

Historic Buda
Stagecoach House &
Onion Creek Post Office
A Restoration Master Plan



The small town of Buda has played an impressive role in Texas history. Much of its story can be learned through the proposed restoration of the historic Stagecoach House and Onion Creek Post Office, which will become an educational center for people of all ages. Archeological documentation reveals much about the early settlers, as well as postal delivery by stagecoach between San Antonio and Austin.



Today's Buda was part of a Mexican Land Grant awarded in 1835 to Stephen Von Eggleston & P.J. Allen. At the time, Indian tribes inhabited the area, the most common of which were the Tonkawas. By 1850, a Hays County census stated that one-third of the county's population lived around Onion Creek. Stagecoach routes also passed through the area, stopping to change or water horses and to leave the mail. One route stopped at Victor Labenski's cabin beginning in 1850, another at Adolphus Weir's house in 1851.



The Weir stop became known as the Manchaca Springs Post Office. It operated until 1875, when the Stagecoach House and Post Office moved west along Onion Creek to the house and engraved limestone building which still stand today.



Stagecoach operations in Texas were closely tied to government mail contracts. Thus the coming of the railroad signaled the end of the Stagecoach era, and the beginning of dramatic change. As a new town emerged, activity centered at the crossing of the Old San Antonio Road and the new International Great Northern Railroad, near the present location of North Main and San Antonio Streets. The Post Office was moved to the Chandler Store in Block 1 between San Antonio Street and Elm Street of this new town, which was named DuPre in 1881 and changed to Buda in 1887.

Buda has once again become one of the fastest growing communities in Central Texas. Today, the restoration of historic buildings plays an important role in preserving this fascinating piece of history for today and tomorrow. Restoration of the Stagecoach House and Post Office will provide a Visitor's Center and Community Center for Buda. It will become the new point of entry, the welcoming gesture, for Buda and this historic central Texas area.

Buda, Texas

Stagecoach departing Austin for
San Antonio via Buda

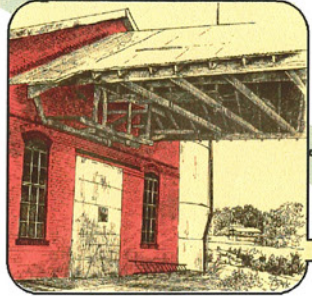
Source: Stagecoach Inns of Texas



(Source)

