign and date the application.

COMMUNITIES 2005 APPLICATION

*Application Form*

**1. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Communities must consult with their State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) during development of this application and send a copy of the completed application to the SHPO when it is submitted. (Not required for tribal submissions.)

**Check this box to signify that you have done so.**

SHPO names and addresses can be found at [www.neshpo.org](http://www.neshpo.org) or by calling (202) 624-5465.

Applications must be submitted in hard copy and will not be returned. **Please provide two original copies of all materials and three to five related images as described on page 2.** Model application documents are available at [www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov/communities.html). Submission well in advance of one of the quarterly **deadlines (March 1, June 1, September 1, December 1)** will facilitate timely review.

**Submit applications to:**

**PRESERVE AMERICA** Communities  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 809  
Washington, DC 20004

**Sources of additional information:**

Office of Preservation Initiatives  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
(202) 606-8505  
Web site: [www.PreserveAmerica.gov](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov)

**2. COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

All communities, incorporated or unincorporated, and federally recognized Indian tribes are eligible to seek designation as **PRESERVE AMERICA** Communities.

City El Paso County El Paso Congressional District \_\_\_\_\_  
State Texas Indian tribe \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**3. APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Application for designation can only be submitted by one of the following:

- Mayor or equivalent elected governing official of an incorporated community;
- County executive or equivalent elected governing official of the appropriate jurisdiction of an unincorporated community; or
- Tribal governing official.

Applicant's Name Mayor John Cook Title Mayor

Address 2 Civic Center Plaza 10th Floor

City El Paso State Texas Zip 79901

Phone 915-541-4000 Fax 915-541-4501 E-mail mayor@elpasotexas.gov

For more information, contact Mathew Briones Title Assistant to Mayor

Phone 915-541-4656 Fax 915-541-4501 E-mail brionesmd@elpasotexas.gov

#### 4. DESIGNATION CRITERIA AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

A community will qualify for designation as a **PRESERVE AMERICA** Community if:

**A.** The community has supported (within the last three years) a historic or cultural preservation project that promotes heritage tourism or otherwise fosters economic vitality. The project must have involved a public-private partnership between government entities and at least one civic association, non-profit organization, or business enterprise. *(Please provide a written description of a specific project, documenting how it fulfills these requirements. Do not exceed 500 words.)*

**B.** The governing body of the community has recently adopted a resolution indicating its commitment to the preservation of its heritage assets. *(Please include a signed and dated copy of the resolution.)*

**C.** The community meets at least five of the criteria outlined below (with at least one from each specified category). *(Please check the criteria below under which you are seeking PRESERVE AMERICA Community designation. For each criterion, please provide a written description of no more than 250 words explaining how your community meets the criterion.)*

##### **Category 1: Discovering Heritage Through Historic Places**

- An ongoing, publicly available inventory of historic properties.
- A community-supported museum, interpretive facility, archive, or local history records collection (private or public).
- Active citizen volunteer involvement, such as a docent or guide program for interpretation of local history and culture, or volunteer participation in improving the condition of heritage assets within the community.
- Opportunities for children to learn about local heritage in the schools, through either established curriculum or special outreach activities.

##### **Category 2: Protecting Historic Resources**

- A local governmental body, such as a board or a commission, charged with leading historic preservation activities within the community.
- An adopted community-wide historic preservation plan that is being implemented.
- A historic preservation review ordinance and volunteer or professional staff to implement it.

##### **Category 3: Promoting Historic Assets**

- A local heritage tourism program or active participation in a regional program, with such promotional material as a walking/driving trail or tour itinerary, map of historic resources, etc.
- A regularly scheduled heritage observance or event.
- A historic preservation awards or recognition program.

**D.** Submit three to five images that show people using and enjoying your historic cultural and natural resources (CD with digital images with a resolution of 300 dpi or greater, 4" x 6" color photographs, or slides) and provide caption and credit information for each.

**5. ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING MATERIAL**

Written endorsements by preservation organizations, civic organizations, members of Congress, and other elected officials are encouraged. *(Please provide copies of any letters of endorsement.)*

Documenting participation in other nationwide preservation programs is encouraged. *(Please let us know if your community is a Certified Local Government, a Main Street Community, a recipient of funds under the Save America's Treasures program, a recipient of Transportation Enhancements funding for historic preservation, etc.)*

*(Brochures, additional photos, reports, publications, etc. may be appended if desired.)*

**6. RELEASE AUTHORIZATION**

The undersigned gives the ACHP and the **PRESERVE AMERICA** Communities program absolute right to use, in whole and in part, all material submitted in furtherance of this application. All submitted materials become the property of **PRESERVE AMERICA**. Materials may be used in program activities, including publications and Web sites. **PRESERVE AMERICA** is given permission to make any editorial changes and/or additions to the subject material. The undersigned guarantees to have on file all necessary individual agreements and signatures to ensure **PRESERVE AMERICA** unencumbered use of all associated material.

**7. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT**

**The elected governing official of the community must sign and date this form. Signatures must be original and in ink.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
John Cook, Mayor 8/30/2005

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John F. Nance  
Assistant City Attorney

City of El Paso  
Preserve America's Communities  
Application 2005

Community Support of Historic Preservation

4. A. THE PLAZA THEATRE

The Plaza Theatre is an exceptional example of an atmospheric movie palace and one of the few remaining of its type in the country. It is located in El Paso, Texas, a major metropolitan area on the border of the United States and Mexico. Built in 1930, the theatre represents a period of economic and population growth in the Southwest and the emergence of El Paso as a commercial and cultural center in the early decades of the twentieth century. Articulated in an extravagant Spanish Colonial Revival style, the theatre embodies the unique bi-national, bi-cultural, and bi-lingual character of the region.

From its beginning in the 1930s through the 1960s, the Plaza Theatre provided a wide assortment of live entertainment as well as motion pictures. By the 1970s, however, the Plaza experienced a slow and gradual period of decline, finally closing its doors in 1973.

