

TEXAS CAPITOL COMPLEX GUIDE





Texas *Capitals* and *Capitols*

PRIOR TO THE ANNEXATION of Texas as the 28th U.S. state on Dec. 29, 1845, Texas history records 14 capital cities under flags of Spain, Mexico and the Republic of Texas. (1836 was a busy year for Texas capitals as the Republic of Texas kept moving its seat of government to avoid the Mexican army that was seeking to crush the revolution.)

The Texas Congress chose Austin as the permanent capital of the Republic in 1839. The first of four Austin capitols was a rustic frame structure at the corner of 8th and Colorado streets. This original building served the Republic of Texas from 1839–42 and the state of Texas from 1845–52, at which point a structure called the Limestone Capitol was erected on the present Capitol Grounds. The second Capitol eventually proved inadequate for the growing business of the state. Its destruction by fire in 1881 impelled action on long-envisioned plans for a monumental new building.

In the interim, a temporary Capitol was built at 11th Street and Congress Avenue in 1882. It served until the present Capitol was completed in 1888. The temporary Capitol burned down in 1899. Its foundations are located at point “A” in the the foldout map.

EARLY CAPITALS OF TEXAS

Mexico City, Mexico	1519
Monclova, Mexico	1686
Los Adaes (now Robeline, Louisiana)	1721
San Antonio	1772
Saltillo, Mexico	1824
Monclova, Mexico	1833
San Felipe	1835
Washington-on-the-Brazos	1836
Harrisburg	1836
Galveston Island	1836
Velasco	1836
Columbia (West Columbia)	Oct. 1836
Houston	Apr. 19, 1837
Austin*	Jan. 19, 1839

**In 1842, the Texas capital moved to Houston and then Washington-on-the-Brazos before returning to Austin in 1845.*





PHOTOS BY WILL VAN OVERBEEK / TXDOT

The Capitol of Texas

THE TEXAS CONSTITUTION, adopted Feb. 15, 1876, provided for the sale of public land to finance a new state capitol. The builders accepted, as payment, 3 million acres of land in 10 counties of the Texas Panhandle. This land became the famed XIT Ranch.

Original plans called for construction using Texas limestone. However, after the laying of the cornerstone on March 2, 1885, concern arose about being able to obtain a uniform quality of limestone from the then-available quarries.

Fortunately, the owners of Granite Mountain, in Marble Falls

in Burnet County, offered building stone free of charge to the state. The structure was completed with the superb Sunset Red Texas Granite that makes the Texas Capitol so distinctive. It was dedicated on May 16, 1888, and occupied in September of that year. The final cost was approximately \$3.7 million (equivalent to an estimated \$91.2 million in 2011 dollars).



Capitol Construction

CONSTRUCTION of the Capitol began in 1882 and was completed in 1888. Covering 2.25 acres of ground with 8.5 acres of floor space, the Capitol was said to be the seventh largest building in the world at the time of its completion. It was designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1986.

Architect: Elijah E. Myers.

Design: Renaissance Revival.

Dimensions:

- Length: 585 feet, including steps.
- Width: 300 feet, including steps.
- Height: 302.64 feet, from the oval walk to the tip of the star in the Goddess of Liberty statue's hand. The dome, including the statue, is 14.64 feet taller than that of the U.S. Capitol.
- The Goddess of Liberty statue is 15 feet, 7.5 inches tall, measured to the top of the star. Made of zinc, the statue was placed on Feb. 26, 1888. It was replaced with an aluminum duplicate in 1986. The original Goddess of Liberty is a permanent exhibit at the Bullock Texas State History Museum.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

• Exterior walls: Approximately 4,000 loads of Sunset Red Texas Granite and 11,000 loads of limestone, quarried approximately 47 miles northwest of Austin near Marble Falls, were transported by a specially built railroad and teams of oxen.

