



**AGENDA
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING
CITY OF LEANDER, TEXAS**

Development Services - San Gabriel Conference Room
201 North Brushy Street - Leander, Texas
Wednesday, February 19, 2025
Regular Meeting at 5:30 PM



**Place 1 - Benjamin Geiger
Place 2 – Anna Yelaun
Place 3 – Kathy Howell
Place 4 – Esmeralda Gonzales
Place 5 - Joel Bakki**

**Place 6 – Christina Twing
Place 7 – Triste Freeburg
Council Liaison - Kathryn Pantalion-Parker
Staff Liaison – Karina Castillo**

REGULAR MEETING

1. Open Meeting.
2. Roll Call.
3. Public comments on items not listed in the agenda.

Public comments on items listed in the agenda will be heard at the time each item is discussed.

[All comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes (6 minutes if translation is needed) per individual.]

4. CHAIR'S REPORT
5. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT
 1. Public Education
 2. Website and Social Media
 3. Special Events
 4. Historic Locations
6. STAFF BRIEFINGS
 1. Bryson Farmstead
 2. Mason Homestead

CONSENT AGENDA: ACTION

7. Approval of the minutes for meeting held on January 15, 2025.

REGULAR AGENDA

8. Discussion of historical properties within the City of Leander limits.

9. Discuss and consider topics to submit for the Central Texas Learning Festival held March 5, 2025 through March 9, 2025.
10. Discuss and consider the City of Leander Public Library showcase.
11. Discuss and consider the characters for Spirits of Bagdad held in October 2025.
12. Future Agenda Items [Any deliberation of or decision about the subject of the inquiry shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on the agenda for a subsequent meeting.]
13. Adjournment

CERTIFICATION

The City of Leander is committed to compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Please call the City Secretary at (512) 528-2743 for information. Hearing impaired or speech disabled persons equipped with telecommunication devices for the deaf may call (512) 528-2800. I certify that the above agenda for this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Leander, Texas, was posted on the bulletin board at City Hall in Leander, Texas, on the 14th day of February, 2025 by 5:00 p.m. pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karina Castillo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karina Castillo, Planning Manager



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2/19/2025**

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Approval of the minutes for meeting held on January 15, 2025.

BACKGROUND:

HISTORY/TIMELINE:

APPLICANT/AGENT:

PRESENTER:

Attachments:

1. 01.17.2025 HPC Draft Minutes



**MINUTES
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING
CITY OF LEANDER, TEXAS**

Development Services - San Gabriel Conference Room
201 North Brushy Street - Leander, Texas
Wednesday, January 15, 2025
Regular Meeting at 5:30 PM



**Place 1 - Benjamin Geiger
Place 2 – Anna Yelaun
Place 3 – Kathy Howell
Place 4 – Kathy Gonzales
Place 5 - Joel Bakki**

**Place 6 – Christina Twing
Place 7 – Triste Freeburg
Council Liaison - Kathryn Pantalion-Parker
Staff Liaison – Karina Castillo**

REGULAR MEETING

1. Open Meeting.

Opened meeting at 5:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call.

Roll call reflects all Commissioners present except Commissioner Geiger and Commissioner Bakki.

3. Public comments on items not listed in the agenda.

Public comments on items listed in the agenda will be heard at the time each item is discussed.

[All comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes (6 minutes if translation is needed) per individual.]

No one spoke.

4. Review Board and Commission Reference Book.

Received a presentation by City Secretary Dara Crabtree.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

Vice Chair Howell initiated introductions with the newly appointed Commissioners.

6. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Public Education
2. Website and Social Media
3. Special Events
4. Historic Locations

1. The public education update included a presentation at the City Council meeting on 1/16. The Commission discussed the status of the showcase at the Leander Public Library.
2. The website and social media did not have any updates.
3. The special events did not have any updates since no events have taken place since the last meeting.
4. The historic locations update included renovations to the Mason Homestead coming soon.

7. STAFF BRIEFINGS

1. Bryson Farmstead
2. Davis House

The Bryson Farmstead update included the 30% plans being submitted to the Texas Historic Commission for review.

CONSENT AGENDA: ACTION

8. Approval of the minutes for meeting held on November 20, 2024.

Motion: Approve

By: Commissioner Twing

Seconded: Commissioner Freeburg

Vote: 5 - 0 None

REGULAR AGENDA

9. Discuss and consider the sub-committee appointments.

The subcommittee appointees are as follows:

1. Public Education - Commissioner Howell
2. Website and Social Media - Commissioner Yelaun
3. Special Events - Commissioner Twing
4. Historic Locations - Commissioner Gonzales

10. Discuss and consider action on the upcoming events for 2025.

Motion: Approve the following schedule of events for the Commission to participate in:

- Central Texas Learning Festival - 03/05/2025 - 03/09/2025
- Mason Heritage Days - 03/29/2025
- Old Town Festival - 06/07/2025

By: Board Member Twing

Seconded: Board Member Gonzalez

Vote: 5 - 0 None

11. Discussion of historical properties within the City of Leander limits.

Vice Chair Howell requested to move the item to the February 19, 2025 agenda.

12. Future Agenda Items [Any deliberation of or decision about the subject of the inquiry shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on the agenda for a subsequent meeting.]

Future agenda items to include discussing topics for the Central Texas Learning Festival and the Leander Public Library showcase.

13. Adjournment

Adjourned at 7:09 p.m

APPROVED

CHAIR

ATTEST:

STAFF LIAISON



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2/19/2025

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Discussion of historical properties within the City of Leander limits.

BACKGROUND:

The Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance listed duties that are required by the Commission to include maintaining an inventory of historical properties within the City of Leander. The City completed a study in partnership with CityLab which included an inventory of historical properties as a part of Tools for Implementing Preservation Policy and Programs.