The prospect of restoring the Plaza Theatre began in the mid-1980s with the strong possibility that it might be demolished in favor of a parking garage. Upon learning of its fate, the El Paso Community Foundation spearheaded a grassroots campaign to inform and energize the community behind the notion that this distinctive and ornate building should be saved and preserved. From spare change being collected by school children to car washes dedicated for the Plaza Theatre a slow and steady stream of funds emerged from not only the surrounding region, but from across the nation as people learned of the possible fate of the theatre. Within two months, the community raised \$1 million and saved the theatre from the wrecking ball.

On July 30, 2002, after three years of intensive feasibility studies and project development, the City of El Paso and the El Paso Community Foundation formally agreed to create a public/private partnership to restore the Plaza Theatre and convert it into a full performing arts venue.

Of the \$26.5 million estimated cost to restore the theatre, the City of El Paso has dedicated \$15.5 million and the El Paso Community Foundation, \$12 million.

Currently, over 200 "Star Keepers" are serving as volunteer foot soldiers to marshal community support and assist the foundation in its fundraising efforts.

Scheduled for completion in the fall of 2005, the Plaza Theatre Performing Arts Centre will be a state-of-the-art performance and gathering facility. The 2,100-seat main theatre

will boast a 10-story stage house capable of handling large traveling Broadway shows. The restored Mighty Wurlitzer organ will come home to be enjoyed once again by Plaza Theatre patrons. In addition, the facility will include a 200-seat children's theatre, a rooftop garden, meeting facilities and a privately managed restaurant.

The Plaza Theatre was nominated to The National Register of Historic Places as a "Nationally Significant" Spanish Colonial Revival based atmospheric movie palace in April of 2003. Also in 2003, the City of El Paso received \$199,000 from the Save America's Treasures grant program to assist in the restoration of the theatre.

City of El Paso  
Preserve America's Communities  
Application 2005

C. The community meets at least five of the criteria outlined below:

**Category 1: Discovering Heritage Through Historic Places**

An ongoing, publicly available inventory of historic properties.

Several resources are publicly available that provide inventories of historic properties in El Paso on three different levels: national, state, and local. Nationally, the U.S. Department of Interior's National Register of Historic Places maintains the National Register Information System, which includes 44 properties in El Paso (as of May 2005). Also available is the National Park Service's listing of National Historic trails which lists *El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro* or "The Royal Road to the Interior" from Mexico City, through El Paso, to Santa Fe, New Mexico and describes 400 years of history in this region. Also on a national level, the Historic American Buildings Survey and Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) website lists 33 significant sites in El Paso County; many of these facilities are affiliated with historic Fort Bliss and date from the late 1840s.

Texas state resources include the Texas Historical Commission's website on which 138 historic locations in El Paso County are listed along with all 126 official historical markers.

Locally, 12 publications have been created listing various aspects of historic properties, from historic walking tours to maps that document the nine historic districts in El Paso. The County of El Paso maintains an extensive website that offers a comprehensive overview of all local archive sites throughout the El Paso. The website also includes information on various historic properties as well as detailed information on various historic properties such as Concordia Cemetery, site of gun fighter John Wesley Hardin 's grave.

A community-supported museum, interpretive facility, archive, or local history records collection (private or public).

The Border Museum Association produces a "Guide to Regional Archives" brochure that lists nearly thirty archive and interpretive facilities in the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez, Mexico region. Four significant facilities located within the city of El Paso are referenced below.

- The El Paso Museum of History will be opening a new facility downtown by February 2006. The El Paso community supported the realization of the new facility when voters approved over \$6 million dollars for the construction of the museum in a 2000 bond

election. While a facility for the museum currently exists, the new building will provide a far superior experience to explore El Paso's vast body of historical artifacts and stories.

- The City of El Paso's Library system maintains the Border Heritage Collection. The purpose of the collection is to rescue and maintain the history, tradition, customs, beliefs and development of the area in as many forms as possible. The collection serves to educate researchers in the total border experience.

- The El Paso Museum of Archaeology retains a collection of prehistoric artifacts from the southwest. The museum tells the story of the first inhabitants of the El Paso area, the greater Southwest, and northern Mexico. Exhibits in the museum narrate and depict native peoples from the Paleoindian hunters of the Ice Age to their modern Indian descendants.

- Keystone Dam Archeological Site and Archaic Wetlands is a grassroots-developed cultural site containing the oldest known village site in the western U.S. (approximately 3,600 to 4,800 years old.)

## **Category 2: Protecting Historic Resources**

A local governmental body, such as a board or a commission, charged with leading historic preservation activities within the community.

- The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission is a nine member advisory commission charged with making recommendations on the designation of historic landmarks and districts. The Commission also has the authority to grant certificates of appropriateness in compliance with historic guidelines.

A historic preservation review ordinance and volunteer or professional staff to implement it.

The Historic Landmark Commission was created in 1996 by Ordinance number 20.67.020 to ensure that the protection, enhancement, preservation and use of historic landmarks is enforced throughout the City of El Paso.

This nine-member advisory commission is composed of volunteers appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The Commission is staffed with two city staff members. The Commission works to protect, enhance and perpetuate historic landmarks which represent or reflect distinctive and important elements of the city's, region's, state's or nation's architectural, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, ethnic and political history and to develop appropriate settings for such places

Furthermore, the ordinance was created to safeguard the city's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such historic landmarks, by appropriate regulations, to foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past, and

to protect and enhance the city's attractions to tourists and visitors and provide incidental support and stimulus to business and industry.

Since its adoption, the Ordinance continues to strengthen the economy of the city, promote the use of historic landmarks for the culture, prosperity, education and general welfare of the people of the city and visitors to the city and prevent the uprooting of architectural products of distinct periods.

### **Category 3: Promoting Historic Assets**

A local heritage tourism program or active participation in a regional program, with such promotional material as a walking/driving trail or tour itinerary, map of historic resources, etc.

El Paso is engaged in a variety of national, state and local heritage related programs:

- El Paso's Rio Grande River was designated an American Heritage River by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1999. The community groups that supported the designation are still active in developing heritage tourism, environmental stewardship, recreational, and transportation opportunities.

- El Paso is part of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, a National Historic Trail. El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (Royal Road of the Interior) National Historic Trail recognizes the primary route between the colonial Spanish capital of Mexico City and the Spanish provincial capital of Santa Fe. The national historic trail extends 404 miles from El Paso, Texas, to San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico.

