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PRESS RELEASE

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Local history museum proposed

Kerrville, Texas (Jan. 21, 2020) - The City of Kerrville and the Heart of the Hills Heritage Center (HHHC) have entered into a prospective public/private partnership to develop the A.C. Schreiner House and its grounds on the Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library campus as a local history museum.

The museum will focus on the rich cultural heritage and history of Kerr County and the surrounding Hill Country, including Kerrville's origins as a shingle-making community in the 1840s and its growth as a vital and vibrant economic trading center between San Antonio and El Paso.

"People have been trying to form a history museum for Kerr County since at least the 1920s," local historian Joe Herring, Jr. said. "Several efforts have been successful in the past, but those museums and collections are no longer here. Today Kerr County does not have a history museum. We need a special dedicated place for our citizens and visitors to

learn our community's story. A community is stronger when it knows its history. I'm grateful for all of those who have been working so long to make this museum a reality.”

The proposed project is dependent on private and public fundraising efforts. The partnership between the City and HHHC will promote improvements to the grounds, including a small pavilion, improved walkways, and additional landscaping. A tie-in to the Kerrville Urban Trail System (KUTS) will connect the system to pathways through the campus, leading to the Kerrville River Trail.

The mission of the Heart of the Hills Heritage Center is to collect, preserve, interpret, and promote the cultural heritage and history of Kerr County and the Texas Hill Country through exhibits, educational activities and special events.

The firms SLS Partnership of Kerrville and Lubbock, Texas, and Outposts Landscape Architects of Colmesneil, Texas, designed the A.C. Schreiner House site plan. The A.C. Schreiner house and grounds were gifted to the City of Kerrville in 2015 for the benefit, enhancement, and support of the Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library Campus system. The grounds of the A.C. Schreiner House have been the home of the Kerrville Farmer’s Market since April 2018.

"I believe having a museum of this area's history in a historic home like this helps bring us together as a community and is a tremendous teaching opportunity for young and old alike," Kerrville Mayor Bill Blackburn said.

“This proposed project supports the Kerrville 2050 and Downtown revitalization efforts by providing a history and heritage center that will attract residents and visitors of all ages to the library campus and our beautiful downtown,” Library Director Laura Bechtel said. “Our hope is

that residents and visitors of all ages find opportunities to learn about our community and its cultural heritage.

“We hope that the whole community comes together to support this undertaking to create a new, exciting destination for families in downtown Kerrville,” Bechtel added.

HHHC member William Rector is also looking forward to having a new history center.

“Today’s workshop decision fulfills many of the museum focus groups’ recommendations from 2016, and also fulfills many of the objectives of the Kerrville 2050 Plan,” Rector said. “Unfortunately, children are not born with an innate knowledge of history. Education of our children about the people, sacrifices, hardships and inspirations that created this community, county and area is one of the primary objectives of this Heritage Center.

“A regional history center has been a dream for many years,” Rector added. “This particular attempt was brought on by public input and intends to utilize existing groups from our community and state for a result that we can all be proud of. We believe it will be an additional draw to the downtown area and a compliment to what has already been established, combining a large public space that highlights our river, our past and our future.”

Public fundraising efforts will begin soon in an effort to reach the estimated \$4 million-plus from public and private sources needed to fund the project.

