

Tomball Archive and History Center

Quarterly Report – January, 5, 2026

October – December 2025

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Executive Summary

During this quarter, significant progress was made toward establishing the foundational structure of the Archive. Efforts focused on developing core policies, preparing the physical environment, as well as assessing existing municipal records and donated collections. This work has laid the administrative, physical, and procedural groundwork necessary for future accessioning, processing, and preservation.

Accomplishments

1. Set up and organized the physical archive stacks including shelving adjustments, unpacking supplies, and testing equipment.
2. Created foundational policies to govern archival work.
3. Began developing multiple operational workflows, forms, and resources related to the digitization, processing, inventorying, digital file management of collections.
4. Initiated first communications with donors of special collections.
5. Began work to identify and purchase software license for a digital archival management system.
6. Accessioned and inventoried first collections!

Identified Challenges

1. Recurring delays in procedure creation and equipment set up due to responsiveness of campus support groups.
2. Ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding governance and staff expectations due to lack of a clearly defined working agreement between the City and Harris County Public Library.

Next Quarter Goals

1. Finalize a working agreement with the County that 1) clearly defines the roles of both City and County staff; 2) establishes a shared commitment for supporting the Center's work.
2. Select and configure the digital archival management system.
3. Identify additional community partners for outreach and engagement.

Administrative and Strategic Foundations

Governance & Partnerships

Preliminary discussions related to policies and procedures with County staff highlighted the need for a formal agreement that outlines responsibilities, shared resources, and reporting expectations. A proposal was drafted recommending the potential separation of duties and shared responsibilities of both City and County partners including the recommendation of the formation of a joint advisory committee to support strategic direction, ensure accountability, and promote coordinated service delivery. This committee could help guide collection priorities, policy review, and community engagement going forward.

Tasks Completed

1. Updated Mission, Vision, and Values document with reflecting the current strategic direction of the Center.
2. Drafted proposed Scope of Work outlining clear duties and responsibilities of City and Library staff.
3. Completed proposal for a future Joint Advisory Committee to aid in the governance of the Center.

Challenges

1. Lack of formal agreement (and transparency on status) with Harris County Public Library creates ambiguity in working relationship with HCPL and Lonestar staff.

Policy & Procedure Development

A suite of foundational policies was drafted to establish standards for future archival operations. Work began on establishing and documenting workflows and procedures to guide processing and preservation work. Together, these documents create a coherent framework that supports responsible stewardship, consistent decision-making, and transparent service to the public. Additional procedures were identified as next-phase priorities such as digitizing audiovisual materials and researcher request procedures.

Tasks Completed

1. Completed initial drafts of the following policies 1) Acquisition and Collection Development; 2) Access and Use; 3) Accessioning and Deaccessioning; 4) Gifts and Donations; and 5) Preservation
2. Completed drafts of the following procedures: 1) Processing workflow; 2) Accessing procedure; 3) Inventorying and Labeling Collections; 2) Mirroring External Hard Drive; 3) Digitizing objects using DigiStation scanners; and 4) Setting up Overhead Mount and Camera for Large-Format Digitization and Capture.

Challenges

1. Lack of formal agreement (and transparency on status) with Harris County Public Library creates ambiguity in working relationship with HCPL and Lonestar staff as well as in use of DigiStation equipment.

Infrastructure & Capacity Building

Physical & Environmental Setup

Substantial work was completed to prepare the facility for archival storage and long-term preservation activities. A major focus was on environmental stability: climate monitoring equipment was identified, justified, and installed in stacks to initiate continuous tracking of temperature and humidity in storage areas. Preliminary assessments of shelving, space allocation, and material flow were conducted to support efficient future operations.

Tasks Completed

1. Purchase of additional supplies and equipment for managing the space and collections. Including equipment options for large-format digitization.
2. Establish shelf inventory and identification for space management.
3. Climate monitoring notice and justification to LSC.
4. Unpacked and set up Fire TV, external hard drive, remote temperature monitor.
5. Unpacked and tested camera, mount, and lighting equipment for large format digitization needs.

Challenges

1. Delays in response and approvals with campus stakeholders have stalled the completion of climate monitoring, increasing potential risks to collections.
2. Delays in response and support from campus stakeholders have stalled the installation of necessary drivers and software to complete workstation setup.

Systems & Tools

Early planning began to select an archival management system capable of supporting accessioning, description, and public access. Research and progress have been made to plan collection- and item-level metadata needs. Preliminary workflow concepts and templates have been outlined to ensure alignment with best practices and scalability as collections grow. These decisions will support consistent documentation and efficient processing once materials begin entering the archive.

Tasks Completed

1. Began conversations with Lucidea regarding capabilities and cost of Archivera as an AMS solution for the Center.
2. Established and documented the process for storing digital files, administrative records, and mirroring external hard drives.
3. Created a prototype book cradle and successfully tested the overhead camera mount for digitization.

Challenges

No direct challenges were identified related to the progress of work in this area outside of general resource constraints (i.e., time, staffing, etc.).

Collection Assessment & Planning

Existing Records Survey

Initial review of existing municipal records and donated collections highlighted the breadth of formats and volumes that will eventually require transfer, assessment, and preservation. Formats include bound ledgers, large-format maps/plans, various photographic prints, dishware, scrapbooks, and vinyl banners. Planning and notes have begun regarding potential preservation concerns, storage needs, and prioritization for processing. This survey lays the groundwork for a phased processing strategy and ensures the archive is prepared to manage the records responsibly.

Tasks Completed

1. Appraised donated collections for relevance to scope and mission of Center.
2. Preliminarily rehoused and inventoried materials received in preparation for official accession and processing.
3. Identified potential special supply and storage needs for physical objects.

Challenges

No direct challenges were identified related to the progress of work in this area outside of general resource constraints (i.e., time, staffing, etc.).

Intake & Accession Planning

Formal accessioning of collections officially began with the receipt of two completed Deeds of Gift from community members. Intake procedures were outlined to standardize future records transfers (municipal) and accessioning (special collections).

Tasks Completed

1. Accessioning and inventorying of MS 001 Tomball Garden Club collection (6 cu.ft. [6 boxes]; 23.9GB) and MS 002 First Baptist Church Collection (23 cu.ft. [23 boxes]).
2. Established and documented accessioning workflow including creation of collection numbers, control folders, and administrative record.
3. Created templates for donor communications including a Letter to Establish a Collection (Deed of Gift) and a Letter of Thanks for Donations.

Challenges

1. Mild risk to the documentation of legal custody of collection held by the City as the establishment of an official Deed of Gift for the Center is pending approval by City leadership. Current collections are using a form from LSC-Tomball Community Library based on the Harris County Public Library Deed of Gift form along with documented email communications about the City of Tomball's involvement.

Community & Stakeholder Engagement

While the key focus this quarter was to establish procedural and foundation documentation, progress was made to build relationships with internal departments and community members. Early conversations helped identify objects of local significance within Public Works. Coordination with the City's Records Specialist has been pivotal in this work. Communications with existing donors have led to the official accession of two special collections in the Archives.

Tasks Completed

1. Met with Public Works Director regarding historical log books and maps to transfer.
2. Established working relationship with Records Specialist to coordinate and establish transfer procedures for City records.

Biggest Challenge: Establishing a Formal Agreement

Several challenges were noted as the archive moves toward operational readiness within the sections above. Most notably, the absence of a formalized intergovernmental agreement creates limits on clarity and efficiency of work.

Without clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority, routine activities such as policy development, workflow design, and resource allocation are slowed by uncertainty and require repeated clarification.

While a facilities agreement has been established with Lonestar College, more clarity and support are needed surrounding the coordination of IT services, access permissions, and administrative support. These delays have already affected the implementation and configuration of equipment to monitor and process collections.

Establishing a formal agreement will be critical for ensuring partnership and shared stewardship of the archive moving forward.