- El Paso is a member of the Texas Mountain Trail, the newest designee of the Texas Heritage Trails program. As part of a far-west Texas collaboration, the Texas Mountain Trail represents a unique place in the geography and history of Texas. Through this program El Paso will benefit from grants, technical and promotional assistance, and other resources provided by the Texas Historical Commission.

- The El Paso Convention Center and Visitors Bureau offers a Downtown Historic Self-Guided Walking Tour. The tour provides over 25 sites of exceptional historic and architectural significance.

- "The Pass of the North – Heritage Corridor" is a project sponsored by the El Paso Community Foundation. It is a binational and tri-state initiative designed to preserve and showcase the historical, cultural and natural inheritance of the El Paso, Dona-Ana County, and Ciudad Juarez region.

A regularly scheduled heritage observance or event.

- The International Hispanic Cultural Institute (IHCI) organizes the Latin Arts Fiesta. Held in September, this event provides an opportunity for cultural exchange with Latin artists and music and dance contests.
- The end of April marks a weeklong series of cultural events dedicated to celebrating El Paso's diverse history and culture. El Paso Heritage Week offers numerous events like concerts, parades, walking and trolley tours and historic reenactments. Cinco de Mayo is the opportunity to celebrate the culmination of the Heritage Week.
- "Celebration of our Mountains" is a month-long festival designed to facilitate an appreciation of the Franklin Mountains that dominate the El Paso skyline. From geological tours to archaeology lectures, and hiking and biking tours to community volunteer workdays, this event engages El Pasoans and visitors alike in exploring the depths of the region's inventory of heritage and natural assets.
- October 12<sup>th</sup> marks "Feather Fest", Keystone Heritage Park's annual event that celebrates the waterfowl inhabiting Keystone Wetlands. Experts are on hand to talk about the biodiversity of the wetlands and the significance of the archeological site.
- At the Magoffin Home State Historic Site the Casa Magoffin Companeros (Friends of the Magoffin Home) host several annual events at the home including a Victorian Tea in May and a Holiday Tea and Reception in December.
- In September, the El Paso County Historical Society conducts an annual historic home tour throughout the city.
- On August 19<sup>th</sup>, to observe the significance of the Historic Concordia Cemetery, the Concordia Heritage Society, along with the John Wesley Hardin Secret Society, organizes historic re-enactments. This event is organized to mark the anniversary of Hardin's death and the circumstances that led to it at the notorious gunslinger's gravesite.

**D.** Submit three to five images that show people using and enjoying your historic cultural and natural resources (CD with digital images with a resolution of 300 dpi or greater, 4" x 6" color photographs, or slides) and provide caption and credit information for each.

City of El Paso  
Preserve America's Communities  
Application 2005

**Additional Supporting Material**

**5 Photos:**

- **Eastwood High School Students on Plaza Theatre Tour** – Photo Courtesy of El Paso Community Foundation
- **Installation of El Paso Southwestern Railroad Locomotive “Engine No. 1” Union Plaza Transit Terminal** - Photo Courtesy of City of El Paso/Sun Metro
- **Downtown Street life. Background-Historic Kress Building** –Photo Courtesy of City of El Paso, Planning research and Development Department
- **“Spring Tea” at the Magoffin Home State Historic Site** - Photo Courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife
- **Outdoor Lecture by Dr. Marc Thompson, Director El Paso Museum of Archaeology**- Photo Courtesy of El Paso Museum of Archaeology

**Save America's Treasures**

The City of El Paso has received funds for one of its three official Save America's Treasures Projects. The Plaza Theatre received a \$199,000 grant from the Historic Preservation Fund for the Save America's Treasures Grant Program Public Law 108-7, making Fiscal Year 2004 appropriations for the Department of the Interior.

**Texas Preservation Trust Fund**

The city also received a Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grant for the Plaza Theatre in the amount of \$25,000 in Fiscal Year 2004.

**Transportation Enhancement Grants for Historic and Cultural Preservation**

Since 1994, the City of El Paso has received four transportation enhancement grants to address local historic and cultural preservation efforts. They are listed below (all projects are listed at 80% funding levels to reflect only the federal portion of project costs):

1994 - Mission Trails Project - \$2,715,220  
2000 - El Paso Southwestern Railroad Locomotive “Engine No. 1” - \$928,320  
2000 - Keystone Dam Archeological Site and Archaic Wetlands - \$1,422,720  
2002 - Rio Grande River Trail - \$3,131,040

**Letters of Support**

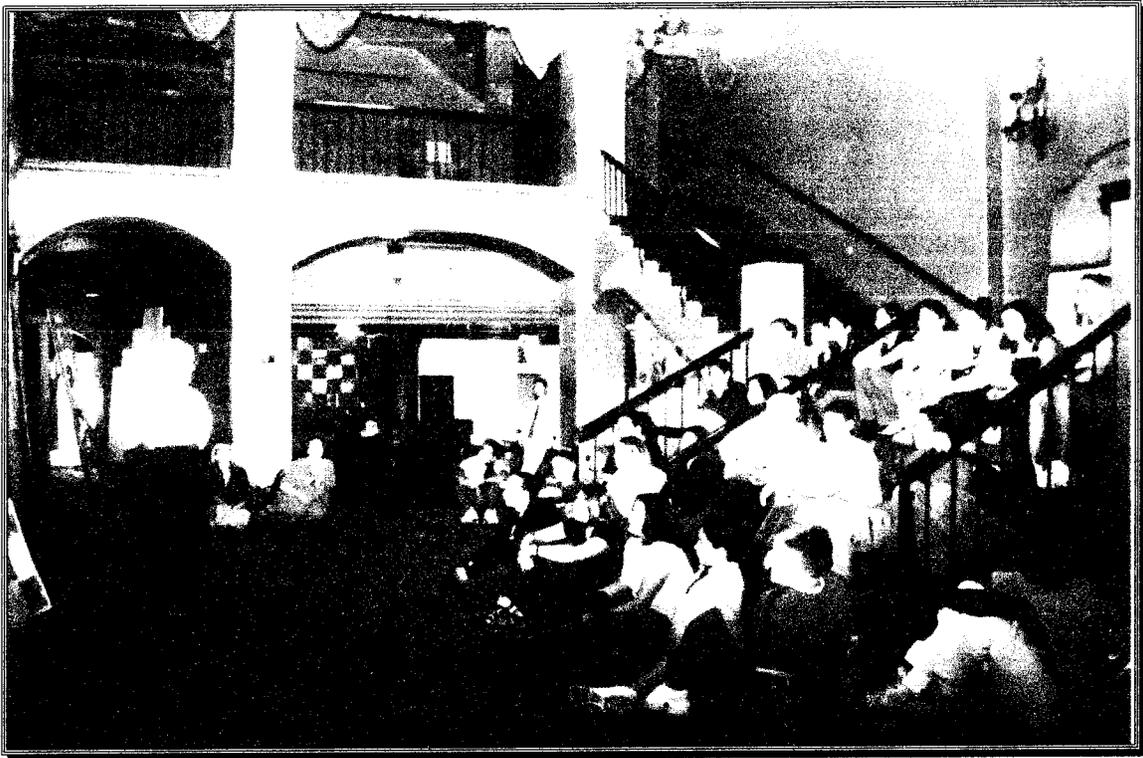
**Texas Senate Resolution in recognition of Plaza Theatre**