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Barton Gin, Built 1914

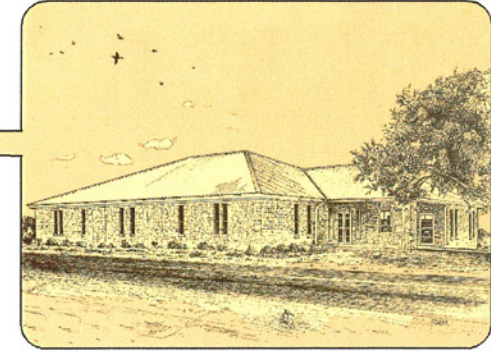


To Labenski Cabin
Stagecoach & Mail Stop
Circa 1850

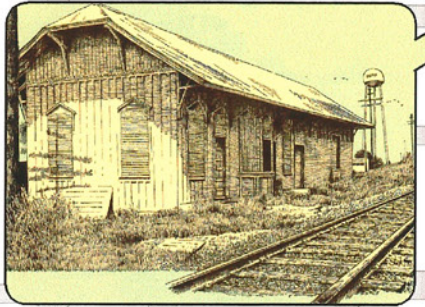
Barber Buildings, Built 1915



Basil Anthony Moreau Memorial Library, Built 1993

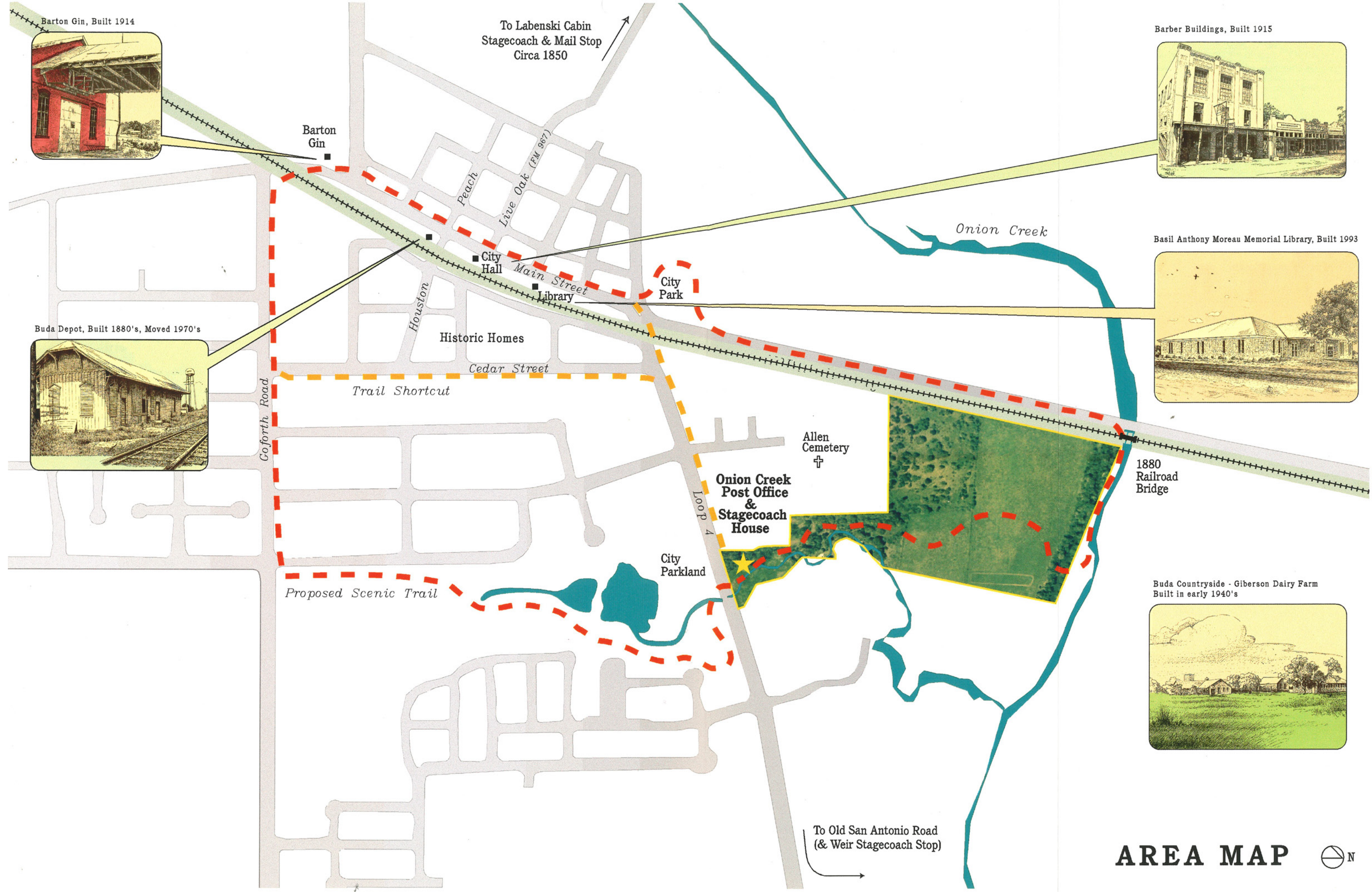
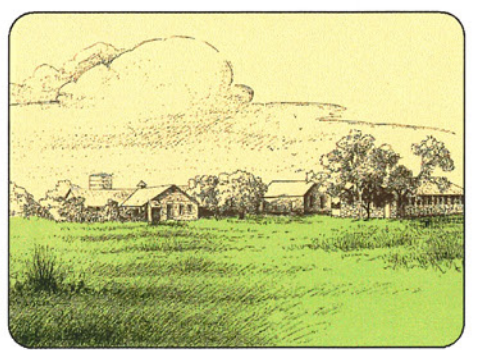


Buda Depot, Built 1880's, Moved 1970's



1880
Railroad
Bridge

Buda Countryside - Giberson Dairy Farm
Built in early 1940's



To Old San Antonio Road
(& Weir Stagecoach Stop)



The grounds will be developed to maximize community use of this historic site and enhance the many beautiful natural features.



