



May 11, 2026

Omar Siddiqi
Administrative Analyst
City of Denton
Parks and Recreation Department
Omar.Siddiqi@CityofDenton.com

Re: Request for Letter of Support from the Denton City Staff for the Tejas Storytelling Association's Application to the Texas Commission on the Arts for an Arts Respond—Cultural District Project Grant for the City of Denton Texas Storytelling Festival in the amount of \$5,000

Dear Mr. Siddiqi:

The City of Denton Texas Storytelling Festival is a destination event for cultural tourism in North Texas. It is a major storytelling festival in the southwest, and attracts storytellers and story listeners from all over Texas, the nation, and internationally. Since its inception in 1985, it has been produced annually by the Tejas Storytelling Association (TSA). 2027 will be the forty-second consecutive year. The City of Denton has been a partner of this event since inception, and the Texas Storytelling Festival has been an Original Cultural District Project since that designation was received by the City of Denton.

In-person festivals over the years have the direct economic benefit of bringing over 200 or more registrants to Denton. There were 230 registrants in 2026 who attended the 4-day festival. One 2026 attendee from Oklahoma tracked personal spending over just 2 days of the festival at over \$418.85, including gas, food, and lodging. The festival hotel typically reports approximately \$10,000 in room nights annually, while two local restaurants, who cater meal functions benefit directly through registrations, earning approximately \$1,000 per meal. Total festival attendance at all face-to-face events was approximately 1667. The festival brings people into Denton from the surrounding communities as well to attend the workshops and concerts, the ghost tales and Liars' Contest, Kids' Day, and story swaps. These are college students, families with children and nursing home residents, while non-resident storytellers and retirees make up a larger percentage. The festival also attracts the Deaf community due to the superb sign language interpreters who interpret all concerts.

Tejas Storytelling Association • 214 West Hickory • Denton, TX 76201 • 940-382-7014 • tsa@tejasstorytelling.com

To be held at the Quakertown Civic Center in the Original Denton Cultural District on March 11-14, 2027, the Texas Storytelling Festival attracts performing artists, teachers, librarians, clergy, attorneys, counselors, and all those who use storytelling in their work. Tejas Storytelling Association is a nonprofit, 501 (c) 3 organization, headquartered in Denton, with a world-wide membership of approximately 280. Festival evaluations always report that people return year after year. As one participant commented, "Everything was inspiring!"

The planned line up of new and returning featured storytellers for 2027 will showcase both nationally known and Texas storytellers, representing many heritages. Typically, 65 storytellers, 85 volunteers, and community partners, who include the City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Texas Commission on the Arts come together annually, with the Denton Benefit League and other local sponsors and individual donors. Recycled Books in Denton and the Texas Folklore Society have been especially supportive the last few years, with TFS manning a table throughout the whole festival.

In all ways, the City of Denton Texas Storytelling Festival benefits the Denton community culturally and economically.

TSA seeks assistance with the partial rental cost of the Quakertown Civic Center for the 2027 festival in the amount of \$5,000, and hopes to apply to the Texas Commission on the Arts through the Cultural District Project grants for this help. We would respectfully request a letter of support from the City of Denton for this application.

Thank you very much for your help in referring this proposal to the City of Denton for its consideration.

Warm regards,

Valerie Kimble

Valerie Kimble
TSA Grants Committee

Enclosure: 2025 Close-out report for TCA Cultural District Grant

Cc: Allison Wing, Interim Director of Parks and Recreation, allison.wing@cityofdenton.com
Ron Carter, TSA Grants Committee Chair
Michael Brundy, TSA President
John Hale, TSA President-Elect
Dalton Gregory, TSA Treasurer Emeritus