Looking Ahead

Priorities for Next Quarter

Building on the foundational work of this quarter, our primary goal for the next quarter is to move from procedural planning and documentation to operational readiness. Tasks that will help us reach this goal include:

- Complete work agreement with Harris County/Harris County Public Library.
- Complete policies and legal documentation surrounding legal custody and access of records.
- Finalize purchase of a digital repository system for the management and public access of digital records.
- Complete installation and configuration of equipment.

- Process accessioned collections for research, access, and use.
- Deepen community awareness, engagement, and outreach activities.

Establishing a Joint Advisory Committee

Along with a Scope of Work agreement between City and County stakeholders, it is recommended that a Joint Advisory Committee be established to guide the operations and strategic direction of the Tomball Archive and History Center. Such a body would ensure clear communication, shared accountability, and coordinated decision-making between the City of Tomball and Harris County Public Library.

A formal advisory structure would provide an essential forum for aligning City and County priorities, reviewing policies, and supporting long-term planning. This effort would also strengthen transparency and foster collaboration by providing both partners with a consistent mechanism for oversight, policy development, and evaluation of the Center's performance. Review the attached proposal for more details on the membership and duties of the proposed committee.

Appendices

2025 Accessioning Logs

2025-001: Tomball Garden Club Collection

- Date Received: 12/12/2025
- Donated By: Tomball Garden Club
- Location: 1.2; Collections> Digitization_Folders > Tomball Garden Club
- Acquisition Type: Donation
- Deed of Gift/Transfer of Ownership: Yes, Unsigned
- Custodial Note: Digital copies of items were originally gifted April, 5 2024. Original Deed of Gift was reviewed December 12, 2025 by club president and two members of the TGC board. These representatives agreed to gift all physical items to the Archive for preservation.
- Date(s) of Materials: 1959-2007
- Creator(s): unknown
- Extent: 6 boxes (5 document, 1 oversize); 4 cu. ft.
- Type(s) of Materials: Correspondence; Administrative Records (Bylaws, Reports, Minutes, etc.); Photographs; Financial Documents; Digital media (digitized and born digital); Framed objects; Paper;
- Scope and Contents: Newspaper clippings, photographic prints, meeting minutes and rosters. Substantial portion of the collection is scrapbook pages.
- Physical Condition: Fair
- Condition Notes: Acidification of newspaper clippings and other paper documents. brittle scrapbook pages. Many pages have been previously transferred to plastic sleeves. Some have been laminated.
- Potential Restrictions: Needs further assessment
- Restriction Note: Contains family history album of unknown origin. May contain personal information to be restricted. Possibly needs to be separated and/or returned to creator. One bound scrapbook should be digitized and restricted from physical access. Pages are very brittle.

2025-002: First Baptist Church Collections

- Date Received: 12/18/2025
- Donated By: Steve Byrd, First Baptist Church Tomball
- Location: 1.3; 2.6; LSC-Tomball Community Library storage
- Acquisition Type: Donation
- Deed of Gift/Transfer of Ownership: Yes, signed
- Custodial Note: Originally received by staff in the fall of 2024; Donor agreement filled and returned 12/17/2025
- Date(s) of Materials: 1922-2014
- Creator(s): Leslie Upchurch (verify)

- Extent: roughly 20 boxes
- Type(s) of Materials: Directories; Correspondence; Administrative Records (Bylaws, Reports, Minutes, etc.); Paper; Photographs; Audiovisual (film, video, audio); Garments and textiles; Framed objects; Newsletters
- Scope and Contents: Contains wide variety of objects and materials used for management, operation, fundraising, and ministry of the First Baptist Church in Tomball. Much of the collection was originally purchased for and organized by the church's media library.
- Physical Condition: Fair
- Condition Notes: Most of the collection is generally in good condition; some vinyl records are broken and many are scratched and poorly cared for. At least one box had evidence of pests with damage to a felt banner.
- Potential Restrictions: Needs further assessment
- Restriction Note: Could have copyright restrictions on some of the audio media. Review for financial or personal information to restrict within office documents and member directories.

2025-003: Office of the Mayor Records

- Date Received: 11/06/2025
- Donated By: Thomas Harris III, City Secretary, City of Tomball
- Location: 1.1
- Acquisition Type: Donation
- Deed of Gift/Transfer of Ownership: No, TBD
- Custodial Note: These items were given to the former city secretary, Tracylynn Garcia, from Mayor Lori Klein Quinn in 2024. Some boxes were collected from the previous mayor, Gretchen Fagan. These boxes and items were stored in the mayor's office until they were given to the city secretary. In 2025, the current city secretary, Thomas Harris III, noted the historical value of the items and requested the boxes be accessioned to the archive. **Items need further review as some may be separated to a new collections for individual mayors based on item creation dates.**
- Date(s) of Materials: TBD-2023
- Creator(s): potentially multiple sources
- Extent: 5 boxes; round metal sign; rolled vinyl banner
- Type(s) of Materials: Administrative Records (Bylaws, Reports, Minutes, etc.); Photographs; Manuals; Framed objects; vinyl banner; dishware
- Scope and Contents: This collection contains various ephemera, photographs, and manuals collected by the Mayor's office.
- Physical Condition: Good
- Potential Restrictions: Needs further assessment

Collections Inventory

Collection Category	ID #	Collection Name	Scope and Contents	Boxes	Cubic Feet	Dates	Physical Location	Notes
MS	001	Tomball Garden Club Collection	Newspaper clippings, photographic prints, meeting minutes and rosters. Substantial portion of the collection is scrapbook pages.	6	4	1959-2007	1.2	Previously digitized files currently at Collections>Digitization_Folders>Tomball Garden Club; Will need review and processing.
MS	002	First Baptist Church Collection	Contains wide variety of objects and materials used for management, operation, fundraising, and ministry of the First Baptist Church in Tomball. Much of the collection was originally purchased for and organized by the church's media library.	20	10	1922-2014	1.3; 2.6; LSC-TCL	Originally received by staff in the fall of 2024; Donor agreement filled and returned 12/17/2025; Many boxes contain administrative documents in chronological order; others are boxes of related materials by format.

Lifetime Project Expenses

- FY24: \$16,109.22
- FY25: \$15,089.43
- FY26: \$2,298.19*

*Total does not include employee wages.

Year	Item Description	Category	Date Purchased	Amount
FY26	Lint-free task wipes	Archival Supplies and Tools	11/20/2025	\$ 8.57
FY26	Microfiber cloths	Archival Supplies and Tools	11/20/2025	\$ 7.64
FY26	Alcohol surface wipes	Archival Supplies and Tools	11/20/2025	\$ 20.99
FY26	Tripod with camera adapter	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 56.02
FY26	Courier Bag	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 55.44
FY26	Muslin Background	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 39.71
FY26	Remote Shutter Release Cable	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 6.37
FY26	Wireless Remote Shutter Release	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 44.96
FY26	Quick Release Plate	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 30.60
FY26	Polarizer Lens Filter	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 44.18
FY26	1TB Memory Cards (2)	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 258.68
FY26	Super Clamps	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 29.92
FY26	Sandbags	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 40.42
FY26	GVM Batteries and Chargers	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 79.98
FY26	ColorChecker Calibration tool	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 89.00
FY26	Neweer Overhead Camera Mount	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 64.41
FY26	GVM LED Light Panels	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 144.30
FY26	Nikon D7500 DSLR Camera with Lens	Special Equipment	11/3/2025	\$ 1,043.90
FY26	Pencil Sharpener	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 12.15
FY26	Stackable File Tray (2)	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 21.94
FY26	Storage Bins and Baskets	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 26.99
FY26	2-inch Artist Tape	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 12.99
FY26	Metal S-Hooks (20)	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 6.93
FY26	Hanging Vinyl Ticket Holders	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 19.29
FY26	Scissors	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 8.99
FY26	Thermometer/Hygrometer	Facilities	10/27/2025	\$ 39.99
FY26	Dusting Brush	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 15.69
FY26	Artifact Tags	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 45.05
FY26	Foil Back Labels	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/27/2025	\$ 23.09
FY25	Business Cards	Other	10/31/2024	\$ 29.20
FY25	Library Cart	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/31/2024	\$ 726.60
FY25	Hand Cart	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/31/2024	\$ 471.90
FY25	Mallet	Archival Supplies and Tools	10/31/2024	\$ 22.81
FY25	Gross Pay	Payroll	7/18/2025	\$ 12,853.00

