



HISTORIC TEXAS CEMETERY DESIGNATION PROGRAM

Cemeteries are important keys to Texas' past. They are reminders of settlement patterns and reveal information about historic events, religion, lifestyles, and genealogy. Unfortunately, historic cemeteries are increasingly threatened by development pressures, encroachment, vandalism, and theft. Circumstances can change quickly—a cemetery considered maintained and safe can quickly become neglected and endangered. To address the problem of cemetery destruction and to record as many cemeteries as possible, the Texas Historical Commission oversees the Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) designation program.



Travis County cemetery, designated August 2000

What is the HTC designation?

Begun in 1998, the HTC designation program is an official recognition of family and community graveyards that encourages preservation of historic cemeteries. The designation imposes no restrictions on private owners' use of the land adjacent to the cemetery or the daily operations of the cemetery. Every county in Texas has at least one cemetery designated as a Historic Texas Cemetery through this program.

Benefits

- Records the cemetery location and boundaries in the county deed records as a historically dedicated cemetery worthy of preservation.
- Helps preserve cemeteries by alerting present and future landowners of the presence of this important historical resource on their property.
- Prerequisite for participation in the RIP Guardian program and to apply for an Official Texas Historical Marker for the cemetery.

Requirements

A cemetery is eligible for designation if it is at least 50 years old and is deemed worthy of recognition for its historical associations. The very nature of a cemetery being a landmark of a family's or community's presence is considered to validate the criteria of historical associations. Any individual, organization, or agency may submit a request for designation.

More Information

Additional information about the HTC designation program, forms, samples, and instructions can be found at www.thc.state.tx.us/cemeteries/cemhtc.shtml.

How to Reach Us

Staff members are available to answer questions and provide preservation assistance. Please contact us at:
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