The front gardens will be planted to recreate a historical landscape. The open areas under the magnificent oaks will be used for community festivals and fairs and will be highly visible for travelers along Loop 4. The Scenic Trail will meander among the large oaks back to the Postal Museum, housed in the soon-to-be restored one room, limestone Post Office built in 1876.



The Stagecoach House will accommodate groups up to 60 people, with full kitchen facilities. This building will also house the Buda Visitor's Center, to be open to the public with a variety of information on activities in the community and central Texas.

Large outdoor events will be held in the open-air pole barn, a new structure to be built to accommodate hundreds of people with restroom facilities in the restored historic shed. A small and large amphitheatre will be carved out of the natural hillside for outdoor musical and performance events. Parking will be provided as well as handicap accessibility to all activities.



Visitor's Center Grounds



SITE PLAN



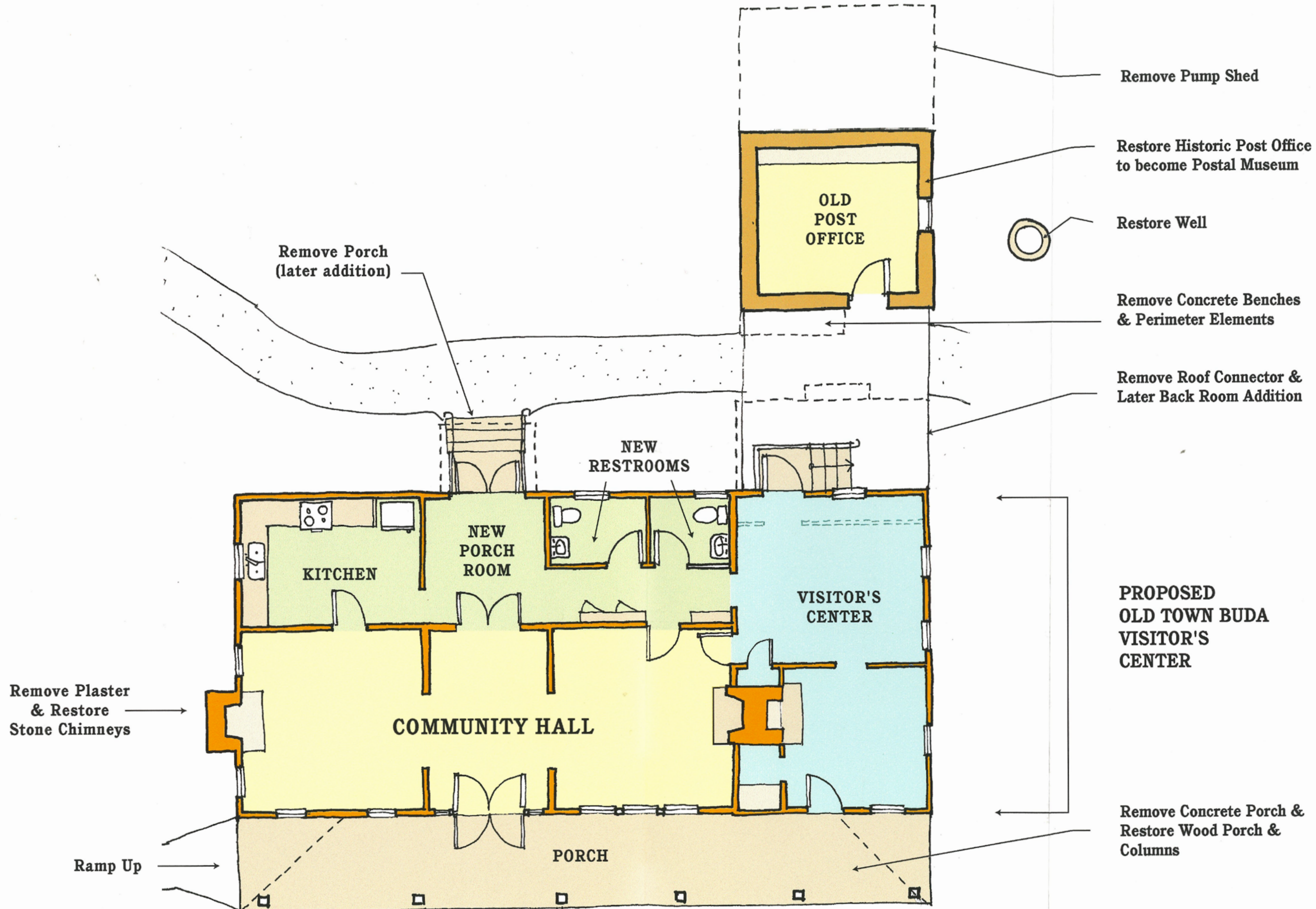


This beautiful tract of 51 acres was purchased by the City of Buda in 1998. The House and Post Office buildings on one and a half acres is the gift of Victor Stanzel, a notable toymaker. Acquisition of this property enables the City of Buda to create a Visitor's Center and Community Center, a place for public and private events, with an educational focus on the history of the surrounding area.