FY25	Employer Expenses (FICA Medicare)	Payroll	7/18/2025	\$ 985.92
FY24	Gross Pay	Payroll	9/30/2024	\$ 3,713.17
FY24	Employer Expenses (FICA Medicare)	Payroll	9/30/2024	\$ 284.07
FY24	LED Fastfoto Scanner	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 695.00
FY24	HP Desktop Compuer	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 1,908.42
FY24	HD Monitor	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 319.98
FY24	External Hard Drive	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 499.98
FY24	Webcam	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 56.40
FY24	Fire TV Monitor	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 79.99
FY24	Laserjet Printer	IT/Tech Needs	8/1/2024	\$ 529.00
FY24	File Folders, Storage Cart, Gloves	Archival Supplies and Tools	9/1/2024	\$ 3,409.43
FY24	Cutting Mat	Archival Supplies and Tools	9/30/2024	\$ 256.98
FY24	Step Ladder	Archival Supplies and Tools	9/30/2024	\$ 241.65
FY24	Supplies	Archival Supplies and Tools	9/30/2024	\$ 736.90
FY24	Shelves	Special Equipment	9/30/2024	\$ 3,378.25

Vision, Mission and Values Statement

About

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the greater Tomball area. These areas include Rosehill, Decker's Prairie, Hufsmith and Willow communities.

The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by LoneStar College and Harris County Public Library.

Vision

The Tomball Archive and History Center serves the City of Tomball, its citizens, community area members, and researchers as a repository of historical municipal records and special collections to encourage the discovery of our local history and heritage within the state of Texas.

Values

Service

We are committed to providing professional, courteous, and timely assistance to all users. Whether serving municipal departments, researchers, or members of the public, we strive to facilitate meaningful access to records and information that support transparency, understanding, and informed decision-making.

We work together with our partners to ensure that the stories and historical resources of our city and surrounding community are accessible through timely and knowledgeable research assistance.

Preservation and Access

We safeguard the historical and documentary record of our city and county for future generations. Through responsible stewardship, environmental monitoring, and adherence to archival best practices, we ensure that materials entrusted to our care remain stable, authentic, and accessible over time.

We believe that historical records belong to everyone. We work to make our collections discoverable, inclusive, and understandable by removing barriers to access and supporting equitable use of physical and digital archival resources.

Accountability

We uphold the principles of public trust by managing records and collections with integrity, transparency, and accuracy. Our policies and procedures reflect our obligation to maintain compliance with records management standards, ethical guidelines, and the legal and fiscal responsibilities of both municipal and county governments.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

We value the voices, experiences, and histories of our shared community. Through outreach programs, exhibitions, partnerships, and public events, we encourage community participation in preserving and interpreting the shared heritage of our region.

We recognize that the success of the Center depends on cooperation among city and county partners as well as community organizations and individuals. We actively pursue partnerships that expand resources, expertise, and opportunities for preservation and public engagement.

Mission

To preserve, protect, and share the historical municipal records of the City of Tomball as well as special collections from the surrounding communities documented in our collecting areas to support ongoing historic preservation.

To accomplish this mission, the Tomball Archive and History Center will:

- Identify, acquire, and maintain the permanent records of the City of Tomball in accordance with established retention schedules and archival standards.
- Collect and steward special collections, manuscripts, photographs, and other materials that reflect the social, cultural, and historical development of the greater Tomball area.
- Implement and maintain procedures for secure, long-term preservation and management of physical and digital materials in accordance with professional standards and legal requirements.
- Provide equitable access to physical and digital archival materials through research appointments, reference materials, and online resources.
- Collaborate with partners to support the discovery of collections and showcase local history within the community.

We welcome all individuals to use the available collections and materials for research or educational needs. Interested individuals must schedule an appointment for access to the Center's collections. All materials are available to the public in a supervised environment, with instructions for handling fragile materials when appropriate.

Joint Advisory Committee Proposal

To ensure clear communication, shared accountability, and coordinated decision-making between the City of Tomball and Harris County Public Library, it is recommended that a Joint Advisory Committee be established to guide the operations and strategic direction of the Tomball Archive and History Center.

As a cooperative venture, the Center serves both as the official repository for municipal records and as a community resource for historical research and preservation. A formal advisory structure would provide an essential forum for aligning city and county priorities, reviewing policies, and supporting long-term planning. Such a committee would strengthen transparency and foster collaboration by providing both partners with a consistent mechanism for oversight, policy development, and evaluation of the Center's performance. By supporting this body, both entities would affirm their commitment to ensuring that the Center's mission, collections, and services remain balanced, sustainable, and responsive to public needs at both the city and county level.

Committee Composition

It is proposed that the Joint Advisory Committee consist of six members, appointed equally by the City and the County (three from each entity). Membership may include representatives from:

1. Leadership of City of Tomball,
2. Members of Tomball's City Council,
3. Administration from Harris County Public Library System,
4. Harris County Historical Commission, and
5. Greater Tomball area community stakeholders with expertise in history, archives, or education.

The Historical Archivist will serve as an ex officio, non-voting member, providing reports and professional recommendations. Additional ad hoc members may be invited to participate in discussions related to specific projects or initiatives.

Responsibilities

It is proposed that the Joint Advisory Committee would:

1. Review and recommend policies related to collection development, access, preservation, and public use.
2. Advise on annual goals, budget priorities, and grant or partnership opportunities.
3. Receive and review regular reports from the Historical Archivist on operations, usage statistics, and collection growth.
4. Promote public engagement and advocate for the Center within both city and county communities.
5. Serve as a neutral body to resolve questions or concerns related to intergovernmental coordination and collaborative partnerships.

Meetings and Reporting

It is proposed that the committee would meet quarterly (or more frequently as needed). Meeting agendas and minutes will be jointly maintained by the City and County representatives.

The committee would prepare and disseminate an annual report summarizing activities, recommendations, and performance measures to be submitted to both Tomball's City Council and the Harris County Commissioners Court.

Committee recommendations would be advisory in nature and subject to review and approval by the governing authorities.

Policies

Accessioning and Deaccessioning Policy

This policy establishes the procedures and standards for accessioning and deaccessioning materials within the Tomball Archive and History Center. The policy ensures that all additions to and removals from the collection are handled responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with professional archival principles, applicable laws, and institutional agreements between the City of Tomball and Harris County.

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the greater Tomball area. These areas include Rosehill, Decker's Prairie, Hufsmith and Willow communities. The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by LoneStar College and Harris County Public Library.

1. *Definitions*

- **City:** Any reference within this document to “City” is a reference to the City of Tomball as a municipal organization
- **city:** Any reference within this document to “city” is a reference to the regional area within the city limits of Tomball, Texas and the communities that make up the greater Tomball area.
- **Center:** Any reference within this document to “Center” is a reference to the Tomball Archive and History Center.
- **Accession:** The formal process of documenting and recording the acceptance of materials into the Center's permanent collection.
- **Deaccession:** The formal, documented removal of materials from the Center's permanent collection.
- **Transfer of Custody:** The legal process of transferring ownership or stewardship to the Center, accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g., Donor Agreement or City Records Transfer Request Form).
- **Administrative Record:** The official record containing all administrative, descriptive, and legal documentation related to an accession.

2. *Scope of Accessioned Materials*

This policy applies to all materials acquired or held by the Center, including:

- Municipal government records transferred from City departments, offices, boards, or commissions;
- Historical materials donated by individuals, organizations, or businesses; and
- Any other materials accepted by the Archivist into the custody of the Center for permanent retention.

3. *Accessioning Policy*

All accessioned materials must fall within the Center's collecting scope and support its mission. Potential gifts and donations must be appraised using the [Appraisal Form](#) and approved by the Archivist before accessioned into the Center's collections.