- Foundation and interior walls: Texas limestone.
- Woodwork: Wainscoting (the paneling, usually 3 to 4 feet high, of an interior wall) and other woodwork are primarily oak and pine. Cherry, walnut, mahogany and cedar were used too.
- Dome: Galvanized, cast and wrought iron.
- Roof covering: Copper, 85,000 square feet.
- Flooring: Original, geometric-patterned encaustic tile, glass tile, wood, concrete, wool carpet and linoleum. Terrazzo on the first floor halls and rotunda were laid in 1936; terrazzo on the upper floors were laid circa 1950s. All terrazzo colors were created using Texas rock aggregate except for a small amount of pure white marble from Georgia.



The star in the ceiling of the Capitol dome has letters between the points spelling out “Texas.”

- Weight of cornerstone: 16,000 pounds in the rough.

RESTORATION AND RENOVATION

Under the supervision of the Texas State Preservation Board, a comprehensive restoration and renovation of the Capitol was completed in 1995 with a rededication ceremony held on April 21 of that year. The restoration focused on the period from 1888, when the building was completed, to 1915, before major remodeling began. All non-original walls and ceilings added over the years were removed, and the original woodwork and plasterwork were restored or reproduced. To create a safe and functional working environment, new fire protection, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, heating, air-conditioning and communications systems were installed.

Certain historically significant areas—including the Senate and House chambers, Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals courtrooms, Treasurer’s Business Office, Legislative Reference Library and the Agricultural Museum—received special treatment, including restoration and/or reproduction of original flooring, furnishings, artwork and accessories.

THE CAPITOL EXTENSION

In conjunction with the renovation, the four-story underground Capitol Extension was built on the north side of the Capitol. Completed in 1993, the more than 650,000-square-foot extension is connected to the Capitol and to five adjacent buildings by pedestrian tunnels. It contains eight skylight courts that bring natural light into the building.

The design of the two-story, open-air rotunda in the extension complements the Capitol rotunda. The bronze star on the floor reflects the style of the star in the ceiling of the Capitol dome. Both stars have letters between the points spelling out “Texas.”



A composite terrazzo design of the “Seals of the Nations” is in the center of the rotunda floor.



What's Where?

FIRST FLOOR—**South Entrance Foyer** (from 11th and Congress)—Twelve significant battles fought on Texas soil are memorialized in terrazzo on the foyer floor. On opposite walls are paintings by early Texas artist W.H. Huddle: The one on the west wall depicts the surrender of Santa Anna after the battle of San Jacinto, and the one on the east wall features David Crockett, well-known hero of the Alamo. Flanking the entrance to the rotunda are marble statues by Texas sculptor Elisabet Ney of Stephen F. Austin, founder of the first American colony in Texas, and Sam Houston, Commander-in-Chief of the Army during the Texas Revolution.

The **Treasurer's Business Office** in the south entrance foyer has been restored to its circa 1910 architecture, finishes and furnishings, and it houses the **Capitol Information and Guide Service**.

ROTUNDA—In the center of the building is the rotunda rising to the top of the dome. The original size of the ground floor's corridors and rotunda have been restored. Rotating exhibits from around the state are displayed in the ground-floor rotunda, which leads to the Capitol extension. The four upper floors of the Capitol open onto the rotunda. The circular steps in the uppermost portion of the dome are not open to the public. Portraits of the four presidents of the Republic of Texas and past governors of the State of Texas are displayed on the walls of the first, second, third and fourth floors. A marble bust by Enrico F. Cerracchio of Texas' first female governor, Miriam A. Ferguson, occupies a pedestal on the first floor.

A composite terrazzo design of the “Seals of the Nations” is in

the center of the rotunda floor. The Seal of the Republic of Texas, with its Lone Star, forms the core of the giant pattern. Encircling the core and between the points of a larger star are the coats of arms from the five other nations of which Texas has been a part.