The site will become the trailhead for a new three mile walking tour of Buda and through a protected natural preserve along beautiful Onion Creek. Highlights along the trail will include the Old Post Office Museum, an old stagecoach bridge, the old railroad trestle with monumental limestone pylons, City Park, the famous antique shops of downtown Buda, great restaurants and many restored homes of the 19th century.

The new Scenic Trail will provide an educational and recreational opportunity for Buda's residents and visitors. It will also ensure the preservation of 51 acres of natural countryside along Onion Creek for the enjoyment of future generations.

Scenic Trail



FLOOR PLAN





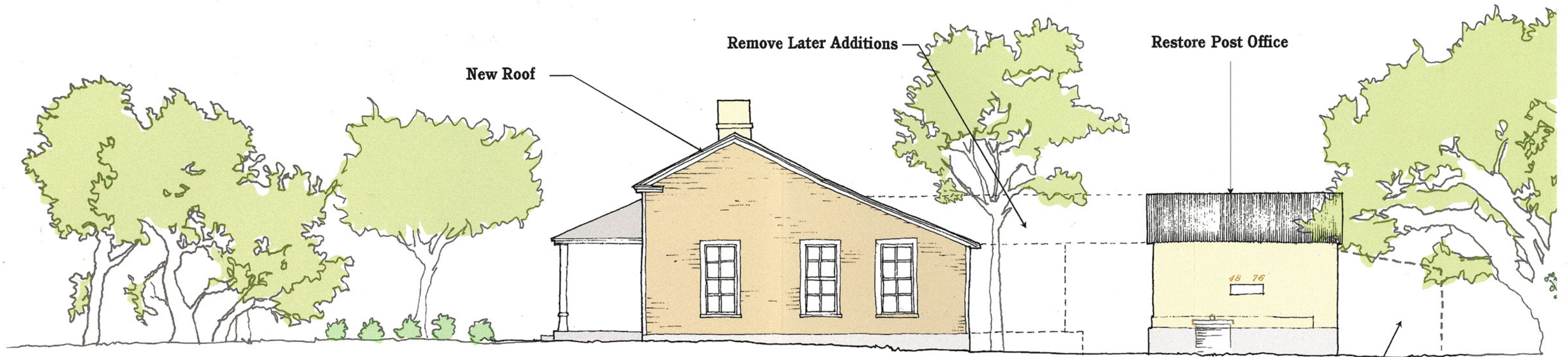
The Stagecoach House, also known as the Mc-Elroy-Severn House, dates to the mid-1870's and is an excellent example of the center-passage house form of the era. The property has had many alterations over the years. Restoration efforts will focus upon re-creating the house at the turn of the century and alterations made after that time will be removed and original elements restored. The house will retain the porch to the south and a portion of the original north open porch will be restored.