3.1 *Eligibility and Criteria*

To be considered for accession:

1. Legal title, right of custody, and/or right of use must be clearly identified, documented, and established;
2. The materials must be in a condition suitable for long-term preservation or can be stabilized with available or attainable resources; and
3. The Center can ensure reasonable public access in accordance with privacy laws and donor agreements.

3.1.1 Reasonable Public Access

Reasonable public access is defined as the Center's ability to balance requested access to the collections while acknowledging and protecting the security of and integrity of the records. If the condition of materials is such that physical handling could damage or risk deterioration, the Archivist may choose to share digital copies of records or provide proxy research services in which archival staff can assist researchers in information discovery in a controlled, secured manner.

3.2 *Accessioning Procedure*

3.2.1 Documentation of Accession or Transfer

For municipal records: the Archivist, in coordination with appropriate City Secretary staff, will [evaluate materials for relevance, authenticity, and research value](#) and document their transfer to the Center within a City Records Transfer Request Form.

For gifts, donations and community records: Following the guidelines and procedures noted in the Gifts and Donations Policy, a Donor Agreement must be signed by the donor and the Archivist (or authorized official), establishing transfer of ownership and intellectual property rights before accessioning.

3.2.2 Accession Number and Record Creation

Each accession will be assigned an accession number once transferred to the Center. The Archivist will then use the [Accession Form](#) to document the following:

- Source of acquisition (donor information)
- Date of accession
- Provenance or creator information

- Description and extent
- Rights and restrictions
- Condition notes

Information from this form will be manually transferred to the Administrative Record for the collection and saved to the collection's control folder. The collection-level data will be saved to the [Collection Inventory](#) for the Center. More detailed guidance on this process is outlined in the Center's Processing Manual.

3.2.3 *Inventory and Processing*

Once the collection is formally accessioned, the materials (both physical and digital) will be stored appropriately in the Center with their location noted in the Administrative Record. A basic inventory will be completed upon accession to ensure accountability of materials.

Full arrangement, description, preservation, and access will occur once evaluated for processing and preservation priority at the discretion of the Archivist as resources allow.

4. *Deaccessioning Policy*

Accessioned collections and materials remain in the custody of the Tomball Archive and History Center until their integrity, authenticity, or relevance to the Center no longer falls within the scope or capabilities of the Center to preserve, protect, or provide access. The authority to deaccession records from the Center is given by Local Government Code, Chapter 202.004:

Sec. 202.004. ALIENATION OF RECORDS. (a) A local government record may be sold or donated, loaned, transferred, or otherwise passed out of the custody of a local government to any public institution of higher education, public museum, public library, or other public entity with the approval of the local government's records management officer and after the expiration of the record's retention period under the local government's records control schedule.

(b) A local government record may not be sold or donated (except for the purposes of recycling), loaned, transferred, or otherwise passed out of the custody of a local government to any private college or university, private museum or library, private organization of any type, or an individual, except with the consent of the director and librarian and after the expiration of its retention period under the local government's records control schedule.

(c) A records management officer or custodian may temporarily transfer a local government record to a person for the purposes of microfilming, duplication, conversion to electronic media, restoration, or similar records management and preservation procedures.

4.1 *Eligibility and Criteria*

Materials may be considered for deaccession when one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. The material falls outside the Center's collecting scope or lacks research or evidential value.

2. The material is a duplicate or it exists in another format that better supports preservation or access.
3. The material's condition is such that it cannot be preserved without disproportionate cost or risk to other holdings.
4. Legal or ethical obligations require return or disposal (e.g., donor stipulations, privacy laws, or city retention policies).
5. The material poses a hazard to personnel or other collections.

4.2 Deaccessioning Procedure

4.2.1 Documentation and Approval

The Archivist will prepare a written justification outlining the reason for deaccession, including references to accession records and any restrictions. A Notice of Deaccession will be documented in the collection folder and in the Deaccession Log.

For municipal records, the City Secretary or designated records officer must approve the disposition in accordance with retention schedules and state law.

4.2.2 Disposition of Records

Following approval, materials may be:

- Returned to the original donor (if legally or ethically appropriate);
- Transferred to another qualified archival repository; or
- Destroyed in a secure and documented manner, applicable laws and ethical standards.

The Center will maintain a permanent record of all deaccessioned materials for accountability and institutional memory.

5. Revision and Administrative Acknowledgement

This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to reflect changes in professional standards, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

Access and Use Policy

The purpose of this policy is to define the principles and procedures governing public access to, and use of, the collections of the Tomball Archive and History Center. This policy ensures that access is provided in a fair, consistent, and lawful manner that balances transparency, intellectual freedom, and preservation of materials with legal, ethical, and privacy obligations.

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the greater Tomball area. These areas include Rosehill, Decker's Prairie, Hufsmith and Willow communities. The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by LoneStar College and Harris County Public Library.

1. Definitions

- **City:** Any reference within this document to "City" is a reference to the City of Tomball as a municipal organization
- **city:** Any reference within this document to "city" is a reference to the regional area within the city limits of Tomball, Texas and the communities that make up the greater Tomball area.
- **Center:** Any reference within this document to "Center" is a reference to the Tomball Archive and History Center.

2. Scope of Materials and Access

This policy applies to all collections and materials held by the Center, including permanent municipal records transferred from the City of Tomball as well as historical and cultural materials donated by individuals, families, organizations, and businesses.

Accessible collection materials include physical, digital, and digitized objects as well as related metadata, finding aids, and other administrative information stored by the Center.

3. Principles of Access and Use

The Tomball Archive and History Center serves the City of Tomball employees, departments, boards, and commissions as well as the general public. The Center is committed to providing equitable public access to its holdings in support of research, education, and community engagement.

Access may be restricted to protect personal privacy, proprietary information, or confidential government data. Appropriate access and use will be determined and approved by the Archivist and archival staff in accordance with restrictions maintained by applicable laws and donor agreements as well as measures to protect the long-term access and physical condition of materials.

4. Access to Collections

Archival collections and holdings do not circulate as part of the larger Harris County Public Library collection. A reference area will be made available to researchers within the Tomball Community Library

space when necessary. This area will be monitored by archives staff both to assist researchers as well as to ensure the integrity of records and objects.

Reference inquiries can be made by telephone or email. Researchers must make an appointment with archival staff to access physical collections. Requests may be filled by digitizing records and emailing to a patron.

4.1 Requests for Access

All research requests are logged via a Research Request form. This form is a permanent record stored for accountability and reporting purposes.

4.1.1 *Open Records Act*

All documents and records maintained by the Center including files documenting the acquisition and donation of records and their use are subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 522, which gives the public the right to access government records except in cases of confidentiality or privacy issues. Requests for access to active or restricted government records may be referred to the appropriate City department or the City Secretary's Office.

4.1.2 *Restrictions to Access*

Access to private donations to the Center are open to the public except in cases where donors have restricted portions of their records as a condition of their donation in accordance with Section 552.021 of the Public Information Act by Sections 552.120 and 552.121.

The Archivist will make all decisions concerning access to materials in which their physical condition could be compromised or create other risks to the collections, environment, or researchers. Access to may be denied or delayed until a sufficient and secure means of providing access to the materials can be ensured. Restricted materials will be clearly identified in collection descriptions. Access requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Archivist.

4.1.3 *Researcher Registration and Agreement*

All researchers who physically access the archives will complete a Researcher Registration Form and show identification before given access to materials. Researchers will be given an identification number to track requests and access. This information will be used by the Center in statistical reports.

4.1.4 *Reference Area Rules*

As part of researcher registration, researchers sign a statement that they have read and understand the Regulations for Use for the Tomball Archive and History Center. This agreement stipulates that researchers and visitors must:

- Handle materials with care and comply with staff instructions;
- Use only pencils and approved materials in research areas;
- Not alter, mark, or remove archival materials from the designated research space; and
- Obtain permission before photographing, scanning, or otherwise reproducing materials.