## **Brochures and Other Promotional Material**

- *Historic* El Paso
- American Heritage Rivers
- Magoffin Home State Historic Site
- “I am the Plaza Theatre”
- Franklin Mountains State Park
- El Paso Museum of Archaeology
- El Paso Calendar of Events
- “Border Sights” Tours of El Paso
- “Images” of El Paso, Texas
- National Border Patrol Museum and Memorial Library
- El Paso International Latino Arts Festival
- Downtown Walking Tours Al Fresco (Junior League of El Paso)
- 2004-2005 Guide to Museums of El Paso & Ciudad Juarez
- Rio Grande Trail System
- The Pass of the North Heritage Corridor (A Project of the El Paso Community Foundation)
- Downtown Historic Self-Guided Walking Tour (2)
- Keystone Heritage Park, Inc.
- Railroads and Highways at the Pass of the North
- El Paso Museum of History
- Guide to Archives
- El Paso Museum of Art
- Discover El Paso
- Chamizal National Memorial
- Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo Cultural Center

City of El Paso  
Preserve America's Communities  
Application 2005

El Paso Residents Enjoying Historic and Natural Resources

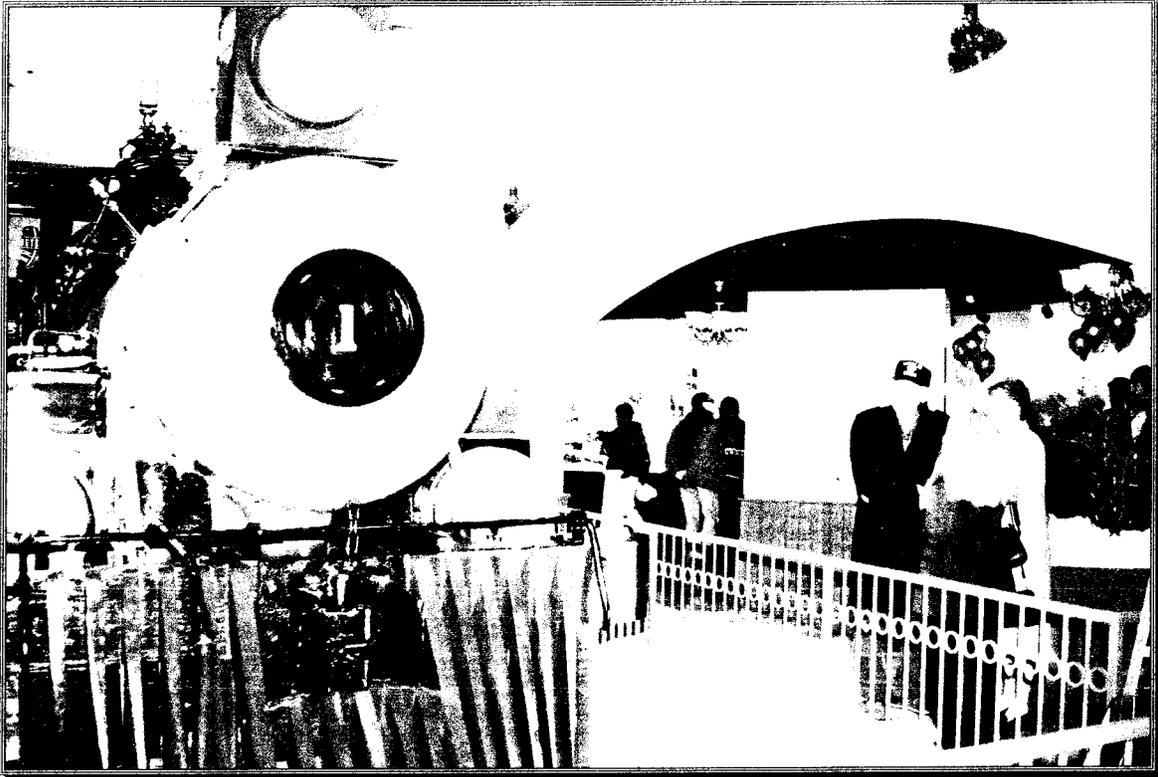


**Eastwood High School Students on Plaza Theatre Tour** – Photo Courtesy of El Paso Community Foundation



**“Spring Tea” at the Magoffin Home State Historic Site**

- Photo Courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife



**Installation of El Paso Southwestern Railroad Locomotive "Engine No. 1" Union Plaza Transit Terminal**

- Photo Courtesy of City of El Paso/Sun Metro



**Downtown Street life. Background-Historic Kress Building**  
-Photo Courtesy of City of El Paso, Planning research and Development Department



**Outdoor Lecture by Dr. Marc Thompson, Director El Paso Museum of Archaeology**  
- Photo Courtesy of El Paso Museum of Archaeology

JOHN F. COOK  
MAYOR



CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

August 9, 2005

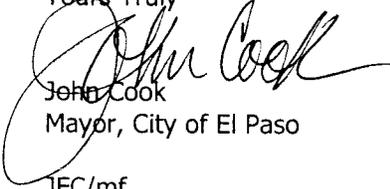
Attention: Preserve America  
To Whom It May Concern:

As the Mayor of El Paso, I can attest to the City of El Paso's leadership, by both elected officials and staff, in exploring and supporting the virtues of our local heritage. City staff and a large number of community leaders are dedicated to continuing the pursuit of historic preservation efforts wherever they may arise. From securing Save America's Treasures grants, to the development of ordinances that encourage historic preservation, many techniques are being employed to strengthen El Paso's unique heritage legacy.