Interior improvements will include a full kitchen and accessible restrooms. The two-room, newer portion of the house, to the east, will house the Buda Visitor's Center and will be open to the public. The main house will be available by reservation for community and private events.

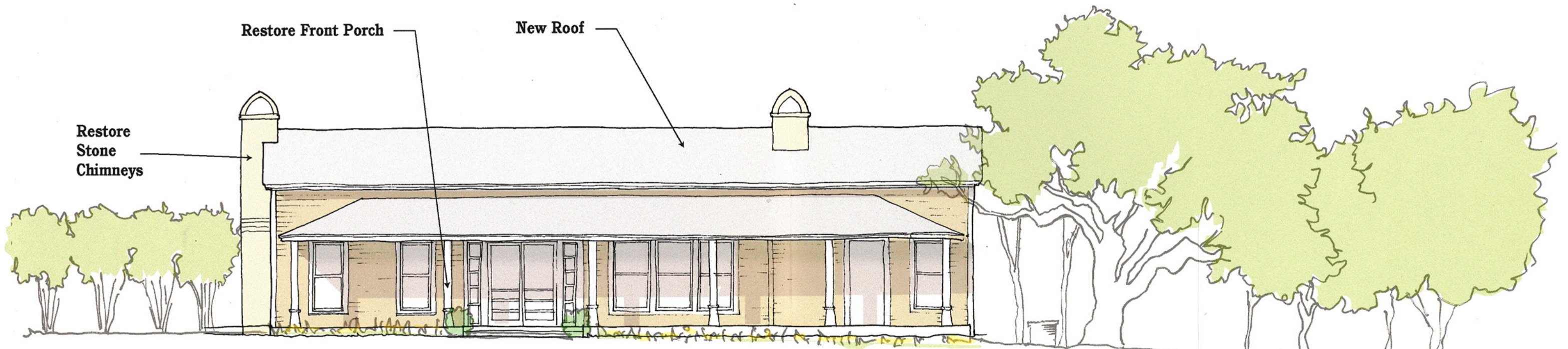
The one-room Onion Creek Post Office, built in 1876, will be restored with later alterations and additions removed. The Texas Historical Commission has stated that the Post Office is "a fine property with exceptional integrity and associative community value."

Plans for restoration include cooperative efforts with the United States Postal Workers to create a Postal Museum in this structure.

Historic Building Restoration



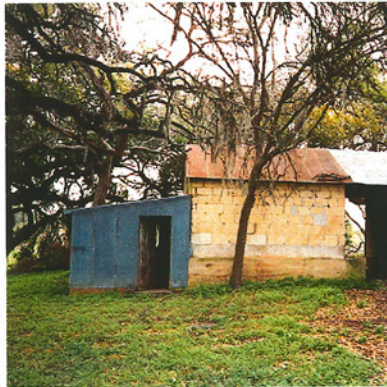
EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



The Stagecoach House is a wood frame structure, with a pier and beam foundation of cedar posts on limestone blocks with hand hewn pegs for joinery. The fireplace footings and the perimeter foundation are dry-stack limestone. The chimneys will be restored to original condition and are probably made of limestone that has been plastered over. Some of the interior walls are framed with cedar posts and roof framing is also cedar post and milled lumber.



The Onion Creek Post Office was made of solid limestone block and will require significant restoration efforts to remove the concrete buttressing which has been poured up against the stone. Some of the stone has also deteriorated and will require replacement, but every effort will be made to utilize all historical elements and materials. The alterations and additions made to the structure will be removed to restore it to the original 1876 condition, a date indicated on one of the two ornately hand carved limestone lintels.



Historic Building Restoration

This restoration project is a remarkable opportunity for the City of Buda to create a facility that is integral to the entire community . . . a place for education, recreation, special events and the enjoyment of nature.

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