5. *Use of Materials and Collections*

The Center makes materials available for research and educational use in compliance with U.S. copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Donors of private collections may retain copyright unless transfer of rights is specified in the Donor Agreement. Researchers are responsible for determining copyright status and for obtaining permissions to publish or distribute copyrighted materials.

5.1 Reproductions and Publications

The Center may provide digitized copies of materials to researchers or other members of the public for use. These reproductions are created in a manner to not compromise preservation of objects or violate legal restrictions. Permission to reproduce does not constitute transfer of copyright or other intellectual property rights.

Researchers are responsible for obtaining copyright clearance and citing the Center and donor (if specified in the Donor Agreement) as the source when reproductions are used in publications, exhibitions, or digital media.

5.2 Handling and Security of Collections

Access to storage and processing areas is restricted to authorized staff and visitors. Materials and collections identified in research requests will be retrieved and re-shelved by archival staff.

5.2.1 *Digital and online access*

Digital materials will be accessed or shared through approved, secure systems. Online access may be subject to the same restrictions as physical materials. Researchers and users are expected to respect copyright and privacy limitations when using digital content published via the Center's digital repository.

5.3 Privacy and Data Protection

The Center safeguards personal information contained in its records and provided to researchers. Records containing sensitive data may be redacted, restricted, or anonymized in compliance with applicable privacy laws and ethical guidelines.

5.4 Citation of Records

Citation information for collections and materials is included in the finding aid. Researchers should reference the relevant editorial style guide for their publication for specific format requirements.

5.4.1 *Municipal Records*

The following items are generally necessary for a proper citation:

- Identification of Item: Use the name of record or item
- Author: Use the name of the office, department, board, etc.
- Year: Use the Created Date for the record. If not listed, use the created date for the larger collection record.
- Publishing Institution/Agency: City of Tomball

- Repository Name: Tomball Archive and History Center
- Repository Location: Tomball, Texas, United States

5.4.2 Archival Collections

Depending on the document type or item the citation information should be referenced from the following descriptive elements in the record:

- Identification of Item: Use the name of record or item, if available. Otherwise use a brief description of the item.
- Author: Use the Creator name associated with the item in the record.
- Year: Use the Created Date for the record. If not listed, use the created date for the larger collection record.
- Repository Name: Tomball Archive and History Center
- Repository Name: Tomball, Texas, United States

6. Revision and Administrative Acknowledgement

This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to reflect changes in professional standards, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

Acquisition and Collection Development Policy

This policy establishes guidelines for the identification, evaluation, and acquisition of records by the Tomball Archive and History Center to aid in the systematic growth of collections that document the historical, administrative, and cultural record of the City of Tomball and the surrounding community.

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the greater Tomball area. These areas include Rosehill, Decker's Prairie, Hufsmith and Willow communities. The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by Lonestar College and Harris County Public Library.

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- **Center:** Any reference within this document to "Center" is a reference to the Tomball Archive and History Center.

2. Scope of Collections and Materials

In accordance with its mission and vision, the Tomball Archive and History Center will acquire and preserve records that:

- Document the history, development, and operations of the City of Tomball and its municipal departments.
- Document the history and growth the city of Tomball and the greater northwest Harris County area through the lives, activities, and contributions of residents, organizations, and businesses.
- Support research, education, and community engagement with the local historical record.

2.1. Accepted Formats

The Center accepts materials in various formats, including textual documents, photographs, maps, audiovisual media, born-digital materials, and selected artifacts directly related to the archival mission.

2.2 Principles of Appraisal

All acquisitions must fall within the collecting scope and further the mission of the Center as well as be in a condition suitable for preservation. If identified materials are in need of preservation, their care and stabilization must be realistically achievable with the available or attainable resources of the Center in accordance with the Center's [Preservation Policy](#). The Center will **not** accession materials [without a formal transfer of ownership or Donor Agreement](#) that is clearly established and documented.

3. Acquisition Procedures

All proposed acquisitions will be reviewed by the Archivist to determine their alignment with the scope and capabilities of the Center. The Center acquires materials through the following means:

- Transfer: Permanent transfer of City of Tomball records in accordance with records management and retention schedules.
- Donation: Gifts from individuals, families, organizations, and businesses relevant to the city and community's history.
- Deposit or Loan: Temporary custody agreements for materials requiring evaluation or short-term exhibition, subject to formal deposit or loan documentation.
- Purchase: Rare or unique items may be purchased when they strongly support the mission and cannot be otherwise acquired.

3.1. City Records

The Center is the repository for the permanent records of the City of Tomball and its municipal departments, offices, boards, and commissions. Acquisitions of municipal records must follow the approved records transfer procedures in coordination with the City Secretary's Office. The Center will acquire and accession records that have been identified and designated as permanent archival records that have enduring historical, artefactual, legal, or intellectual value.

The Center will also seek out and acquire relevant records and materials with historical value outside of the records management process from former and current elected officials or employees.

3.2. Community Records and Special Collections

The Center may acquire and accession records and materials from private donors, community organizations, and business from the greater northwest Harris County area. All private donations must be accompanied by a valid donor agreement or transfer of custody to the Center.

4. Maintenance of Collections

All accessioned collections will be arranged and described according to archival principles using established archival descriptive standards. This process ensures appropriate and relevant context related to the creation and use of the records is included within the archival record. The Center reserves the right to reappraise and deaccession materials within the collection as appropriate and in accordance with the Center's [Accessioning and Deaccessioning Policy](#).

4.1 Arrangement Classification

All records and materials accessioned to the archives will be processed in accordance with procedures and guidelines outlined in the Center's Processing Manual. All materials in the Center archives are classified as:

- Municipal Records (MR): Any collection of materials created by an internal department, board, or commission directly affiliated with the City of Tomball.
- Manuscript Collections (MS): Any collection of materials created by an individual (or family), private business, or community group in relation to their work as an important figure or stakeholder of either the City of Tomball as a municipal entity or the regional community.

- **Artifacts:** Objects or items that may be received or stored separate from its associated collection or fonds, but remain intellectually and administratively within the original transfer, donation, or accession.

The Archivist will determine additional collections classifications as needed and document them in the relevant documentation. All collections and artifacts will be identified with an associated identification number that reflects its classification.

4.2 Arrangement and Description Procedures

4.2.1 Administrative Records

Every record group or manuscript collection will have an administrative record which documents the stewardship, assessment, and context of the materials. This record will include the following:

- Correspondence between donor and archival staff;
- Notes on provenance;
- Scope and contents;
- Processing notes;
- Conservation or preservation notes;
- Research or reference materials related to the collection; and/or
- Other records of permanent value to the management of the collection or materials.

4.2.2 Description and Processing Procedures

The Center will follow the [MPLP \(More Product, Less Process\)](#) standard for processing collections as much as possible. Following accession, archival staff will develop a [processing plan](#) outlining notes on condition, scope, restriction needs, and preservation recommendations. This plan will be approved by the Archivist before processing begins. As a result of processing, two levels of description are created for each record in the Center's archival holdings: a database entry and finding aid. The database entry ensures the collection is included in the official inventory of holdings. The finding aid ensures the context of the collection's creation as well as its administrative record are accessible in one place for researcher access. All finding aids will follow [Encoded Archival Description \(EAD\)](#) standard requirements.

Description of collections will proceed from the general to the specific unless otherwise designated and approved by the Archivist. More detailed arrangement and description of materials is outlined in the Center's Processing Manual.

5. Ownership and Access

All acquisitions become the property of the City of Tomball (and its partners) under the stewardship of the Tomball Archive and History Center unless otherwise specified in the donor agreement. Following the guidance and requirements set forth in the [Access and Use Policy](#), the Center will maintain public access to its holdings, subject to privacy laws, donor restrictions, and preservation concerns.

6. *Revision and Administrative Acknowledgement*

This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to reflect changes in professional standards, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

Gifts and Donations Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the acceptance, documentation, and stewardship of gifts and donations to the Tomball Archive and History Center. The policy ensures that all donations are managed in a consistent, ethical, and transparent manner that supports the Center's mission to preserve and share the history of the City of Tomball and the surrounding community.