DIVISION 5. - HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Sec. 1.04.121. - Created; purpose; appointment and term of members.

(e) (6) Maintain an inventory of significant historic, architectural, and cultural landmarks and all properties located within the city.

HISTORY/TIMELINE:

APPLICANT/AGENT:

PRESENTER:

Karina Castillo, AICP, Planning Manager

Attachments:

1. Inventory of Local Assets Presentation

LEANDER TEXAS

AN INVENTORY OF LOCAL HISTORICAL ASSETS

JOSHI—LEITH—SECRIST



Photograph c. 1910, courtesy of Dr. F. Stiles



While upon superficial examination we were not certain whether much historic fabric remained in Leander Texas, we were quick to learn the extent of material that contributes to this unique vernacular landscape.

Thoughts from
Karen Thompson:

The Leander of yesteryear was a family orientated place where everyone knew each other, looked out for one another, and came together when it counted most. It had a great community spirit. If we could recapture that spirit and preserve those special aspects of our past we would have a richer future for it.



RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

**CREATE AN INVENTORY OF
TANGIBLE ASSETS,
INTANGIBLE ASSETS, AND
BUILDINGS FOR THE
PURPOSES OF PLACE-MAKING**

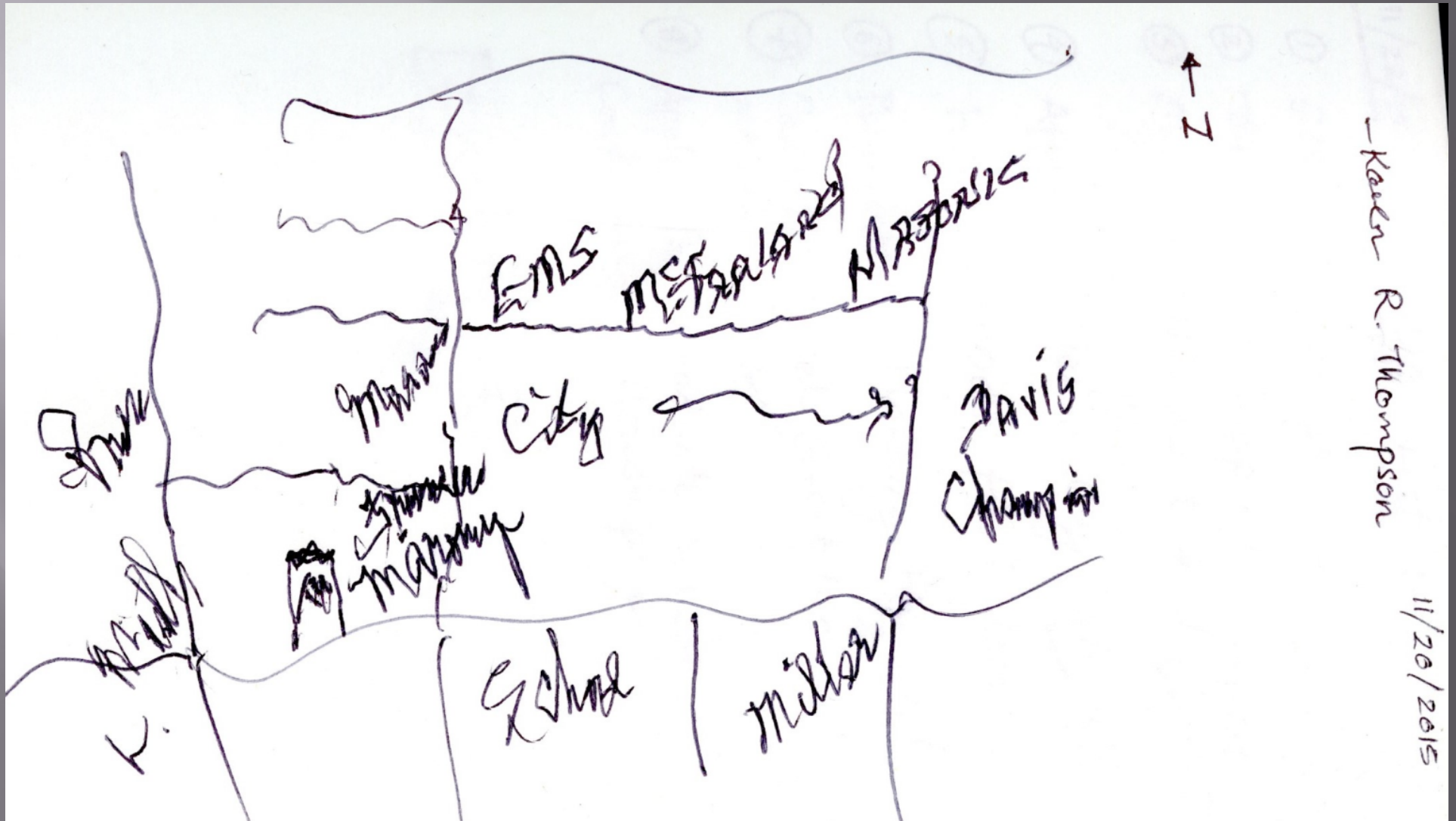
Our Process

A. Williamson Museum Collections

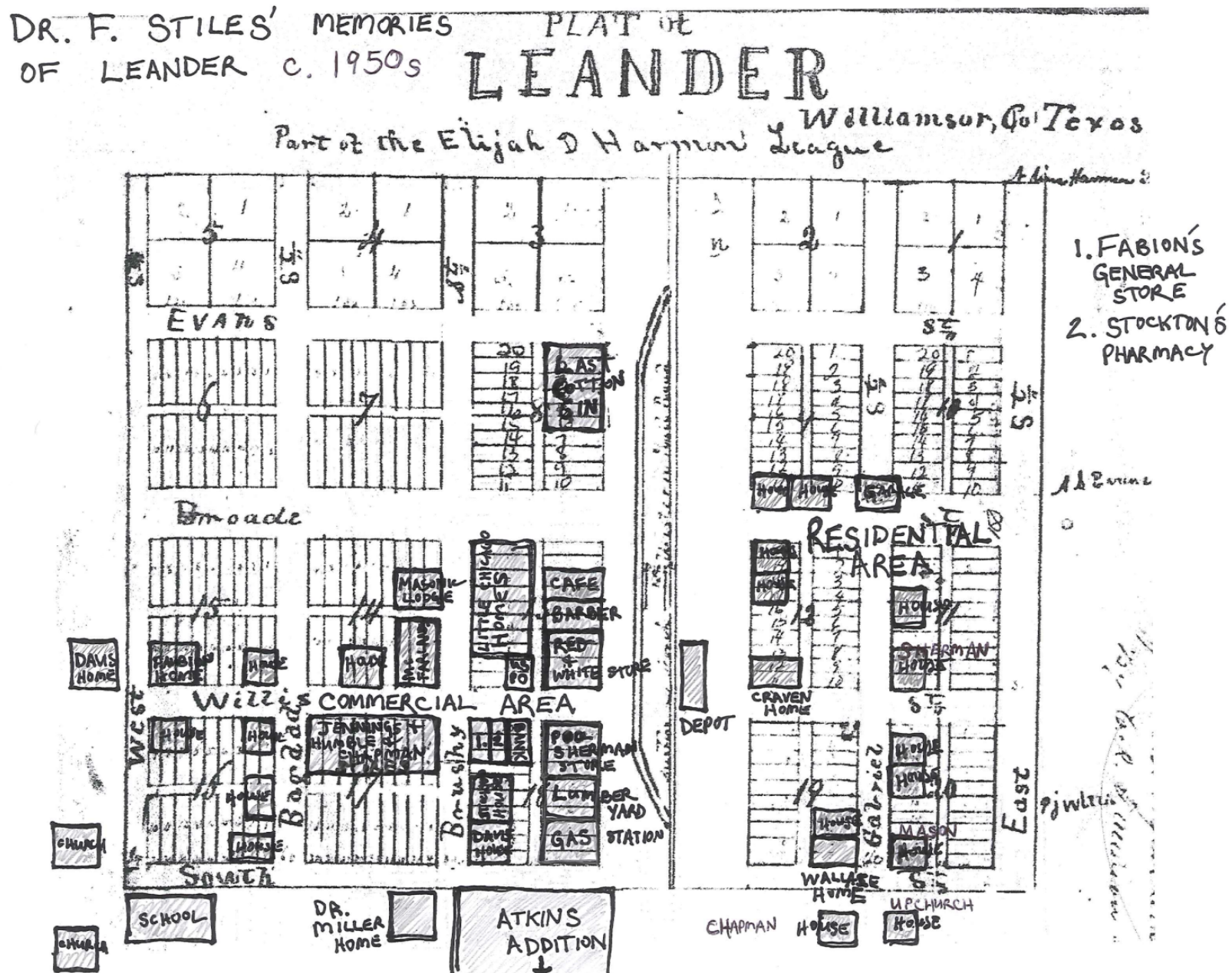
B. Cedar Park Archives

C. Leander Stakeholder Interviews

Karen R. Thompson Memory Map of Leander c. 1950s



Dr. F. Stiles' Memory Map of Leander c. 1950s
Drawn over copy of early map



Historical Introduction

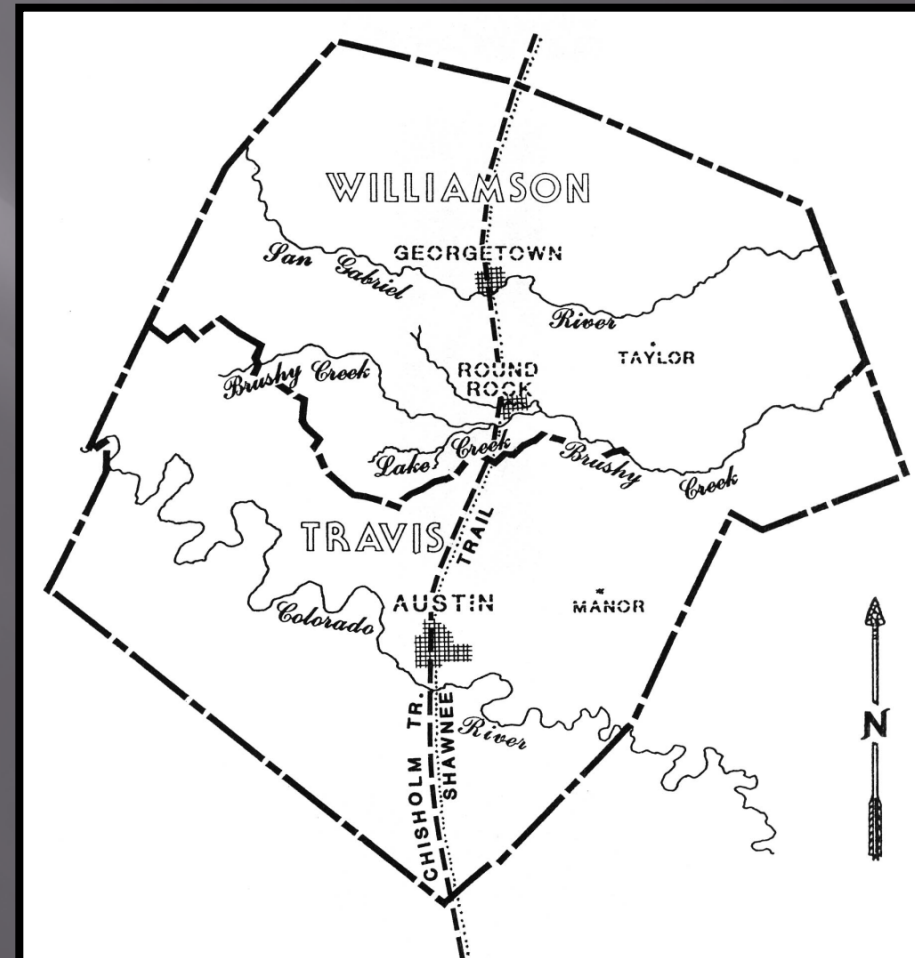


The relationship between Bagdad and Leander:

The early Days

- Mid 1840's first European settlers arrive
- Bagdad established in 1855
- Stagecoach stop between Austin and Burnet
- 1882 railroad passed by
- Late 19th century many Bagdad residents migrate to the burgeoning railroad town of Leander

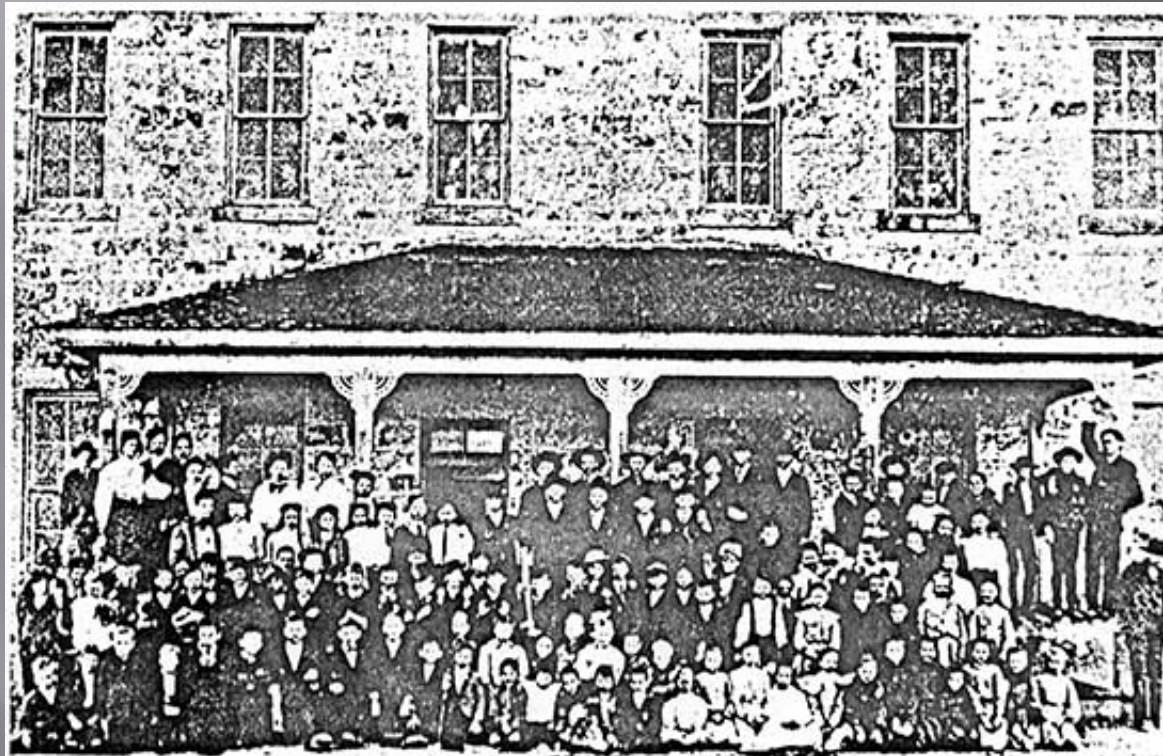
Chisholm Trail



The Norton Moses Masonic Lodge

Founded 1868, erected 1870, Bagdad.

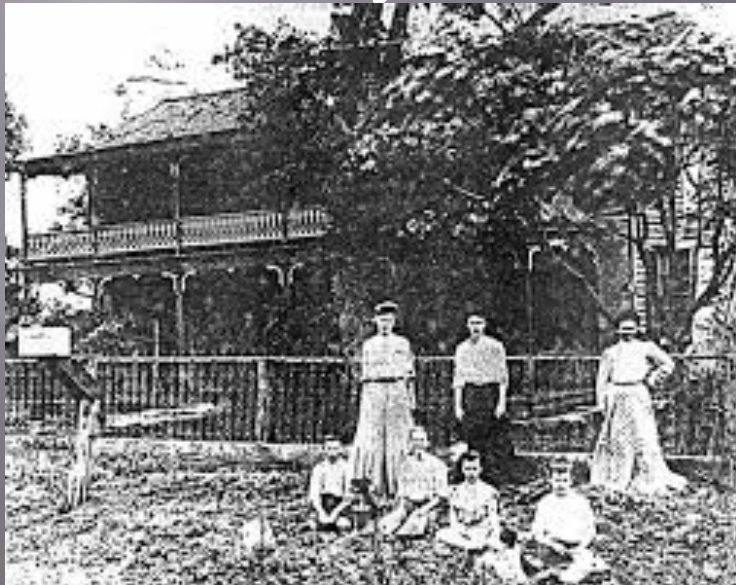
Moved to Leander, stone by stone, c. 1900



On June 24, 1868, a group of Masons met for the purpose of organizing a Masonic Lodge in Bagdad, Williamson County, Texas. At this same meeting, a committee was appointed to locate suitable land for a building. The building, of native stone quarried on the headwaters of Running Brushy, was reported completed on May 11, 1870. The building was also used as a school as evidenced by the class of 1871.