In downtown El Paso, the community's investment of over \$140 million in quality of life improvements through a voter-approved bond issue in 2000 has facilitated the construction of a new, \$6 million history museum currently under construction. This facility along with the historic Plaza Theatre will make El Paso a world-class destination for heritage tourism in 2006. Enhancing El Paso's cultural heritage has played a large role in the city's visioning process and image of it's future. The city's capital investment in heritage infrastructure is one of many compelling reasons that the City of El Paso should be recognized as a Preserve America Community.

My staff and I stand ready to assist in any further support that may be required to earn this important designation for the City of El Paso. I hope that El Paso's unique place in the patchwork of American history is as engrossing to you as it is to us.

Yours Truly

  
John Cook  
Mayor, City of El Paso

JFC/mf

JOHN F. COOK  
MAYOR



JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BRYD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA, JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN, JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

## OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

August 11, 2005

Attention: Preserve America

To whoever it may concern,

As El Paso's City Manager, I am proud to support the City of El Paso's efforts to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community. As a representative of El Paso, Texas I know firsthand that the City of El Paso is eager to pursue the benefits of a focused heritage tourism industry and the resulting enrichment of the community.

El Paso has recently demonstrated the advantages of public/private collaboration with successful projects accomplished in concert with the community. Among those are the designation of the Rio Grande River as an American Heritage River in 1999 and the work of the community and local governments in the creation of the Rio Grande River Trail in 2001. The Plaza Theatre project, which has proven to unite the El Paso community like never before and bring about an excited atmosphere regarding an enlivened downtown through historic preservation, is another prime example of a collaborative effort focused on the areas historic treasures.

I am personally excited that the City of El Paso is undertaking this important endeavor. Clearly, El Paso has long been a hub of rich and dynamic cultural heritage, and with the Preserve America Community Designation, it will continue to grow in prominence. I believe this proposal is extremely well conceived and offers a glimpse of El Paso's offerings to the nation.

Your support and consideration are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joyce Wilson".

Joyce Wilson  
City Manager

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4304

August 17, 2005

Dear Preserve America Staff:

I am pleased to support the City of El Paso's effort to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community.

In the past I have offered my support to the City of El Paso for heritage-focused projects including the Plaza Theatre and the Rio Grande River Trail and I am well aware of the city's accomplishments on the historic preservation front. El Paso has a rich offering of historic assets that should be held up to a national spotlight. I believe becoming a Preserve America Community will help the City of El Paso accomplish this.

From earning the designation of an American Heritage River for the Rio Grande River in 1999 to the ongoing Plaza Theatre project, which involves a nationally significant Spanish-themed atmospheric theatre, El Paso has allocated a significant amount of staff time and funding towards attaining heritage-related goals. I can think of no better way to recognize these accomplishments than to approve the enclosed application.

I have chosen to highlight two significant projects in El Paso, but I know that there is a bounty of historic wealth that will be revealed within the city's Preserve America Community application.

Please give careful consideration to approval of the City of El Paso's application, and do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Kay Bailey Hutchison

KBH/had

Reply to:  
1919 Smith Street #800  
Houston, Texas 77002

SILVESTRE REYES  
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
RANKING MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
TERRORISM, HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, ANALYSIS  
AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2433 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4831  
FAX: (202) 225-2016

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
310 NORTH MESA, SUITE 400  
EL PASO, TX 79901  
(915) 534-4400  
FAX: (915) 534-7426  
<http://www.house.gov/reyes/>

August 17, 2005

Preserve America Communities  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 809  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Friends:

I recently learned that the City of El Paso will be submitting an application to the Preserve America's Communities Program, and I am writing to express my full support for this endeavor.

I am very excited by the possibility of El Paso joining the growing ranks of the over 247 other communities that have already been designated. There has been proven leadership in our community, both in the public and private sectors, in strengthening the infrastructure and capacity underlying our rich and dynamic heritage.

We as a community are dedicated to continuing the pursuit of historic preservation efforts and furthering El Paso's unique historic legacy. From securing Save America's Treasures grants, to the development of ordinances that encourage historic preservation, to fostering important public/private partnerships like the restoration of the Plaza Theatre, to championing heritage tourism, we have greatly elevated the importance of preserving our cultural heritage.

I believe that upon careful review you will find that El Paso not only meets the criteria of the Preserve America's Communities Program, but that it exemplifies the spirit and goals of the program as well.

As always, your careful consideration is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Silvestre Reyes', followed by a horizontal line.

Silvestre Reyes  
Member of Congress

SR/km

# ADAIR MARGO GALLERY

19 August 2005

Preserve America Communities  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 809  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Preserve America's Communities Staff:

As a fourth-generation El Pasoan, I offer my enthusiastic support of the City of El Paso's efforts to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community.

The El Paso writer and painter, Tom Lea, wrote:

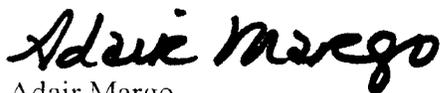
*From earliest time the valley of the Rio Grande has been a natural pathway for men traversing the Southwest. It was an ancient trail before Europeans set foot on the Western World; and when the Spanish in their widening conquests advanced up the central plateau of Mexico, they found the river course the easiest route into the unknown North. Where the Rio Grande issued from the southernmost spurs of the Rocky Mountains, its valley narrowed sharply through a Pass, immediately recognized by the Spanish as of great strategic value, their doorway to the North. They named this place El Paso del Norte.*

El Pasoans have lived with this rich history for hundreds of years, and we are eager to tell our evolving story. Preserve America encourages us to engage the rest of the nation in a dialogue about our rich Hispanic heritage, and about the historic and cultural development of a community that bridges three states and two nations.

