



## First lady Laura Bush Designates Plano, Texas a Preserve America Community

WASHINGTON, DC—Plano was recently designated by Laura Bush one of the Nation's newest Preserve America communities.

The Preserve America initiative is a new White House effort to encourage and support community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of America's priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include:

a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past; strengthened regional identities and local pride; increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets; and support for the economic vitality of our communities.



"Preserve America communities demonstrate that they are committed to preserving America's heritage while ensuring a future filled with opportunities for learning and enjoyment," Mrs. Bush said. "This community designation program, combined with the Preserve America Presidential Awards and Federal support, provides strong incentives for continued preservation of our cultural and natural heritage resources. I commend Plano and its leaders for their commitment to preserving an important part of our Nation's historic past for visitors, neighbors, and, most importantly, for children."

Plano's Heritage Preservation Officer Marcus Watson, who assisted Mayor Evans in preparing the application, said, "Plano has made great strides in historic preservation, and this designation confirms our commitment to protect our community's heritage assets."



Mayor Evans agreed that "the City of Plano will protect and celebrate our heritage, use our historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs."

Communities designated through the program receive national recognition for their efforts. Other benefits include use of the Preserve America logo; notification to media, State tourism offices, and visitor bureaus; and listing in a Web-based directory to showcase preservation efforts and highlight heritage tourism destinations. Plano is now also eligible to apply for grants under the Preserve America Grants Program administered by the Department of the Interior. These matching fund grants of \$20,000 to \$150,000 go on a competitive basis to heritage tourism initiatives, promotion and marketing programs, and interpretive/educational initiatives involving historic resources.

"You are pioneers in this initiative, which shows just how proud the people of Plano are of their city, State and their place in our Nation's history," Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton said. "Each community's unique and diverse stories are part of the larger chapter of American heritage, culture and values. It is by visiting and experiencing these special places that we have an opportunity to touch the past, and can best understand how the past touches us."

The Department of the Interior partners with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to administer the Preserve America Community program on behalf of the Office of the First Lady.

### Plano Observes National Preservation Month

Citizens in Plano joined thousands of individuals around the country as part of a nationwide celebration of National Preservation Month in May 2006. "Sustain America - Vision, Economics, and Preservation" was the theme of the month-long celebration, which is sponsored annually by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Mayor Pat Evans proclaimed Plano's observance of National Preservation Month at the May 8 City Council meeting.

As part of the month-long celebration, Plano observed National Preservation Month on May 4 at an annual Heritage Preservation Awards Reception, hosted by the Plano Conservancy for Historic Preservation and the City of Plano Parks and Recreation Department. This event also served as a dedication ceremony for the Interurban Railway Museum's new National Register of Historic Places plaque.

"Historic preservation has made great strides in recent years, but our job is by no means complete," said National Trust President Richard Moe. "Older business districts and residential neighborhoods are still marred by disinvestment and deterioration. Landmarks of the recent past don't always receive the attention that they deserve. Sprawl continues to devour precious open space and destroy the character that makes each community unique, and laws that protect historic places are under attack. Preservation Month 2006 calls on us to get involved and tackle the new and ongoing challenges we face, and to redouble our efforts to ensure that our movement accurately reflects the vision, energy and diversity of America."

The Heritage Commission is a seven-member board appointed by the City Council. It is responsible for reviewing any proposed exterior alterations, demolition or new construction affecting designated resources or districts. If the proposed improvements are consistent with design guidelines, the Heritage Commission may grant a Certificate of Appropriateness. By preserving and maintaining visual character, the city ensures future generations will enjoy the benefits of Plano's rich architectural heritage.