



City strengthens Heritage Crossing plan

New position would bolster museum programs, downtown planning

In a move to strengthen focus on its downtown revitalization project, the City has chosen Kim Pajot to the newly created position of Heritage Crossing Coordinator and Downtown Liaison.

The action is designed to bring attention to the city's history through Heritage Crossing, the downtown historic site dedicated earlier this year, and its centerpiece Landmark Society Museum in the 1901 Santa Fe Railroad Depot through special programs planned to attract people downtown.

Already a city employee, Ms. Pajot has been Marketing and Advertising Manager for the Granville Arts Center since 2011, as well as manager of the Plaza Theatre, working in the offices of Patty Granville, Director of Cultural Facilities for the City of Garland. A graduate of Garland High School, she has a bachelor of arts degree in Anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Master of Arts degree in Elementary Education from the University of Phoenix.

Janice Black, president of Garland Landmark Society, the volunteer organization which operates the depot museum, said she is pleased with the appointment and that the Society is looking forward to working with Ms. Pajot in furthering the museum's programs. Ms. Pajot will headquarter in the museum.

Ms. Pajot said she is anxious to begin work in the new position, though there will be some delay while she wraps up work in the Cultural Affairs Office. In the city hierarchy, she will be responsible to Ms. Granville, whose office is part

of the Parks and Recreation Department, directed by Jim Stone.

"I fully intend to follow the desires and guidance of the Landmark Society to assist in increasing membership, volunteer participation and community engagement through special marketing and public presentations," Ms. Pajot said. She will also continue in her current term as a

vice-president of the Garland Downtown Business Association, an organization she has served in a volunteer position as board member while manager of the Plaza Theatre.

"I'll maintain a close relationship with GDBA, perhaps as an ex-officio consultant with their board," she said.

"The preservation of Garland's history is the mission of Landmark Society," said Ms. Pajot. "I will be helping to improve community involvement through promotion, part-time staffing, marketing and city website development."

Plans are underway for an April 11, 2015, Heritage Celebration downtown,

patterned after the highly successful program that dedicated Heritage Crossing last spring. "A part-time staff will be joining me to assist with Celebration activities, and to make it possible to keep the museum open every Saturday year round," Ms. Pajot said. The museum for many years has been open for a few hours on the first and third Saturdays of each month with Landmark volunteers staffing.



Kim Pajot

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Coordinator will oversee Crossing marketing, act as liaison between city, Landmark

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Her principal duties, Mrs. Pajot said, will be overseeing the planning, marketing and coordination, as well as developing market and promotional strategies for special events and activities of the Landmark museum and Heritage Crossing facilities.

“The Landmark Society plays a valuable role in gathering history, building archives, publishing histories and a newsletter. My position will not be involved in these operations, which require an extensive history background and training.

“I will participate in organizations such as the Texas Downtown Association, the American Association for State and Local History, the American Historical Association, the Dallas Historical Society and possibly others, as seen fit, in order to broaden my knowledge base and increase networking opportunities.

“There will certainly be times when my role as Heritage Crossing Coordinator will have liaison type responsibilities and actions for both the City of Garland and Heritage Crossing, but this will be mainly seen in an information dissemination capacity.”

Heritage Crossing is part of a long-term and ongoing city plan to revitalize the historic downtown district. The museum and its accompanying railcar, currently being renovated, are the centerpiece in the Crossing, located on Sixth Street, behind the Central Library and bordered by Walnut Street on the north. The Walnut Street side is being landscaped to complement the Crossing to its south.

Currently, new privately developed retail and residential buildings are being added to the downtown district, and a new city multi-storied parking garage is under construction across from City Hall, which is also undergoing renovation. The downtown district centers around the Square, which also will be re-conceived.

The district, in addition to businesses, includes Heritage Crossing, the DART rail station and the Richland Community College Garland campus on Walnut Street, the Granville Performing Arts Center, City Hall, the Square and the Central Library.

Landmark Society official says:

Citizen participation still is greatest need

The city's latest engagement with the Landmark Society brings the relationship almost full circle. Landmark began as an advisory group appointed by the city in 1972 after it had acquired the historic Santa Fe depot. The vintage building was moved to the new Heritage Park, a sliver of land on Fourth Street near the depot's original location.

A 9-member board was appointed by the City Council to coordinate local history efforts and to oversee the new park and the depot, dedicated in 1974.

In 1985, the Landmark Society loosed its city ties and became a private non-profit corporation, its members focused on gathering and preserving the city history and operating the museum. The city continued to provide maintenance to the building, but the museum's business was conducted by volunteers. In the succeeding years, it has added to the museum exhibits, collected and catalogued historic photos and other materials, published several books, installed historic markers, and developed a comprehensive website dedicated to city and area history.

In 2013, Landmark agreed to a city plan to move the depot to the city's newly created Heritage Crossing on Sixth Street. The culmination of that move was the opening of Heritage Crossing and re-dedication of the completely renovated museum last spring.

Michael Hayslip is the only surviving member of that advisory committee appointed by the city council in 1972. At 29, he was the youngest member of the advisory group and became its leader after the initial president, Cecil Cooper, died in his first year. Except for a decade's absence, Hayslip has continued to serve Landmark in various capacities since then, now occupying the office of curator.

He expressed Landmark's appreciation of the city's latest plan of support, while

renewing his call for involvement of Garland citizens in the society's efforts to collect and preserve history.

"It's hard to imagine civic pride without some knowledge of the community's development," he said. "Like apple pie and motherhood, local history is a cause for which most profess feelings from respect to reverence.

"Yet, the responsibilities of maintaining a historical knowledge base for our growing and complex city are outstripping the supply of volunteer resources. Historical conversation abounds, but volunteers who gather documents and photos, research files, chronicle events, construct displays and provide programs are scarce. Fresh ideas are rare, and too many suggestions begin with 'we oughta,' rather than 'I will.' "

Those problems are not Landmark's alone, he continued.

"These aren't Garland deficiencies; regional, state and national colleagues reveal similar challenges. Landmark's results compare favorably, and the roster of present and former officers confirms that we've enjoyed as strong a support group as Garland could muster. Still, national studies suggest that civic involvement wanes, particularly among younger people, and Garland isn't exempt.

"Everyone at Landmark appreciates council and administrative support for the Heritage Coordinator. Viewing this as augmentation, not replacement, we renew our call for volunteers --researchers and writers, as well as those with skills in computers, display, organization, photography and other functions we may not yet realize necessary. This community's story is a great one, already more than a century and a half long, and we shouldn't skimp on any of it."

Garland Landmark Society

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Depot Museum and the Rail Car are operated by the Garland Landmark Society,
a non-profit and volunteer organization.

Website: www.garlandhistorical.org

Memberships are available at these rates:

Individual / Couple \$20 Corporate \$100

To join or renew, enclose payment with this information and mail to:
Garland Landmark Society, P. O. Box 462232, Garland TX 75046-2232

Name: _____

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City, State, Zip: _____

Phone (home): _____ (work) _____

E-Mail: _____



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