El Paso has been busy restoring its Spanish missions and plazas, important immigration sites and its downtown Plaza Theatre. The *Rio Grande* has received the American Heritage River designation and the historic *Camino Real* (Royal Road that extended from Mexico City to Santa Fe) is receiving increased attention. The University of Texas at El Paso is researching the *bracero* (farm worker) program with the Smithsonian and developing exhibits on Mexican immigration. These and many, many other projects point to the fact that we are ready for a Preserve America designation. We want to share!

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this request.

Most sincerely,



Adair Margo

415 E. Yandell  
El Paso, Texas 79902  
tel 915.533.0048  
fax 915.496.8550  
amargo@whc.net  
www.adairmargo.com



Attention: Preserve America

To Whom It May Concern:

The El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau and El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Centers offers our strong support and encouragement to the City of El Paso in their bid to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community.

As managers of four major performance art venues we are well aware of the value of heritage tourism in our field. Recently we were awarded the management contract for the historic Plaza Theatre. We are honored to have been chosen to steward this El Paso jewel through a grand reopening in 2006, an event that will rival all previous hoped-for downtown catalysts. As a Save America's Treasures project, the Plaza represents the pinnacle of what historic preservation can provide to local economies.

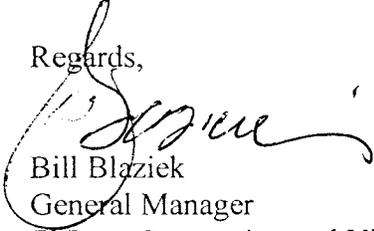
Projects like the Plaza as well countless other initiatives that involve a wide spectrum of the community reveal El Paso's readiness to seek the Preserve America Community designation. I know firsthand that the City of El Paso is eager to pursue the benefits of a focused heritage tourism industry and the resulting enrichment of the community.

From securing Save America's Treasures grants, to the development of ordinances that encourage historic preservation many techniques are being employed to further El Paso's unique heritage. These are among the many compelling reasons that the City of El Paso should be recognized as a Preserve America Community.

Clearly, El Paso has long been a hub of rich and dynamic cultural heritage, and with the Preserve America Community Designation, it will continue to grow in prominence. I believe this proposal is extremely well conceived and offers a glimpse of El Paso's offerings to the nation.

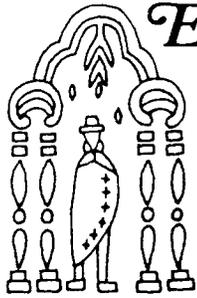
Your support and consideration are greatly appreciated.

Regards,



Bill Blaziek  
General Manager

El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau  
El Paso Convention and Performing Arts Centers



# EL PASO MUSEUM OF HISTORY

12901 Gateway West • El Paso, Texas 79927 • (915) 858-1928

August 18, 2005

Attention: Preserve America

Dear Preserve America Committee:

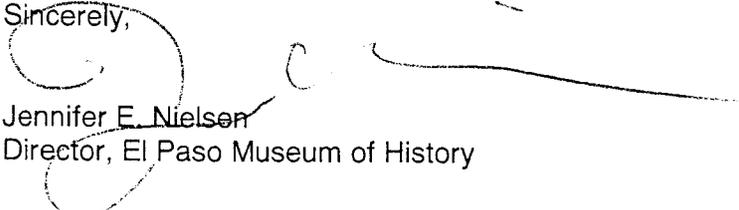
The El Paso Museum of History strongly supports the City of El Paso, Texas in its efforts to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community. As a professional directly involved with the preservation of public history in El Paso, I can attest to the high level of readiness and community support in the pursuit of heritage preservation and tourism efforts.

The history of El Paso stands out among American cities for many reasons. Due to a climate that encourages preservation, the region boasts a wealth of archaeological sites (dating back as far as 13,000 years ago) such as Keystone Heritage Park and Hueco Tanks State Historic Site. Few other locations have experienced a role in such a wide variety of armed conflicts including the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, and the Mexican Revolution. The region has served as a historic crossroads for over four centuries. Beginning in the 1600s as a key location connecting trade between Mexico City and Santa Fe along the Camino Real, supporting the development of East to West trade and migration with the stagecoach and railroad routes in the 1800s, and finally in its current role as the largest bi-national metropolitan area in the Western Hemisphere.

Not only does the history of the El Paso region stand out, but recent efforts show the increasing value of El Paso's heritage resources to the healthy development of the community. In 2000, voters approved a \$6.5 million *Quality of Life* bond issue dedicated to building a new history museum in downtown El Paso (currently 55% completion). The \$38 million Plaza Theatre renovation project, also currently in progress, will preserve one of the most spectacular historic theatre interiors in the nation while at the same time bringing much needed arts and culture resources to the community. Additionally, the El Paso Community Foundation's *Pass of the North Heritage Corridor* program works to unite the region's historic preservation stakeholders and develop projects such as the Border Heritage Booklet Series that make El Paso's heritage resources more accessible to both visitors and local citizens.

With the Preserve America Community Designation, El Paso will be able to continue in its current positive direction toward preserving and sharing the heritage of one of this nation's most diverse cities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Jennifer E. Nielsen  
Director, El Paso Museum of History

## El Paso Museum of Archaeology

8 August 2005

Attention: Preserve America

To whom it may concern:

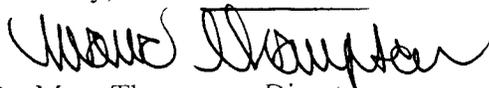
The El Paso Museum of Archaeology supports efforts to establish El Paso, Texas as a Preserve America Community. One of the oldest known communities in the prehistoric Southwest, a 4,500-year-old Archaic period village, is located within the city of El Paso. Additionally, later prehistoric villages comprised of adobe pueblos dotted the landscape before European contact. In 1598, settlers from New Spain (now Mexico) crossed the Rio Grande at what would become El Paso and entered New Mexico. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century onward El Paso became an historic hub of commerce, cultural blending, and multiethnic settlement.

Today, El Paso boasts numerous buildings and districts on both the national and state historic registers. Cooperative efforts between city and private entities are preserving valuable cultural resources such as the Keystone Heritage Park with the nearly 5,000-year-old archaeological remains, and restoration of the Plaza Theatre in historic downtown El Paso.

