

# HILLSBORO PRESERVATION HISTORY OVERVIEW

Hillsboro is the county seat of Hill County, when Hill County was established in 1853, three locations (Lexington (Union Bluff), Peoria and Woodbury) were suggested for the county seat, but none were near the center of the county. A 220-acre plot was donated by Thomas M. Steiner a mile from the center of the county, and the community was called Hillsborough, in honor of Dr. George W. Hill, an early settler; Hill was the first settler in Navarro County, which later became part of Hill County. In 1853 a section was carved out of the west half of Navarro County and named Hill County after Dr. Hill. The first school in Hill County opened, and in 1854 Hillsborough received a post office. Before current courthouse was built in 1890, several courthouses served the community. The first, built of elm poles, was replaced by a frame building in 1854. In 1872 a two-story brick courthouse was constructed; it burned and was replaced by a fourth courthouse in 1874 and that structure burned in 1993 and was restored and occupied today.

## THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In 2004, the Hillsboro City Council established the **Designation of Landmarks and Historical Districts** in order to safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage as embodied and reflected in historic properties, districts, and landmarks, by application of

appropriate resources. The Council established the Hillsboro Preservation Commission, which recommended to Council the boundaries of the designated District's. Additionally, the Commission was given the responsibility to "preserve and protect" the District's architectural character. To accomplish this, the Commission is authorized by city ordinance to review proposed changes to the exterior features of buildings (and certain structures) within the Districts visible to the public and to decide upon the appropriateness of such changes within the context of the District. To assist with carrying out its responsibilities, the Commission has developed and adopted a Preservation Handbook that is utilized to help the Commission decide upon the appropriateness of activities proposed within the Districts. The handbook is also intended to help residents of the Districts understand the Commission's general preferences as it reviews proposed changes.



Copies of the Historic Overlay are available at the  
City of Hillsboro Community Development  
214 E. Elm St. Hillsboro, TX 76645  
Phone (254) 582-2119 Fax (254) 582-0112  
[www.hillsborotx.org](http://www.hillsborotx.org) rev. 5.3.13

# HILLSBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION



## PURPOSE OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1. Approve or disapprove applications for Certificates of Appropriateness utilizing the approved Hillsboro Preservation Handbook.
2. Adopt criteria for the designation of historic, architectural, and cultural landmarks and for the delineation of historic districts, which will be ratified by the City Council.
3. Recommend recognition for owners of landmarks or properties within historic districts with certificates, plaques or markers.
4. Increase public awareness of the value of historic, cultural and architectural preservation by developing and participating in public education programs.

## BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The owners of historic structures and homes in Hillsboro are entrusted with proper preservation of the community's architectural past. Proper preservation will help Hillsboro maintain its historical designations and ensure that tourism and its economic benefits continue to grow. Preserving Hillsboro's old structures enriches the community and maintains a strong link to its past. Both Hillsboro and its residents benefit financially from the City's revitalization. Visitors and new residents come to Hillsboro to step back in time and savor the rural,

frontier heritage of Texas. Cherishing and preserving that heritage has enabled Hillsboro to pave a new pathway to the community's growing future.

## LOCAL EXAMPLES OF HISTORIC

HILLSBORO CITY LIBRARY  
118 S. Waco Street, Built in 1913...originally the U. S. Post Office



THE TARLTON-MORRIS HOUSE:  
211 N. Pleasant, Built in 1895 for attorney Green D. Tarlton, Recorded Texas Historical Landmark.



MKT (KATY) DEPOT:  
115 N. Covington The depot was restored and moved to its current location from the original site in 1978



THE HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE:  
Built in 1890, Restored from fire in 1993  
Hillsboro Courthouse Square



HISTORIC CITY HALL:  
127 E. Franklin  
Built in 1909-1910 by Tom Sowell, contractor/builder.



THE PALACE THEATRE:  
Located on South Waco.

*The marquee shows movie Treasure Island (Wallace Beery, Jackie Cooper, Lionel Barrymore) and Hide Out (Robert Montgomery and Maureen O'Sullivan) Both were released in August 1934*



Internet information regarding Hillsboro Historic Preservation is available on the web at the following address: <http://www.hillsborotx.org>.