Colorful stonework depicts the Great Seal of the United States. Next, clockwise, is the Seal of the Confederacy picturing an equestrian figure of George Washington at Richmond. Mexico's seal displays the legendary eagle and snake. France is represented by the dignity of the fleur-de-lis from the coat of arms of the Bourbon kings of France. For the Kingdom of Spain, a seal depicts the lions and castles of Leon and Castile. The overall design can be appreciated more fully by views from the upper balconies of the rotunda.

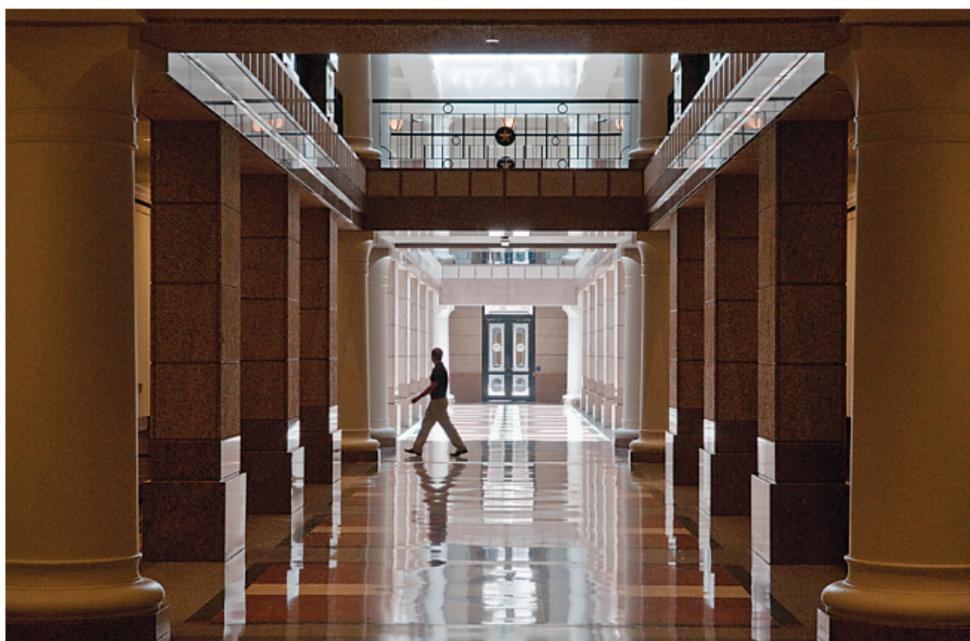
SECOND FLOOR—Visitors are welcome in the **Governor's Public Reception Room**, which is furnished with handsome, late 19th-century Victorian antiques, a few of which are original to the room. Decor includes original and reproduction cherry-wood shutters originally installed on all above-ground windows. Working offices for the governor and staff are to the right and left of the reception room.



The Senate Chamber is in the east wing on the second floor.

Regular sessions of the Legislature convene on the second Tuesday of January in odd-numbered years, but the governor may call special sessions. During legislative sessions, visitors are not permitted on the House or Senate floor without permission; however, proceedings may be viewed from the third-floor visitor galleries.

The **House of Representatives Chamber**, in the west wing, is the meeting location for 150 members elected for two-year terms and presided over by the speaker, who is elected from the membership. Votes are cast electronically. Totals appear on a small panel on the speaker's desk and on large panels



The underground Capitol Extension contains skylight courts that bring natural light into the building.

on the west wall of the chamber. Members of the press have their own box to the speaker's left. Bills are read at the podium directly in front of the speaker. Behind the speaker's rostrum, the original San Jacinto battle flag is enshrined. The speaker of the House has offices and living quarters behind the chamber. The chief clerk's office is to the north of the chamber.

The **Senate Chamber**, in the east wing, is the hall of deliberation for the 31 members elected for four-year terms. The lieutenant governor presides over the Senate. The lieutenant governor's office and the office for the secretary of the senate are behind the Senate Chamber. Of the many paintings in this chamber, most historical interest is drawn to the two giant scenes on the west wall titled "Dawn at the Alamo" and "The Battle of San Jacinto." Artist H.A. McArdle spent 40 years researching and painting the two immense pictures.