El Paso's prehistory and history are becoming increasingly valuable, visible, and vital to the future of this borderland community. Efforts such as Preserve America will enhance this city's ability to appreciate the past and plan for the future.

I encourage you to give our city every consideration for inclusion in the Preserve American program.

Sincerely,



Dr. Marc Thompson, Director

JOHN COOK, MAYOR

JOYCE WILSON  
CITY MANAGER

CAROL A. BREY-CASIANO  
DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES



CITY COUNCIL  
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1  
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2  
J. ALEXANDRO LOZANO, DISTRICT 3  
MELINA CASTRO, DISTRICT 4  
PRESI ORTEGA JR., DISTRICT 5  
EDDIE HOLGUIN, JR., DISTRICT 6  
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7  
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

## EL PASO PUBLIC LIBRARY

August 15, 2005

Attention: Preserve America

To whom it may concern:

As the Director of the oldest public library in the state of Texas, I am pleased to add my support to the City of El Paso's efforts to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community. The diversity of the city is evident to all who live, work and visit here. The rich cultural contributions made by our community are reflected in the mission of the El Paso Public Library, which is "committed to serving our diverse community through full access to information, entertainment, and lifelong learning."

The Border Heritage Collection of the El Paso Public Library seeks to rescue and maintain the history, tradition, customs, beliefs and development of the area in as many forms as possible. The collection serves to educate researchers in the total border experience. An awareness of the area's heritage is evident to all who visit the Main Library, which was built in 1954 and is an outstanding example of contemporary southwestern architecture.

Our Library Staff is eager to join me in promoting this appealing project. As a major border city with a rich and diversified past, the designation as Preserve America Community can assist in aiding all El Pasoans to reach into the future of our nation.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol A. Brey-Casiano".

Carol A. Brey-Casiano  
Director of Libraries



**FRANK W. GORMAN**

*Manufacturer's Representative*

P. O. BOX 223

**EL PASO, TEXAS 79942**

(915) 532-9554

Preserve America Communities  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 809  
Washington DC, 20004

August 22, 2005

Ref: Preserve America Community Designation - El Paso, Texas

Dear Preserve America Staff:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the City of El Paso's effort to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community. As a Commissioner on the Texas Historical Commission, I can vouch for the fact that El Paso has a multitude of historical assets.

The city's efforts regarding cultural preservation and promotion have only recently hit their stride, but I can assure you that El Paso is picking up speed in promoting such unique historical jewels as:

- Camino Real de Tierra Adentro
- International Boundary Monument No. 1
- Old Ft. Bliss
- Magoffin Home State Historic Site
- Plaza Theatre
- Keystone Dam Archaeological Site
- Ysleta Mission ( Founded 1682)

The above list is but a small example of the historic assets to be found in El Paso. It is my hope that will agree that we merit the designation as a Preserve America Community.

I am encouraged that the City of El Paso is undertaking this important endeavour. El Paso represents over 400 years of history and should be recognized as a major player in the legacy of the birth of this nation. I hope that it is evident that the enclosed proposal conveys El Paso's high aspirations in promoting its unique border culture.

With strong public/private partnerships, the city has joined forces with local organizations such as the El Paso Community Foundation to resurrect the historic Plaza Theatre and to identify and mark significant historical sites throughout the city.

Another focal point in partnerships has been the designation of the Rio Grande River as an American Heritage River in 1999 and the works of the community and local governments on the Rio Grande River Trail in 2001. These two projects have involved over 30 international, federal, state and local organizations and indicate the city's ability to steward complex heritage-related projects to fruition.

Your support and consideration will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Gorman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Frank Gorman

Commissioner, Texas Historical Commission



Office of  
the President

Attention: Preserve America

To Whom It May Concern:

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) supports the City of El Paso's effort to earn the designation of a Preserve America Community. UTEP has worked closely with the City of El Paso on a number of projects, and I can attest to the fact that it has become increasingly more progressive in its pursuit of historic preservation.

El Paso is rich in historic assets. The UTEP campus itself is one of the treasures in El Paso worthy of national attention. Since 1917, the university's architecture has been consistently modeled after Bhutanese monasteries, or *dzongs*, with sloping walls, high inset windows, and mosaic mandalas. Today, the 366-acre UTEP campus resembles a Himalayan community.

The City of El Paso has demonstrated through numerous projects its dedication to heritage promotion and conservation. A noteworthy example is the Plaza Theatre project, a monumental public/private effort that is sure to enliven downtown. This theatre will soon reclaim its title as "The Showplace of the Southwest" and inspire El Pasoans and visitors alike with its majestic interior. The City's major role in supporting efforts to preserve this asset for the benefit of future generations is one of many compelling reasons for my endorsement of its recognition as a Preserve America Community. This project as well as others that involve a broad range of stakeholders across a wide spectrum of the community reveal El Paso's readiness to seek the Preserve America Community designation.

Your consideration is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Natalicio', written in a cursive style.

Diana Natalicio  
President

El Paso, Texas  
79968-0500  
(915) 747-5555  
FAX: (915) 747-5069



201 East Main  
Suite 100  
El Paso, Texas 79901

August 17, 2005

Attention: Preserve America's Communities

To Whom It May Concern:

The El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is providing this letter of support to the City of El Paso for their application to become a Preserve America Community. The Hispanic Chamber recognizes the value in exploring heritage assets and putting those assets to work in various economic models, including tourism.

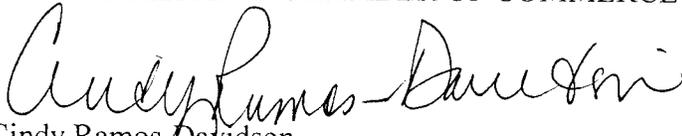
Keystone Dam Archeological Site and Archaic Wetlands serves as a model of grassroots intervention to secure a cultural heritage site, protecting it from development, and building a community-serving institution from grants and donations. The city has played a major role in supporting the community's efforts to preserve this treasure for the benefit of future generations and is one of many compelling reasons that the City of El Paso should be recognized as a Preserve America Community.