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the greater Tomball area. These areas include Rosehill, Decker's Prairie, Hufsmith and Willow communities. The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by Lonestar College and Harris County Public Library.

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- **Center:** Any reference within this document to "Center" is a reference to the Tomball Archive and History Center.

2. Scope of Gifts and Donations

This policy applies to all materials and financial contributions offered to the Center, including but not limited to:

- Archival and historical materials (documents, photographs, audiovisual items, maps, artifacts, and digital files);
- Monetary gifts intended to support collection care, preservation, or programming; and
- In-kind donations of supplies or services that directly benefit archival operations.

All gifts and donations of records and historical materials to the Center must align with the principles and guidelines set in the [Acquisition and Collection Development Policy](#). Financial or in-kind donations must align with City and County policies.

3. Eligibility

Gifts and donations must meet all requirements established in the Scope of Collections and Materials documented in the Acquisition and Collection Development Policy.

The Archivist will review and approve all proposed gifts or donations to ensure they meet the criteria for acceptance and fall within the Center's collecting scope. The City of Tomball retains final authority for accepting donations that carry financial implications or legal obligations.

4. *Review and Appraisal*

Once a collection of materials is identified as a potential gift or donation to the Center, the following workflow will be initiated:

1. Record request and donor information
2. Appraise materials for relevance to scope
3. Acquire Donor Agreement
4. Accession materials into the Archives

4.1 *Record request and donor information*

The name, email, phone number, and other relevant contact information must be documented and stored with each record of gift or donation. For materials that are accessioned into the archives, this information will be retained for Center use is subject to disclosure under the Public Information Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 552.

4.2 *Appraisal of Scope*

Each potential gift or donation of materials will be appraised using [the Appraisal Form](#). This form is used to document and evaluate materials still in the custody of creators or donors. City records **do not** need to be appraised in this manner but should be evaluated according to the Archival Values Checklist and approved for transfer by appropriate records management staff in the City Secretary's office before accessioning.

4.2.1 *Restrictions or Conditions*

The Center reserves the right to decline any donation that does not align with its mission, duplicates existing holdings, or poses preservation or legal challenges. The Archivist will make every effort to find an appropriate repository for those records with historic value that do not conform to the Center's mission.

The Center does not provide monetary appraisals of donations for tax purposes; donors seeking tax deductions are responsible for obtaining independent appraisals in compliance with IRS regulations.

4.3 *Donor Agreement*

All accepted gifts **must** be accompanied by a signed Donor Agreement that formally transfers ownership and defines any restrictions to use and access. Copies of the Donor Agreement will be retained in both the donor file and the accession record.

The Donor Agreement will specify:

- Donor's name and contact information;
- Description of materials donated;
- Acknowledgement of transfer of ownership of rights and/or custody of objects;
- Conditions or restrictions (if any); and
- Signatures of both the donor and the Archivist or other authorized city representative.

4.3.1 Conditional Loans and Temporary Custody

Conditional or long-term loans will be accepted only under exceptional circumstances and must be documented through a formal agreement specifying terms, duration, and responsibilities.

4.3.2 Access and Restrictions

Once accessioned, all materials are subject to the policies and guidelines of the Centers's [Access and Use Policy](#). The donor may specify supplemental restrictions or terms of use within the Donor Agreement with the approval of the Archivist.

4.4 Accession Procedure

Once approved for accession, the collection will be subject to the guidelines and requirements outlined in the Center's Accessioning and Deaccessioning policy. Upon delivery of materials to the Center, the collection will be scheduled for processing. The Center reserves the right to deaccession materials in accordance with established policy and ethical standards.

5. Use and Stewardship of Donated Materials

All donated materials become the property of the City of Tomball and will be managed according to Center policies governing accessioning, preservation, description, access, and deaccessioning with regard to additional specifications noted within the Donor Agreement.

All collections will be arranged and described according to archival principles using established archival descriptive standards. The Center reserves the right to digitize, reproduce, exhibit, or loan materials for research or educational purposes.

6. Monetary and In-Kind Donations

Monetary donations will be accepted through approved City of Tomball procedures and designated for archival or historical purposes as specified by the donor and approved by the City. In-kind donations of supplies or services must directly support TAHC programs, operations, or preservation initiatives and will be evaluated for appropriateness and utility.

7. Donor Relations and Recognition

The Center will provide donors with an official letter acknowledging the gift and its significance to the community's historical record. Additional acknowledgments or communications will be conducted as appropriate at the discretion of the Archivist or the City of Tomball.

Donor privacy will be respected in accordance with applicable laws and the donor's expressed preferences.

8. Revision and Administrative Acknowledgement

This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to reflect changes in professional standards, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

Preservation Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the preservation and care of the Tomball Archive and History Center's collections. The policy ensures that materials entrusted to the Center are protected for long-term access and use through consistent, professional preservation practices that balance resource limitations with preservation priorities. The City assumes financial responsibility for the technical support and maintenance of materials required by this policy.

Established in 2023, the Tomball Archive and History Center preserves, protects, and facilitates access to historical municipal records generated by the City of Tomball as well as special collections donated by the community. The Center is a joint project funded by the City of Tomball through the City Secretary's office, with in-kind services provided by LoneStar College and Harris County Public Library.

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- **Center:** Any reference within this document to "Center" is a reference to the Tomball Archive and History Center.

2. Scope of Materials

In accordance with its mission and vision, the Center will prioritize and foster the long-term preservation of physical and digital materials created or received by the Center, including: permanent municipal records transferred from the City of Tomball; historical and cultural collections donated by individuals, families, organizations, and businesses; and metadata, descriptive documentation, and digital surrogates created as part of access or preservation efforts.

3. Principles of Preservation

The goal of the Center is to preserve and provide long-term access to its holdings following professional archival standards and principles. All collections will be evaluated at accession to understand the current accessibility of materials with the need for future access and use. The Archivist will monitor and appraise the condition of materials over the course of the life cycle and stewardship of items for changing needs.

Preservation strategies will be implemented within available resources and adjusted as resources expand. When feasible, the Center will collaborate with other professionals and organizations to enhance preservation through shared resources, training, and expertise. Digitization will be used as a tool to enhance access while protecting fragile originals.

4. *Environment and Storage Guidelines*

The Tomball Archive and History Center is currently housed in room 214 of the East Hall on the Lonestar Community College campus in Tomball, Texas. In collaboration with campus facilities and associated Harris County employees, archival staff work to sustain a consistent environment to promote long-term preservation of collections. Every effort is made to maintain an ambient temperature between 60 – 70 degrees Fahrenheit and humidity levels between 40 – 60 percent relative humidity.

4.1 *Housings for Records*

Accessioned records are housed in archival quality acid- and lignin-free folders and boxes whenever possible. All materials used in records processing conform to accepted professional archival standards.

4.2 *Pest and Disaster Management*

The Center takes all precautions to reduce the incidence of biological infestations of collections. No food or drink is allowed in the reference or processing areas designated by the Center or the Tomball Community Library. The Archivist will evaluate all materials for pest infestations or other biological concerns at accession and determine any needs for immediate remediation and care.

The Archivist may consult or utilize an outside vendor or service to care for materials or collections of high research or informational value, as necessary. Preservation or conservation needs that fall outside of the scope and means of the Center may result in a collection being deaccessioned from the collection.

4.2.1 *Disaster and Emergency Management*

The Center will maintain a Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan in accordance with the Lonestar College campus to safeguard collections from fire, water, mold, or other emergencies. Archival staff and volunteers will receive training in emergency response and recovery procedures, as appropriate. Vital records and high-priority objects will be identified and prioritized for salvage and protection. The Archivist will review and approve the transfer or separation of records to other secure facilities as appropriate or necessary.

5. *Preservation Priority Tiers*

The Center employs a tiered approach to prioritize preservation and access of materials based on historical and research value, current and future use, and condition or integrity of objects. These tiers are as follows:

- Tier 1: Core Preservation Priority
- Tier 2: Moderate Preservation Priority
- Tier 3: Access-Focused Materials

5.1 *Tier 1 Core Preservation Priority*

This priority is given to unique, irreplaceable, or legally mandated materials of enduring historical or administrative value.

