



COUNTY JUDGE

Mike Campbell

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Mr. Joseph Bell, Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711-2276

RE: Clay County Courthouse Restoration Application Round XIV

Dear Mr. Bell:

I am writing to support Clay County's application for grant funding from the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. The Clay County Courthouse, built in 1884 and substantially modified in 1912 and 1922, remains a vital asset to county operations and an important landmark in the region's cultural heritage.

Although past renovations and deferred maintenance have introduced notable deficiencies, the building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and offers a strong opportunity for comprehensive preservation and restoration. The findings of our current updated Master Plan's assessment support the feasibility of a full restoration guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. This approach will ensure that all repairs respect the courthouse's historic character while meeting contemporary performance and code requirements.

Restoration will reinforce the building's role as the community's civic and cultural anchor and ensure it continues to support core governmental functions, including the County and District Courts, the Commissioners Court, the County and District Clerks, and the Tax Assessor-Collector. Beyond its governmental use, the courthouse remains an active community gathering place, hosting public events and seasonal celebrations. It is further distinguished by its collection of historic markers and monuments.

Precinct 1 Commissioner Ben Pharries noted that it is a major, necessary project for the county. The Commissioners' Court recognizes the importance of our courthouse and is dedicated to providing the funding necessary to maintain it.

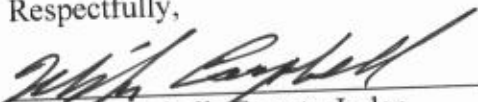
The courthouse was completed in 1884 with a tall clock tower. According to court minutes, the tower leaked because high winds in Clay County caused it to move. Thankfully, a vote to tear it down and build a new one failed overwhelmingly, so in 1922, the tower was replaced by the dome and gable roof you see today.

The Master Plan was created in 2002, updated in 2020, and updated again this year. According to the architectural report, the building is structurally sound. However, there are issues, including deterioration of the masonry, windows, and doors. Accessibility for people with disabilities has always been a challenge.


In 1884, Clay County was at the western edge of civilization in terms of justice. The jurisdiction extended deep into West Texas and remained the closest courtroom for many years. This historic courthouse has served Texas and Clay County well for over 142 years. With the Renovation Grant awarded, we strongly believe it will serve another 142 years.

Thank you for your consideration in funding this grant for Clay County.

Respectfully,



Mike Campbell, County Judge

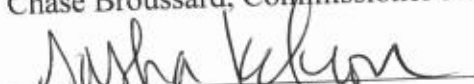
Attest:


Ben Pharries, Commissioner Precinct 1


Jack Pickett, Commissioner Precinct 2


Retta Collins, Commissioner Precinct 3


Chase Broussard, Commissioner Precinct 4


Sasha Kelton, County Clerk