As further evidence of the city's commitment to heritage infrastructure is the investment of over \$140 million in quality of life improvements through a voter-approved bond issue. The bond issue has facilitated the construction of a new, \$6 million history museum currently under construction downtown. Enhancing El Paso's cultural heritage has played a large role in the city's visioning process and image of it's future. The city's capital investment in this and many other heritage-related projects is proof that culture matters in El Paso.

Your consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,

EL PASO HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

  
Cindy Ramos-Davidson  
Chief Executive Officer



# The Senate of The State of Texas

## SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 656

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize the Plaza Theatre in El Paso, Texas, which was constructed in 1930 and is an exceptional, intact example of an atmospheric movie palace in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Embodying the distinctive, illusion-producing characteristics of atmospheric movie theater architecture during this time period, the theater meets the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places for status deemed Nationally Significant; and

WHEREAS, Located in a major metropolitan center on the United States-Mexico border and articulated in a Spanish Colonial Revival style, the Plaza Theatre also embodies the unique binational, bicultural, and bilingual identity of the borderlands region of the Southwest; and

WHEREAS, Constructed at the apex of a period of tremendous economic and population growth in the Southwest, the theater is associated with broad patterns in the history of this part of the country, specifically the development of El Paso as an important commercial and cultural center for the region and the blending of Anglo and Hispanic peoples and cultures that has characterized the borderlands region over the history of its settlement; and

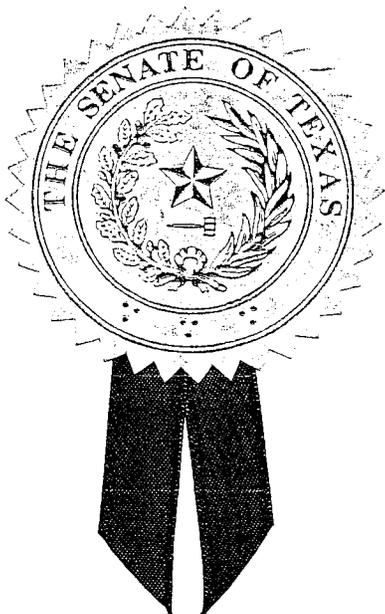
WHEREAS, Among the many distinctions touted on opening night, September 12, 1930, the Plaza was the largest movie theater west of Dallas; it had the first "refrigerated" drinking water system in a public building in the United States; it was one of only six theaters in the Southwest to feature a Brenograph, a

machine that could project stationary or moving color effects onto the screen or across the proscenium; it was the first to employ a "telecheck" system, an in-house communication system linking the box office to the ushers at various levels in the auditorium; and its organ, a Balaban III was one of only six produced by the Wurlitzer Company and is one of only two that still exist today; and

WHEREAS, The significance of the Plaza Theatre is derived from its outstanding architectural value as an intact atmospheric movie palace, combined inextricably with its direct association with the events of a key period of development in the Southwestern region of the United States; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 78th Legislature, hereby recognize the Plaza Theatre in El Paso, Texas, as a Treasure of Texas History within the context of movie theater architecture and development in the United States.

Madla



David Newburn  
President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 22, 2003.

Letsy Saul  
Secretary of the Senate

Frank Madla  
Member, Texas Senate



# rivers & trails

National  
Park  
Service



*rivers, trails, and conservation assistance program*

## RIO GRANDE RIVERPARK

### Project Goal

The development of a linear Riverpark/trail network in the El Paso region that offers recreational opportunities and access to historical, cultural, and natural resources.

### Background

This project has catalyzed a broad-based effort to add new trails, protect open space, and river corridors in the city and county of El Paso. The overall vision of the project is to create a multi-use trail and open space network along the entire length of the Rio Grande as it flows through the El Paso region. This could include over 57 new miles of trail and may eventually extend into New Mexico.

Important features along the trail corridor include: Keystone Archeological and Wetlands site, International Boundary Marker #1, Paso de Norte and Old Fort Bliss, Chihuahuita Neighborhood, downtown El Paso, *Chamizal National Memorial*, El Paso Zoo, Ascarate Regional Park, Shawver County Park, Rio Bosque Wetlands, Franklin Canal, and the historic Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and El Paso Missions in the lower valley.

The Riverpark will be within the City's Empowerment Zone and several Hispanic low-income neighborhoods. This project has energized the community has become a priority project for both the county and city of El Paso. In recent community visioning events, local residents and community groups have expressed overwhelming support for the project and have participated in providing input to create a River Park and trail system that meets their needs.

The City and County of El Paso and the El Paso Del Norte Health Foundation are providing strong local leadership for the project, including substantial financial investments. This active support of the El Paso del Norte Health Foundation to help fund trails could be a model project for RTCA's trails and health initiatives

### Project Results to Date

- Phased Regional River Park Plan completed.
- RiverPark Task Force organized.
- West Side portion of the River Park awarded a \$750,000 regional park grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife.
- East Side trail initiative awarded \$3.1 million in funding from 2001 TEA-21 transportation enhancement program. The money will be used to build 10+ miles of new trail in El Paso. The East Side trail funding will connect Ascarate Park to the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park and Historic Mission Trail in Socorro.

### Rio Grande River in El Paso



*continued*

# RIO GRANDE RIVER PARK

## National Park Service Roles

- Organize a River Park Task Force (a diverse stakeholder group dedicated to the creation of a Rio Grande River Park) activities.
- Assist in integrating additional community support and input in River Park planning process, including organizing community design charettes.
- Provide design assistance for trail linkages, amenities, and sound trail development.
- Provide technical information on trails development at the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park.
- Assist segment leaders in organizing community events along the Rio Grande.
- Provide information to Taskforce members, trail advocates, and the general public on important trail topics such as trails and health, liability, safety and security, development guidelines and user etiquette.
- Provide guidance on funding opportunities and review grant applications as requested.

## Community Charette Phase 1 River Park, Canutillo, HS



## Project Partners

- City of El Paso
- County of El Paso
- El Paso del Norte Health Foundation
- International Boundary and Water Commission
- El Paso Water Utilities El Paso Bicycle Club
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- Border Patrol
- El Paso Community Foundation
- World Wildlife Fund
- USEPA
- Rep. Silvestre Reyes

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