Pioneer families in Bagdad and Leander

- Colonial C. C. Mason
- Charles F. Heinatz
- the Faubion family
- Charles Babcock
- and many more...



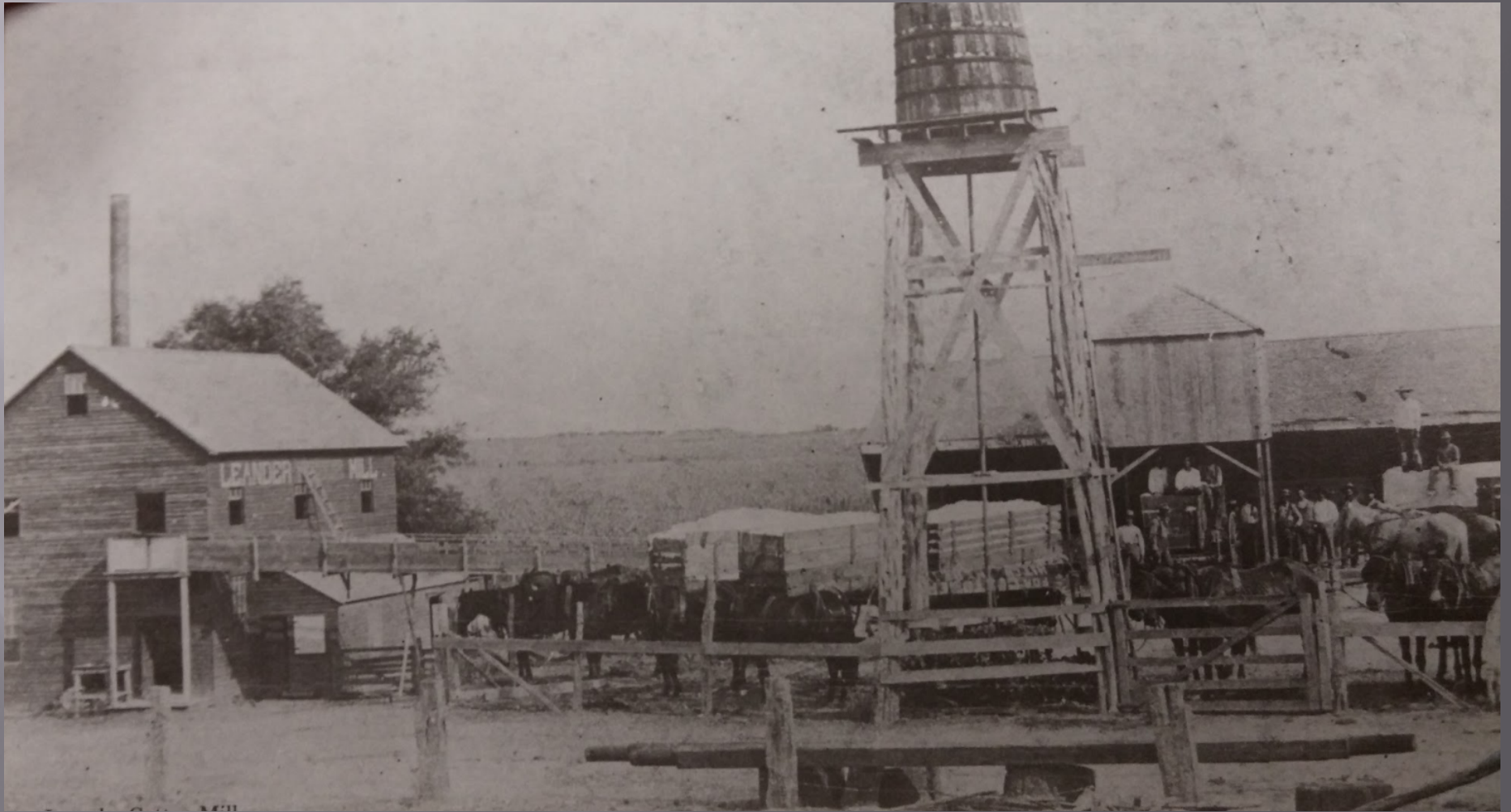
C.C. Mason Family (above)
A.S. Mason Family (left)

Leander: Historical Economy

- Cotton
- Ranching
- Stone quarry
- Farming
- Cedar post production
- Wool and mohair



The old Leander Gin



1. Tangible Assets

Tangible assets are historical artifacts, or material residues of the past, that physically reveal local history.

(Buildings are distinguished from this in a separate category.)



Tangible Assets

Leanderthal Lady



Tangible Assets

Dinosaur tracks along the San Gabriel River



Tangible Assets

Lion mascot, Leander
High School

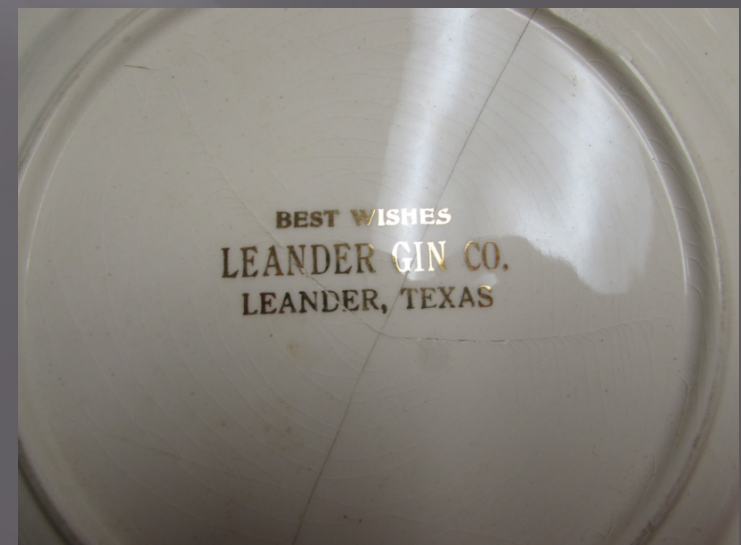
Image: Katherine
Dannelly (Thompson)
c.1950s



Photo courtesy of the Williamson
Museum

Tangible Assets

Leander promotional items from the First State Bank and last cotton gin, from the collection of Dr. Stiles



Tangible Assets

Leander promotional items from
the Red & White Store, J.J.
Stockton, and Pool's

From the collection of Dr. Stiles



Tangible Assets



Pharmaceutical bottle
from the old Stockton
Drug Store and site of the
old Stockton store below

Artifact from the Karen R.
Thompson



Tangible Assets



Mason family photos documenting over 100 years of life in Leander Texas.