5.1.1 Scope of Collections

The following collections and records will be considered a Tier 1 priority for preservation and care:

- All permanent, municipal records;
- Founding City documents, original photographs, and manuscripts relevant to the mission of the Center; or
- Rare or fragile items of exceptional research or evidential significance.

5.1.2 Preservation Guidelines

Collections and materials identified as Tier 1 priority will receive the highest level of environmental and handling control. Under the direction of the Archivist, these materials will be prioritized for stabilization, reformatting, and/or digitization as resources allow. Physical access to objects may be minimized to reduce risk and damage from handling. The Archivist will regularly assess and document the condition of these materials.

5.2 Tier 2 Moderate Preservation Priority

This priority is given to materials with historical or research value that support interpretation, education, or public engagement but have accessible surrogates or copies.

5.2.1 Scope of Collections

The following collections and records may be considered a Tier 2 priority for preservation and care:

- local history collections;
- community organization records; and
- frequently used or requested objects (e.g., photographs).

5.2.2 Preservation Guidelines

Collections and materials identified as a Tier 2 priority will be housed and stored according to accepted archival standards within the means of the Center. To encourage and support access and use, the Archivist will prioritize the digitization or creation of surrogates of materials to support long-term accessibility of original objects. Moderate access and use of original materials will be allowed under the supervision of archival staff. The Archivist and archival staff will monitor the condition of materials and reassess needs every 3-5 years.

5.3 Tier 3 Access-Focused Materials

This priority is given to items primarily retained for reference, display, or educational use; duplicates or low-risk materials.

5.3.1 *Scope of Collections*

The following collections and records may be considered a Tier 3 priority for preservation and care:

- copies;
- printed reference files; or
- items with limited unique informational content.

5.3.2 *Preservation Guidelines*

Collections and materials identified as a Tier 3 priority will be housed and stored according to accepted archival standards within the means of the Center. These materials and records will be made available for regular access, handling, or exhibition. The Archivist will determine and approve the need for replacement or reprinting if damage or deterioration occurs. Digitization of materials will be determined based on user need.

6. *Care and Preservation of Digital Collections*

Digitized materials and born-digital materials require ongoing technical maintenance to ensure long-term accessibility. The Center will employ best practices in digital asset management and archival standards to ensure the ongoing integrity and accessibility of digital files. Ensuring integrity of the record includes the management of the data within the file, the file as an object, the provenance of its creation, and the metadata used in its record.

6.1 *Digital Storage Management*

Digital files will be stored on secure, redundant systems (onsite and cloud-based) to mitigate risk of loss. Along with cloud-based storage for the access of digital records, the Center will use external hard drives backup and store preservation and working copies of files. One hard drive is used in the creation and access of files by archival staff. The other is a mirrored backup to mitigate loss or damage to files.

6.2 *File and Format Management*

Archival staff will ensure that files are accessioned, created, and stored in the proper formats for long-term preservation. When feasible, files may be reformatted to open, non-proprietary formats to ensure accessibility without the need of proprietary software. In accordance with standard archival practice, at least three copies of digitized files will be stored for relevant collections.

- A preservation file is the highest quality copy of an object for long-term preservation. It is created once, stored, and no longer handled. It is used ONLY in the event that a primary access copy becomes corrupted or altered. The Archivist will create a new primary access copy using the preservation file.

- A primary access copy is a working copy of the preservation file and is the source of all other copies.
- An access copy is a copy of the primary access copy at a lower resolution and an accessible file format for viewing, printing, web publishing, etc.

6.3 Integrity Checks and Obsolescence

Digital files and objects will undergo fixity checks to ensure the data integrity of the file. An initial fixity will be established at accession or creation by generating a checksum for the file that is logged with the collection record. Fixity checks will be performed at a regular interval determined by the Archivists. Checks may occur outside of this regular cycle if determined necessary by the Archivist.

The Archivist will review files annually to ensure that the Center has the proper technology (i.e., software or tech equipment) required to open and access files. Any files at risk of loss of access due to obsolescence will be reformatted to an acceptable file type, if possible. If unable to reformat files to an accessible file type, the Archivist may decide to deaccession materials from the collection.

7. *Revision and Administrative Acknowledgement*

This policy will be reviewed every five years or as needed to reflect changes in professional standards, legal requirements, or institutional priorities.

Procedures

Processing Checklist

Choose an unprocessed collection

1. Select a collection to process.
2. Get approval from head archivist to process.

Review all accession and administrative records of the collection

1. Review all available administrative records for the collection.
2. Determine if there is a recent inventory.
3. Search all inventories in TAHC Control Folders for collection #, collection title, creator name.
4. Note locations of all materials and update of the location information in the administrative record.
5. Photocopy, print or save any documents that you want to consult throughout the project.
6. Create a project folder to keep everything together for the duration of the project.
7. Setup project files in the digital control folder.

Conduct an initial assessment and appraisal of the collection

1. Locate and pull all collection materials from all locations.
2. Create a box-level inventory noting record types, materials of significance, preliminary appraisal decisions, preservation needs, and scope of collection.
3. Note any restriction concerns.
4. Determine appropriate housing and storage location for all materials.
5. Upload box-level inventory archival description to the project folder.

Create a processing plan for the collection

1. Write preliminary Biographical Sketch and Scope & Content Note.
2. Outline initial arrangement of collection.
3. Determine an initial Processing Tier-level for each record series.
4. Detail course of action and procedures for arrangement and rehousing of collection.
5. Estimate supplies and preservation activities necessary for processing the collection.
6. Provide a timeline for completion of physical processing.
7. Get approval by a head archivist.

Begin physically processing the collection according to the plan

1. Group materials according to the arrangement in the processing plan.
2. Rehouse materials into archival folders and boxes.
3. Separate materials to appropriate storage sections and containers depending on size or material type. Insert separation sheets (if necessary).
4. Label folders to describe the materials within.
5. Make note of restricted materials, labeling folders and boxes.

6. Make preservation decisions depending on the condition of individual items.
7. Take preservation actions as you go or flag to do all at the end.
8. Finalize box and folder numbers and other container identifications.
9. Create folder-level inventory (or appropriate level of description), matching folder labels.
10. Assign identifiers to all inventoried items.
11. Place foil-back labels on all boxes.
12. Calculate final extent in cubic feet and boxes.

Digitize materials included in a collection (optional)

1. Identify items for digitization and create digitization plan, if not already created.
2. Get approval from a head archivist.
3. Submit items to the digital processing log.
4. Accession items to the digital collection drive (external hard drive).
5. Create an inventory list of all files transferred.
6. Process files and create access files, if possible.
7. Saving files to the appropriate project folders on the digital collection drive.
8. Update collection documentation with the appropriate inventory and location information.

Process born-digital materials (optional)

1. Submit digital items in the digital processing log.
2. Accession items to digital collection drive (DCD)
3. Make a list of all files transferred from all items
4. Process and create access files if possible.
5. Save items to the appropriate project folder(s) on the digital collection drive.

Finalize Description and Arrangement

1. Finalize narrative describing the person or institution's history, collection, and types of materials in collection.
2. Transfer all description information into TAHC Finding Aid template.

Update collection control folders and administrative records

1. Update location information in accession records.
2. Link Physical Storage of all Shelf# locations to Collection-level archival descriptions.
3. Update master inventories in TAHC Control Folders.
4. Update Box inventory database.
5. Put collection and admin materials back in control folders.
6. Print Accession Record and replace in control folder
7. Print Finding aid and place it in the control folder.
8. Deaccession materials.

Shelve Materials

1. Place all boxes, containers, and items of the collection on the appropriate shelves and in the appropriate sections.

Clean the processing area

1. Store empty boxes, if archival-grade, with collection information marked out, so the boxes can be reused for other collections.
2. Place all reuseable archival supplies in the appropriate place in the supply section.
3. De-construct non-archival boxes and set aside for disposal.
4. Discard materials that were set aside for disposal.