In the north wing of the second floor is the **Legislative Reference Library**, which keeps all House and Senate journals of the Texas Legislature and the laws of each legislative session. The library maintains the original bill file containing every version of each bill introduced in the Legislature since 1973. The newspaper files contain more than 500,000 clippings dating back to the early 1900s and are available electronically in the library. Although the library is open to the public, its primary function is to furnish aid and information to legislators and their staffs. The library has been restored to its circa 1915 appearance.

THIRD FLOOR—During sessions of the Legislature, visitors may view proceedings of both the Senate and House of Representatives from the third-floor chamber galleries. Entrance to the **House gallery** is west of the rotunda and entrance to the **Senate gallery** is in the east wing. Photographic composites of past members of both the Senate

and House are displayed on walls of the respective chambers, galleries and ground-floor corridors.

Originally the courtrooms of the **Supreme Court** and the **Court of Criminal Appeals** were situated in the north wing. These courts later moved to nearby office buildings. The rooms have been restored to their late 19th-century appearance and are used as meeting rooms for the legislators.

FOURTH FLOOR—Senate and House members' offices occupy the fourth floor.

CAPITOL EXTENSION—The top floor (E1) of the Capitol extension contains House and Senate members' offices, governor's staff offices, committee hearing rooms, a bookstore, pressroom, public cafeteria and auditorium. It opens to the seal court and open-air rotunda and has tunnels leading to the Capitol, Supreme Court Building, John H. Reagan Building, Texas Workforce Commission Building, Sam Houston Building and Robert E. Johnson Building.

The second level (E2) includes House and Senate members' offices, legislative support offices, committee hearing rooms, the seal court and the open-air rotunda.

The third and fourth levels (P1 and P2) are reserved parking for building occupants.



A statue of Stephen F. Austin, by Elisabet Ney, stands in the South Foyer of the Capitol.



Terry's Texas Rangers, on the Great Walk in front of the Capitol, is one of the four oldest monuments on the grounds.



Visitor Information

CAPITOL BUILDING—Rich with Texas history, the seat of Texas government is open Mon.–Fri. 7 a.m.–10 p.m. and Sat.–Sun. 9 a.m.–8 p.m. Free guided tours are available Mon.–Fri. 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. and Sun. noon–3:30 p.m. For groups of 10 or more, call 512/305-8402 for reservations. Building hours are extended during legislative sessions, which occur January–May in odd-numbered years. Call to confirm tour hours as they are subject to change.

CAPITOL GROUNDS—The Capitol grounds serve as a green sanctuary in the heart of downtown Austin. Immaculate lawns are shaded by approximately 30 species of Texas trees—oak, palm, elm, pecan, walnut, sycamore, hackberry, cedar, peach and other varieties.

★ Capitol Complex

To assist in locating specific points, the numbered sites below correspond to those on the map of the Texas Capitol area.

BUILDINGS

- 1 Texas State Capitol
- 2 Capitol Extension (underground)
- 3 Capitol Visitors Center (Old General Land Office Building)
- 4 Dewitt C. Greer Building
- 5 James Earl Rudder Building
- 6 Thomas Jefferson Rusk Building
- 7 State Insurance Building Annex
- 8 State Insurance Building
- 9 Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives & Library
- 10 Sam Houston Building
- 11 Texas Workforce Commission Annex
- 12 Texas Workforce Commission Building
- 13 Robert E. Johnson Building
- 14 Lyndon B. Johnson Building
- 15 Central Services Building
- 16 Employees Retirement System Building
- 17 William B. Travis Building
- 18 Bullock Texas State History Museum
- 19 Stephen F. Austin Building
- 20 Gethsemane Lutheran Church (Texas Historical Commission)
- 21 DPS-Capitol District
- 22 Carrington-Covert House (Texas Historical Commission)
- 23 William P. Clements, Jr. Building
- 24 Texas Law Center
- 25 John H. Reagan Building
- 26 Price Daniel, Sr. Building
- 27 Tom C. Clark Building
- 28 Supreme Court Building
- 29 Christianson-Leberman Building
- 30 Governor's Mansion
- 31 Ernest O. Thompson Building