Photos from the Karen R. Thompson collection

Tangible Assets

Colloquially known as the 'queen trees,' this grove of live oak trees near 11327 Old Farm Road (2243) is believed to be several hundred years old and among the oldest standing trees in the Leander area.



2. Intangible Historical Assets

Intangible historical assets include significant historical characters, events, celebratory dates, and other non-material cultural capital unique to Leander, that should be remembered and commemorated.

Photo courtesy of the Williamson Museum



Intangible Historical Assets

Local Celebratory Dates and heritage themes:

December 25, 1851: The Babcock family arrives in Bagdad. Mr. Charles Babcock went on to survey the area in 1854, which led to its establishment as a town in 1855

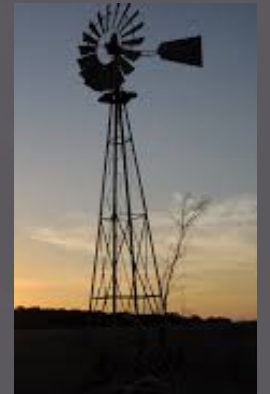
July 17, 1882: The city of Leander was founded named after railroad official **Leander Catfish Brown**

January 21, 1978: Leander was incorporated

Old Leander Days: First Saturday in November
A traditional Leander festival initiated by the high school

Appalachian heritage: **Bagdad Texas** was named after Bagdad Tennessee by early Appalachian pioneers who settled in the area.

Leander was known as **Windmill town** due to all the windmills in use



Intangible Historical Assets

Leander Community Theatre c. 1920s



Photograph courtesy of the Williamson Museum

Intangible Historical Assets

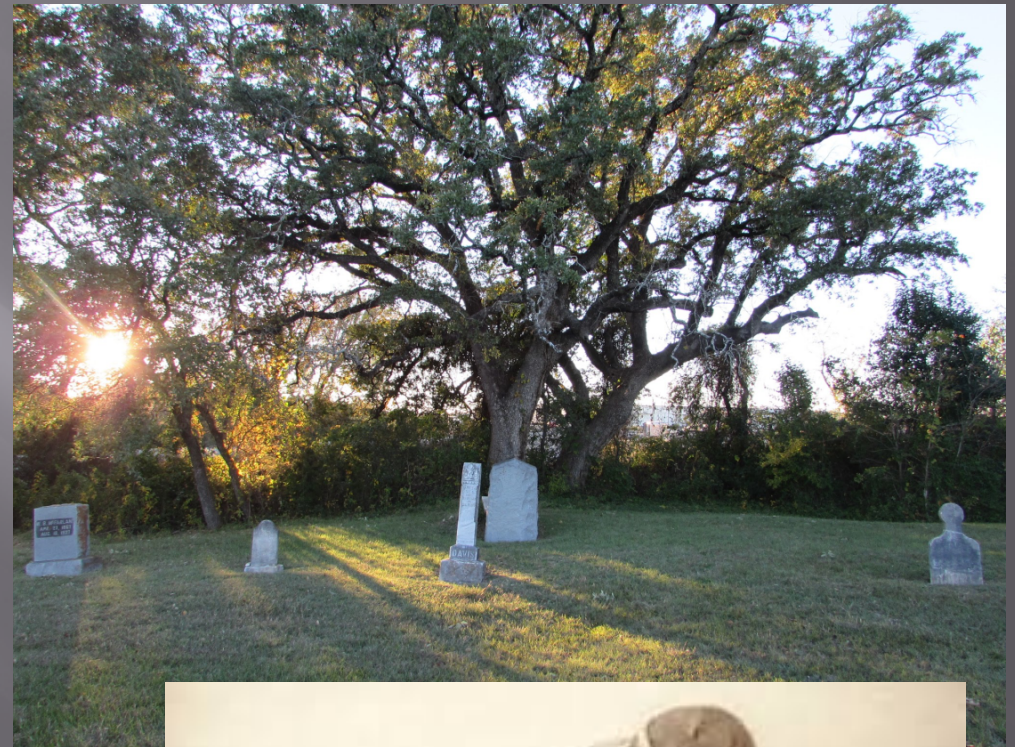
Leander Youth Baseball Team c. 1950s



Photograph courtesy of the Williamson Museum

Intangible Historical Assets

1839 Webster Massacre



Intangible Historical Assets

Dr. Miller, Town physician



Photograph from the collection of Dr. Stiles

Judge J.W. Parker, Texas
Supreme Court



Photograph courtesy of
the Williamson Museum

Intangible Historical Assets



Bill Pickett

A Damned Cool Guy

1870-1932

A Leander son of African American and Native American descent, born near the Free-Slave community of Miller (Jinks Branch) in Northwest Leander. Pickett was a famous cowboy, rodeo star, and trainer for Western film stars such as Roy Rogers. Pickett developed the rodeo sport of 'Bulldogging' which is a form of steer wrestling. Inducted posthumously into the National Rodeo Hall of Fame in 1972. He was part of the Miller Wild West Show in Oklahoma--which originated as the Buffalo Bill Cody Wild West Show. .