Accessioning Physical Records and Collections

1. Record in Accession Log

Each accession must be documented with a complete [Accessioning Form](#). This process allows us to record the contextual and administrative information necessary for long-term preservation. This form includes:

1. Intake Data – administrative information documenting the receipt of items and the assignment of an Accession Number (see below).
2. Custodial History and Provenance – contextual information regarding the history of ownership and details of its donation.
3. Description – preliminary description of the collection to aid in developing a processing plan.
4. Condition and Access – preliminary description of the collection to document preservation or restriction needs.

1.1 Assign an Accession Number

Accessions are tracked and grouped annually. Each accession is given a unique, sequential identifier that reflects the order in which it was received in the year it was received. For each accession, begin with the 4-digit year and then assign a 3-digit number reflecting its order received separated by a '-'.

Reference the Accession Log to identify the next sequential number to use.

Example: 2025-001

2. Create a collection in the TAHC Collection Database

If accession is a new accrual for an existing collection, you will **not** need to create a new collection. Locate the existing collection folder and update the Administrative Record with information on the new accession. Note any updates to the dates, boxes, locations, etc.

If accession is of a new collection, assign a collection number to the collection (if new) and add the collection to the Collection Inventory List once accessioning is complete and materials have been received,

Each collection is first categorized by type and then assigned a unique, sequential number.

2.1 Assign a Collection Category

- MR (Municipal Record) - For city records collections transferred from an internal municipal department, board, commission, etc.
- MS (Manuscripts and Papers) - For special collections created or gathered by individuals or groups.

2.2 Assign a Collection Number

Before assigning an identification number, reference the Collection Inventory List for the next sequential collection number for the relevant collection category:

Example: MS 001

2.3 Create a Collection Control Folder(s)

Collection records are housed in the TAHC Collection Database stored (and mirrored) on the two external hard drives. A print copy of the administrative record and relevant custodial information is stored in a physical folder in the desk in E213.

1. Navigate to the Collections folder and open the directory for the appropriate collection category.
2. Once in the correct directory, create a new folder for the new collection. Name the folder with the ID number and shortened Collection Name separated by an '_'. The Collection name should be formatted appropriately for file management using '-' in place of spaces.

Example: 001_Tomball-Garden-Club-Collection

The physical control folder should be labeled with the name of the collection, accession number, collection number, and date received. If any information is added to the folder at a later date, a second date can be appended to reflect this.

Folder label example:

(Collection Number) M# 00#	Collection Name	(Accession Number) YYYY-00#
		Received: MM/YYYY

2.3.1 Control Folder Contents

Digital control folders house the following files (created/updated at various stages of processing and management):

1. Administrative Record
2. Donor Agreement (signed)
3. Donation Correspondence/Evidence
4. Inventory File(s) - Box-level required with accession; File- and/or Item-level as processed
5. Processing Plan
6. Preservation/Digitization Plan

Physical control folders house only a copy of the Administrative Record, Donor Agreement (signed) and any relevant Donation Correspondence.

3. Place collection in the Archive stacks

Materials should be housed in archival-grade boxes and labeled. Materials that do not fit inside a 1 cubic foot box, should be relocated to the appropriate location and inventoried. Note all locations for the collection in the Administrative Record, listing bay and shelf number individually.

Example Box Label (Unprocessed)

Collection Name	Accession #
-----------------	-------------

Box #	
Location #	
UNPROCESSED	Received: MM/YYYY

4. Send a Letter of Acknowledgement to the donor

More process TBD. Reference the [Letter of Thanks](#) template.

5. Create Box-Level inventory and queue for processing.

See Processing Manual > Initial Assessment. Save a copy of the inventory and processing plan in both the digital and physical control folders.

Appraisal Form

(The following is adapted from an online MS Forms link.)

This form should be used to appraise and evaluate collections/materials that have not yet been formally accessioned to the Archives. These include materials still in the custody of creators or donors or materials that have accumulated in the Archives without documentation or record. **City records do not need to be appraised in this manner but should be evaluated according to the Archival Values Checklist before accessioning.**

Contact Information

- Name:
- Preferred Contact
(Email, phone, physical address, or all of the above.)
- Appraised By:
- Appraisal Date:

Collection Information

- Name or Title of Collection
(May be adjusted during processing)
- Description of materials and subject matter:
(include document and object types, formats, etc.)

Evaluation and Recommendation

- Institutional Relevance:
Does the collection have a direct relationship to the operational and administrative work of the following? (Answer Yes, No, or Unknown for each)
 - City of Tomball and its departments, governing boards, or commissions.
 - Previous and current elected or appointed officials.
 - Previous or current projects, events, or other noteworthy activities.
- Enduing and Historical Value:
Do the items within the collection hold relevant significance to or serve as a vital source of information for the following? (Answer Yes, No, or Unknown for each)
 - Settling and development of the community (pre-founding).
 - Founding and establishment of the City.
 - Growth and development of the City
 - Growth and development of the surrounding community.
- Does the collection contain rare or unique source materials of value to researchers?
(This could be related to institution-specific subjects and priorities as well as broader subjects)
- Has the Archive received special funding, approvals, or requests to aid in the preservation of the collection?
(For collections outside of the Center's prioritized mission and scope)

- Additional notes, concerns, or consideration.
- Recommended Action:
 - Accession
 - Transfer Custody
 - Disposal
 - Destruction

Accessioning Form

This form should be used to document our knowledge about a grouping of archival materials upon their arrival to the Archives. This form is part of the larger processing workflow and will set the stage for stabilization, processing, and preservation of the items. **Information from this form will be manually transferred to the Admin Record template and saved to the collection's control folder as well as saved to the Collection Inventory for the Center.**

Intake Data

- Received by (Staff)
- Date Received
- Donated By (Name, Organization and Contact)
- Location (Shelf, Section and/or digital folder path)
- Accession No (YYYY-###)

Custodial History and Provenance

- Acquisition Type
 - Donation
 - Transfer
 - Deposit
 - Purchase
 - Other
- Deed of Gift/Transfer of Ownership

(A deed of gift letter should be sent to the contact information on file to legally transfer custody of collection for accessioning to the Archives. If no Deed of Gift is available or no contact information is known, any communications or known history of ownership should be documented and saved to the collection's control folder and noted in the Admin Record.)

 - Yes, signed
 - Yes, unsigned
 - No
- Receipt of Purchase

(An official document noting the point of sale, itemized list of purchases, and date should be saved in the collection's control folder and noted in the Admin Record.)

 - Yes
 - No
- Office/Division Name

(For records originating from City Records)
- Records Identification Numbers

(Any ID numbers used in the retention and use of records. Could include Agency Item Number, Record Series Item Number, etc.)
- Are there any related materials in the Archives custody?

- Yes
 - No
 - Unknown
- List Collection ID, Title, Location for related (if new) or existing collections (if accrual)
- Custodial Note
(Information on collection or material ownership.)
- Is there an existing or intelligible file system?
 - Alphabetic
 - Chronological
 - Numerical
 - Topical (Subject)
 - No, not arranged
 - Other
- Are materials foldered?
 - Yes
 - Part
 - No
- Are folders labeled?
 - Yes
 - No

Description

- Title
(if part of an existing record series, note here)
- Date(s) of Materials
- Creator(s)
- Extent
(List exact number and size of containers received.)
- Type(s) of Materials
 - Newspaper
 - Directories
 - Correspondence
 - Administrative records (Bylaws, Reports, Minutes, etc.)
 - Manuals
 - Paper
 - Photographs
 - Financial Documents
 - Audiovisual (film, video, audio)
 - Digital media (digitized and born-digital)
 - Garments and textiles

- Framed objects
 - Other
- Scope and Contents

Condition and Access

- Physical Condition
 - Excellent
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
- Condition Notes
- Potential Restrictions?
 - All
 - Part
 - None
 - Needs further assessment
- Restriction Note
(Include all applicable laws and statutes (i.e., Texas Public Information Act)).