

# **Farmers Branch Historical Park Strategic Plan 2018 - 2028**

## **Presented by the Historical Park and Preservation Board**

### **Mission:**

- The mission of the Historical Park, as a living history museum, is to collect, preserve, interpret and celebrate the history of the United States and Texas with an emphasis on Peters Colony and Farmers Branch.
- Secondary mission is to generate hotel nights

### **Vision:**

The Farmers Branch Historical Park envisions itself as the premier accredited museum of North Texas history. The Park will bring to life our shared experiences through interpretation of people, objects, cultures and activities from the ancient past through the present day. It will be a place where citizens and visitors can connect, understand and explore history.

### **Elements/Goals needed to accomplish the Vision:(strategy must be long term with a commitment of time and money)**

#### **I. "What is the story we're telling?" (What is the ultimate goal)**

- Assemble the individual pieces of the story of Farmers Branch into a cohesive and compelling whole. The story would link our past to our future and use the underlying theme of sustainability to do this. This should be done ASAP either by Historical park staff or contracted out to a professional who can write a compelling story which will define our direction.
- This story will determine what artifacts, facilities, staff, events, activities we need to have in place to tell it to accomplish our mission and vision.

#### **II. Programming**

- Add 1 or 2 more Destination Events. Explore doing a Civil War Reenactment, Antique Farm Equipment Show, 1920's Jam Session, Antique car show, other ideas
- One weekend/ month have all the buildings open and have several demonstrations of skills, trades, gardening, cooking, distilling and brewing, tiny houses, blacksmith etc going on
- Twice on weekend days and less frequently during the week, offer docent led tours. These will be done on a regular published schedule, and will go

to all the buildings for a brief tour and history of each. People on the tours will pay a fee to take them.

- Special smaller Events - i.e. Encounters with the Past, Murders and Mayhem, Victorian Christmas, Vintage Baseball, Lectures, Chataqua others?

### **III. Educational activities and events**

- School tours
- Self-guided tours
- Nature events - i.e. Star parties, Bird Walks, Garden tours, Sustainability events/workshops
- Children and family centered activities and classes in Activity/Conference Center and in historic buildings - i.e. a day at school
- Community centered, culture themed events
- Take artifacts to schools, PTA meetings, Chamber of Commerce, civic & history groups etc
- Research opportunities – schools and colleges, geneologists, academics

### **IV. Hotel night events**

- Bloomin' Bluegrass
- History themed - i.e. Civil War Reenactment, Antique Farm Equipment Show, 1920's Jam Session, Antique car show, other ideas
- Sustainable living in the past, present & future
- Weddings
- Business meetings
- Community and family private events
- Pop Up Etsy Fair
- Pop Up Small Business Ventures/ Environmental Business Entrepreneurs

### **V. Facilities and Infrastructure**

- Museum/Activity/Conference Center located inside the Park - modern "green" building with up to date technology. Revisit the reuse and expense of the Buchanan building in the context of this vision for the Historical Park.
- Welcome/park entry area
- Exhibits - permanent and traveling
  1. Contact the Smithsonian about being a place they can use for their exhibitions

2. Contact the Institute of Texan Cultures for Baseball Memorabilia, etc.

- Archival storage
- Offices
- Gift shop
- Large Meeting room(s)/classrooms
- Use Solar and Wind energy
- Sidewalks and Parking with Grassy areas included for Water Run Off and Heat alleviation
- Light colored permeable surface on Parking for heat reflection and drainage
- Ford Road entrance and parking lot/ Brown highway sign
- Acquire creekside vacant property on the Buchanan tract if not the building, Bonneau property to the east
- Establish an Indian culture area; other outside exhibits

#### **VI. Organization and Staffing (Staff means FT/PT city employees and contract personnel)**

- Fully Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums - This Is not an all or nothing proposition (Progressive levels of accreditation Pledge of Excellance – Museum Assessment Programs – full accreditation.
- Establish the Historical Park as a separate City Department, not under Park and Recreation
- Operate the Park using the procedures and best practices of a Museum
- Essential Staff includes Museum Director, Accredited Curator, Education Director (Danielle), Development Director(fund raiser,sponsorships, grants), Administrative staff (Kim), docents, Landscape and Maintenance (Tony Derrick and his crew)
- Museum Director, Accredited Curator should be hired immediatley** as they are essential to the reallization of this vision and mission.
- Desired Staff includes Volunteer Coordinator, Wedding Planner, others as needed

#### **VII. Collection**

- Overseen by a professional Curator and maintained and organized using Best Practices
- Ensure collection is properly stored and cared for.
- Expand artifact collection to support the museums mission

- Collect and organize Oral Histories so they can be sharedwith the public
- Complete the transcription of Dr. Gilbert's journals
- Continue working with pioneer families to acquire heirloom pieces
- Add to the Story we are telling

## **VIII. Community Partners**

- Friends of the Park
- Volunteers
- Businesses
- Local schools
- Brookhaven College
- Peter's Colony cities
- Area and regional historical societies
- Local arts groups - performing and visual
- Community groups - i.e. garden clubs, environmental groups, Girl and Boy Scouts
- Other museums – local, regional and national
- other

## **IX. Sources of Funds**

- Hotel tax/ Revenue bonds
- General Fund/ GO bonds
- Admission and parking fees
- Memberships
- Rentals - i.e. weddings, business, family and private events
- Event sponsorships
- Grants from private and public foundations and government entities
- Individual and corporate contributions
- Concessions
- Other

## **X. Marketing**

- Opportunities for Marketing Milestones 1.long term commitment 2.ground breaking 3. first stages of accreditation 4. full accreditation
- Change the name from Farmers Branch Historical Park to the Museum of North Texas History. Hold a widely publicized weekend long Grand Re-

Opening Celebration. Have President Sam Houston ride into town and make an appearance (he was in our city and rode right down the trail that is now Valley View Lane.)

- Grand Opening of Museum/Conference Center

Widely publicized with VIP guests from around N. Texas and a variety of activities.

- SOCIAL MEDIA**

- City media

- Local, state and national media

- Signage -one opportunity would be through DART

- Cross promote HP with other FB events and other local events

### **Resources for this Plan**

- 1983, 2004 & 2009 Master Plans

- DOMPROZ Hotel Tax Study

- Derrick Birdsall, Jamie Rigsby, Danielle Brisette, Kim Chapman

- American Alliance of Museums website -

<http://www.aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs/MAP>

- Experiences/discussions of the current and past Historical Park Board Members

Approved by the Historical Park and Preservation Board October 24, 2017

Presented to the Farmers Branch City Council November 1, 2017