Intangible Historical Assets

The Manuel Flores Incident, c. 1839

A decisive move in the Texas Revolution



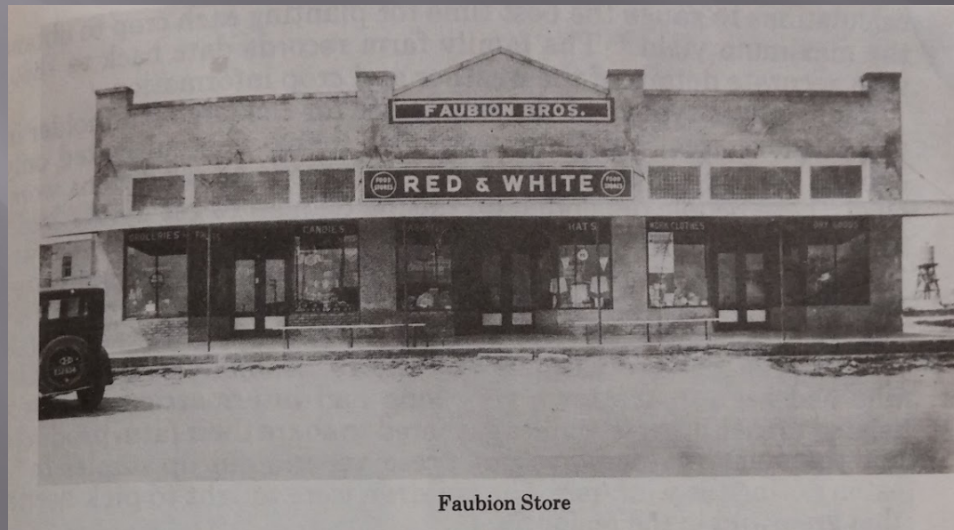
Intangible Historical Assets

The Mason monument in the Bagdad Cemetery was used as the backdrop in the opening scene to the 1974 horror film, Texas Chainsaw Massacre



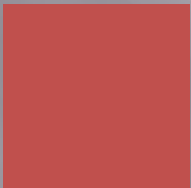
3. Extant Building Stock Survey

1. Our process: walking survey, photography, mapping, and information infill from historic maps, archival documents and local remembrances from informal interviews.
2. Our geographically distinctions in discussing Leander:
 - A. Old Town Leander, potential Historic District: based upon cursory street-view survey and classification of extant architecture
 - B. Leander Town-wide historical assets



Four Divisions for Extant Old Town Leander Building Stock:

1. **Contributing** to a local vernacular landscape:
Structure is over fifty years of age and demonstrates building materials, construction techniques, massing, and aesthetics indicative of localized traditions of vernacular architecture, and thus contributing to the cultural landscape.



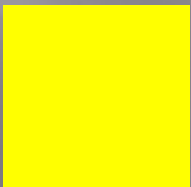
Four Divisions for Extant Old Town Leander Building Stock:

2. **Non-contributing** to a vernacular landscape:
Structure is relatively new, and does not contribute to the vernacular landscape due to a dissonance in materials, massing or aesthetics. These structures include big-box stores, track homes, demonstrating global rather than local building strategies.



Four Divisions for Extant Old Town Leander Building Stock:

3. **Intermediate significance:** A structure that is older but not historic (it is less than 50 years old). It may be emblematic of vernacular construction, or may have been extensively remodeled in recent years. While these structures do not appear historic or significant today, they may be so in the future.

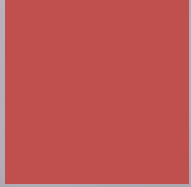


Four Divisions for Extant Old Town Leander Building Stock:

4. **Complementary:** A structure that is relatively new, but demonstrates construction techniques, materials, massing, and aesthetics that complement the extant vernacular cultural landscape.



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander

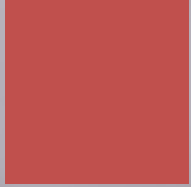


201 N. Gabriel

Dale Rancher property



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander



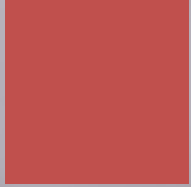
107 S. West Dr.