SITES OF INTEREST

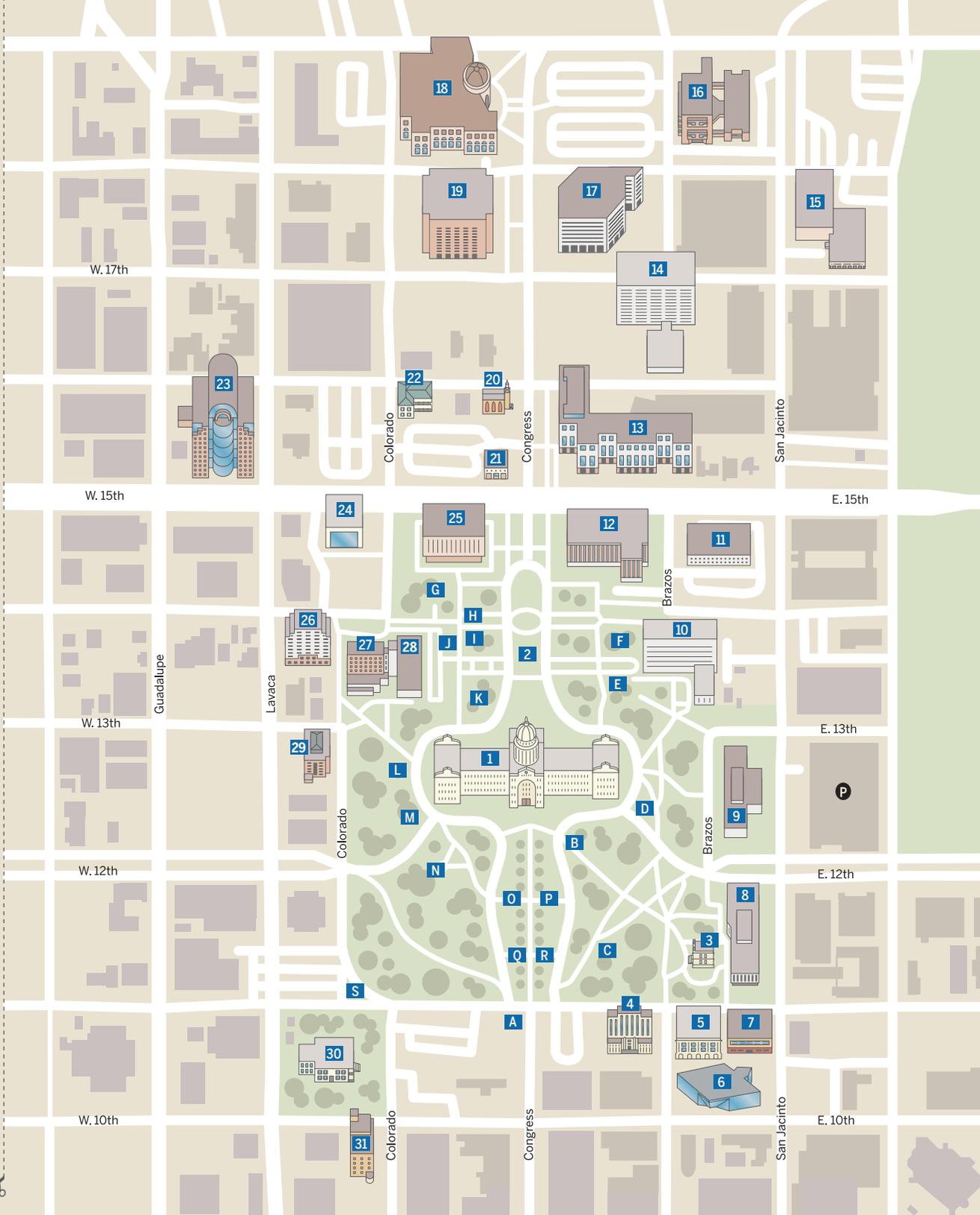
- A Foundations of 1882–88 Temporary State Capitol
- B Artesian Well and East Drinking Fountain

MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

- C Tejano Monument
- D Hood's Texas Brigade
- E Disabled American Veterans
- F Texas Peace Officers and Vietnam Veterans
- G Texas Korean War Veterans
- H Soldiers of World War I
- I Pearl Harbor
- J Texas World War II Veterans and Statue of Liberty Replica
- K Ten Commandments, Pioneer Women, and Tribute to Texas Children
- L 36th Infantry Division–Texas National Guard
- M Spanish-American War, "The Hiker"
- N Texas Cowboy
- O Terry's Texas Rangers–Eighth Texas Cavalry
- P Heroes of the Alamo
- Q Volunteer Firemen
- R Confederate Soldiers
- S Memorial to World War II Dead

VISITOR PARKING

- P Parking Garage at 13th and San Jacinto





Governor's Mansion



Other Sites to See

CAPITOL VISITORS CENTER

The Capitol Visitors Center, at 112 E. 11th St. (southeast corner of the Capitol grounds), is in the restored 1856–57 General Land Office Building. This is the oldest surviving state office building. The multistory “castle,” designed by German architect Christoph Conrad Stremme, functioned as the General Land Office from 1857–1917. William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) worked here as a draftsman from 1887–91. It was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970. Renovations in the 1990s restored the exterior of the structure to its 1880s facade. The Visitors Center houses historical exhibits and videos showcasing Texas and the Capitol.

The gift shop offers a variety of educational items and Texas-made products. Proceeds support the exhibits and educational programming of the Visitors Center.

The Travel Information Center—staffed by uniformed, professional travel counselors—provides free tourist information, maps and descriptive literature to all Texas travelers. Visit the Texas Department of Transportation's website at www.DriveTexas.org or call 800/452-9292 for 24-hour highway conditions.

Open Mon.–Sat. 9 a.m.–5 p.m., and Sun. noon–5 p.m. Call 512/305-8400. Visit www.texascapitolvisitorscenter.com.

GOVERNOR'S MANSION

Completed in 1856, the Greek Revival-style Governor's Mansion is one of the oldest structures in the capitol complex. First occupied by Gov. Elisha Pease and his family, it continues to serve as the official residence of Texas governors. Central heating and air conditioning were added in the 1950s. In 1962, it became the first Texas Historical Landmark. The mansion underwent a major update between 1979–82, and it was undergoing maintenance in 2008, when an arson fire resulted

in extensive structural and architectural damage. Fortunately, the historic furnishings and artifacts were in storage at the time. Restored in 2012, the mansion is open for tours by reservation only (at least one week in advance). Visit www.governor.state.tx.us/mansion or call 512/305-8524.

BULLOCK TEXAS STATE HISTORY MUSEUM

This Austin museum tells the story of Texas through three floors of interactive exhibits plus a gallery that hosts temporary exhibits throughout the year. The museum's IMAX Theatre and Texas Spirit Theater, which bring Texas history to life, amaze visitors with special effects. 1800 N. Congress Ave. 512/936-8746; toll free 866/369-7108; www.TheStoryofTexas.com. Call the



Bullock Texas State History Museum

museum or check the website for hours and holiday closings.

LORENZO DE ZAVALA STATE ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY

Named in honor of Lorenzo de Zavala, an interim vice president of the Republic of Texas, this is the permanent repository for historic Texas documents and archival collections—from family genealogies to treaties of the Republic. It is built of the same Sunset

Red Texas Granite featured throughout the Texas Capitol Complex. Reference, archives, lobby area (historical exhibits) and genealogy research are open Mon.–Fri. 8 a.m.–5 p.m. For more information, call 512/463-5455 or visit www.tsl.texas.gov/agency/visit.html.



Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library



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