Leander United
Methodist
Church

Rolled on logs
from Bagdad to
Leander



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander

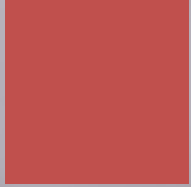


201 N. West Dr.

colloquially
known as the
Ms. Davis House



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander



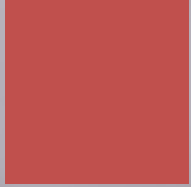
100 N. Brushy

colloquially
known as the
Champion House

Today: The
Chamber of
Commerce
building



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander



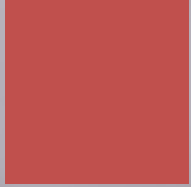
104 N. Brushy

colloquially
known as the
Davis house
and the Stockton
house

Today: The
Planning
Department



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander

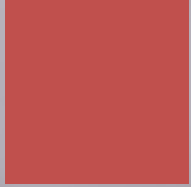


101 N. Gabriel

colloquially
known as the
Wallace House



Contributing Properties in Old Town Leander



101 N. Bagdad
Street

Stone masonry
outbuilding



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

Bagdad Rd ½
mile south of
2243

A.S. Mason
house c. 1866



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

Bagdad Rd 1
mile south of
2243

E.B. Mason
house c. 1865

Donated to
Leander by
Christine Mason
c. 2005



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

E.B. Mason
house c. 1865

Interior



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

301 Bagdad Rd

Heinatz House
c. 1850

Owner:
Bruce Safley

Possibly the
oldest standing
house in
Leander



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

Heinatz House

Interior



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

351 N. Bagdad
Rd

Heinatz General
Store and post
office

c. 1855



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

400 N. Bagdad
Rd

Bagdad
Cemetery



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

**Miller or
Jinks Branch**

Freed Slave
community

North Leander



Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

6000 N. Bagdad
Rd

Purportedly a
Sears Roebuck
home

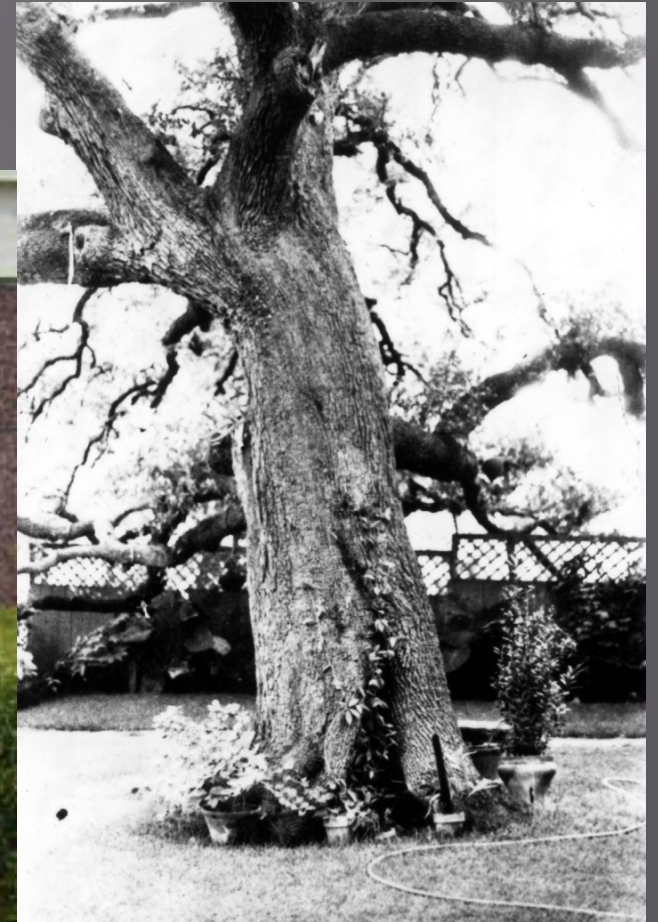


Contributing Properties outside Old Town Leander

Fort Tumlinson Blockhouse site

c. 1835

one of the
earliest
European
settlements in
the area



Conclusions

- Leander is indeed a special place
- If the city council does elect to pursue a National Register district nomination, they can perhaps utilize this data
- There is a considerable amount of historical fabric to work with that contributes to a unique vernacular landscape
- There are many people here who care a lot—which is the most critical key in preservation
- Aspects of Leander that community stakeholders regard as essential to preserve—without which Leander's unique character will be further jeopardized:
 - Certain buildings
 - A representative sample of open land
 - A spirit of community

With sincere gratitude to the generous stakeholders of Leander who gave of their time and insight:

Ann Evans, Curator Williamson Museum
Bill Dodd
Bruce A. Safley
Dale Rancher
Debra Carlson, Leander United Methodist Church
Dr. Frank Stiles
Karen R. Thompson
Mason Thompson
Susan Ney, proprietor of Cobblestone Antiques, Georgetown
Ted Kirkpatrick

Access to archival materials courtesy of the Williamson Museum, the Cedar Park Library, Karen R. Thompson, and Dr. Frank Stiles

Bibliography

Bailey, Elizabeth. A History of Leander: 1836-1986.
Faubion, Mrs. Ada Mae. The True History of Old Bagdad and Leander.
Naumann, Mrs. Malcom. History of Leander. 1974.
Scarborough, Clara Stearns. Land of Good Water: A Williamson County Texas History. Georgetown Texas: Williamson County Publishers, 1973.
Thompson, Karen R. Round Rock, Texas: From Cowboys to Computers. Austin: Nortex Press, 2002.

http://www.williamson-county-historical-commission.org/BAGDAD_TEXAS/BAGDAD_TEXAS.htm
<http://www.leandertx.gov/community/page/history-city-leander>
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/HJL04>
<https://www.stoppingpoints.com/texas/city.cgi?city=Leander&cnty=williamson>
http://www.williamson-county-historical-commission.org/Leander/Pioneers_Home_old_J-C_Bryson_Home_Historical_Marker_Leander_Texas.html
<http://www.statesman.com/news/news/local/century-old-mason-homestead-now-open-to-public/nTtJ9/>
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bbw03>





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2/19/2025

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider topics to submit for the Central Texas Learning Festival held March 5, 2025 through March 9, 2025.

BACKGROUND:

The Commission voted during the January 17, 2025 meeting to participate in the festival. The Central Texas Learning Festival is being held on March 5, 2025 through March 9, 2025.

HISTORY/TIMELINE:

APPLICANT/AGENT:

PRESENTER:

Attachments:



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2/19/2025**

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider the City of Leander Public Library showcase.

BACKGROUND:

The Historic Preservation Committee has previously had a showcase at the Leander Public Library that is periodically updated by the Commissioners based on the agreed upon topics. The Commission may decide to choose a new topic or route a previous topic.

HISTORY/TIMELINE:

APPLICANT/AGENT:

PRESENTER:

Attachments:



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2/19/2025

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider the characters for Spirits of Bagdad held in October 2025.

BACKGROUND:

The Leander Chamber of Commerce previously included a sub-committee made of members of the Historic Preservation Commission to help with their Spirits of Bagdad event held in October. The Chamber has requested the Commission's assistance with their event this October.

HISTORY/TIMELINE:

APPLICANT/AGENT:

PRESENTER:

Attachments: