TEXAS’ BROADWAY OF AMERICA
THE BANKHEAD HIGHWAY

Environmental Affairs Division
Cover: Bankhead Highway in Sulphur Springs, circa 1940.

1917 Highway Map showing the Bankhead Highway through Texas; Official Bankhead Highway historic route sign.
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 4
MISSION STATEMENT 5
INTERPRETIVE PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 5
CENTRAL THEME 6
INTERPRETIVE THEMES 7
SPOTLIGHTS 18
RESOURCES 21
WEBSITES 21
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES 22
SAMPLE LESSON PLANS 23

Prepared for:
Texas Department of Transportation
Environmental Affairs Division
125 E 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Prepared by:
Mikayla Brown
Texas State University
Public History Graduate Student

Looking west on Camp Bowie Blvd. at Montgomery St. intersection, Fort Worth.

Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth.

A section of the Dallas-Fort Worth Pike built in 1919 and 1920.
INTRODUCTION

This interpretive plan articulates the vision of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Environmental Affairs Division in an effort to interpret and emphasize the significance of the Bankhead Highway and the rise of historically significant businesses along the road. This interpretive plan:

– provides initial research and program planning for information-based institutions;
– identifies applicable resources for classroom engagement and further research;
– presents a wide array of educational tools, including adaptive lesson plans that correspond to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards;
– outlines the goals and objectives of the Environmental Affairs Division in their efforts to expand museum outreach; and
– highlights selected themes and narratives regarding the building of the Bankhead Highway and the rise of businesses for tourism along this historic road in Texas.

Who is TxDOT and the Environmental Affairs Division?
TxDOT began in 1917 as the Texas Highway Department. TxDOT maintains the federal and state road systems in Texas – interstate highways, US highways, state highways, farm-to-market roads, and other state types of roads, such as loops. The Environmental Affairs Division (ENV) includes historians and archeologists that conduct outreach on programs across the state. ENV provides policy, procedures, training, guidance and technical assistance to other sections of TxDOT. It also manages environmental programs, works to streamline the environmental process, and monitors changing law and regulations.
MISSION STATEMENT

The Environmental Affairs Division integrates environmental considerations into all TxDOT activities to achieve environmental compliance. As part of that, TxDOT engages in cultural resource management. In an effort to cultivate and manage the archeological and historic resources, the division seeks to create tools that will provide museum specialists and educators with information about the cultural resources related to transportation topics in Texas. This plan will provide a framework of educational and interpretive experiences that increase an understanding of road development, community prosperity, and increased tourism along the Bankhead Highway in Texas.

INTERPRETIVE PLAN
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

– Educate the public about the Bankhead Highway in Texas.

– Inform the public about select historic businesses and roadside attractions along this historic route in Texas.

– Highlight connections between businesses and their communities in relation to the Bankhead Highway.

– Provide an interpretive structure and framework that allows museum staff to add information to, or use interpretive themes for activities and/or museum exhibits.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

CENTRAL THEME
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

As state and federal officials grappled with ways to rebuild roads, a series of laws were passed to accommodate a more automobile-driven nation. Roads connected major cities and accommodated trade and the movement of produce from rural farms. Some roads were also used to transport military equipment and to deliver mail. The earliest Texas laws for road construction required the first roads connect county seats. For a large state, like Texas, this law was inefficient as construction techniques varied between counties and funds were limited and varied. It was difficult for cities to raise funds to protect and rebuild roads without raising property taxes too high. Interestingly, road construction was not entirely driven by automobile owners. A rise in bicyclists lobbied for smoother and safer roads. Similarly, health reformers argued that paved roads were easier to clean than dirt. As lobbying continued by small, state organizations, the federal government recognized the importance of roads for the economy. Legislation allowed states to match federal funds for transportation projects, setting nation-wide highway construction into motion.

**SUBTOPIC I: GRASSROOTS ROAD DEVELOPMENT**

**Rural Free Delivery, 1896**

— John Wanamaker, Postmaster General for the Post Office Department, proposed a service where one person delivered mail directly to rural areas and farms. Previously, farmers traveled into town in order to pick up their mail or paid exponentially high prices for private mail delivery.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

The Bankhead Highway – The national bill eventually passed, despite an ongoing disgust among congressmen for the high start-up cost.

– Rural Free Delivery raised concerns about road construction in Texas – the service depended on safe, reliable roads.

League of American Wheelmen, 1890s – 1900s
– A national organization of “wheelmen” enthusiasts encouraged the use of bicycles for transportation. Their advocacy encouraged safer roads for pedestrian and cyclist use and promoted the necessity of paved roads.

Good Roads Movement, 1870s – 1920s
– This national movement argued for the “need for progress” in road construction. The goal of this movement was to educate rural areas in road engineering and construction in order to connect urban centers, mail routes, and expand economic prosperity into the countryside.

– The Texas Good Roads Association worked with other state groups to create educational programs related to their mission of better road development, and encouraged local and state politicians for improved roadways.

– In 1902, the Texas Farmer’s Congress argued that the state should control roads in Texas and the Texas Good Roads Association was established in the following year.

• The Texas Democratic Party even added the creation of a network of state roads to their campaign platform that same year.

SUBTOPIC II: FEDERAL RESPONSES

The Brownlow Bill, 1903
– Representative Walter Brownlow, from Tennessee, proposed a federal bill that provided twenty million dollars to cover half the costs of state roads.

– Despite the fact that this bill was highly supported, public officials argued that road improvement was not allowed by the Constitution, and further, that road maintenance was not a priority for the United States.

Relief in 1912
– The United States employed another tactic for road construction. This bill paid “rent” to states to use their roads for mail deliveries. This “rent” would then offset maintenance costs. This bill faced controversy, too. States needed federal aid for their roads, but did not want federal intervention on how to spend those funds.

Harris & Ewing, photographer.
Photograph. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016865323/.
SUBTOPIC III:
BANKHEAD NATIONAL HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION

Formed in 1916, this association sought to create a southern transcontinental highway running from Washington, DC, to San Diego, California.

- As part of their mission, the association designated newly formed state highways as part of the official Bankhead Highway route. In Texas, SH 1 became the official route.

Federal Aid Road Act of 1916, The Bankhead Bill

- This bill was put forth by the Senate Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, headed by Senator John Hollis Bankhead from Alabama.

- The Bankhead Bill distributed federal aid for roads by states, but each state that received aid was required to create a state highway department by 1920.
  - Texas was the last state to create a highway department, in 1917. A federal review found that each county in Texas had its own departments that controlled road and bridge construction, while the state department lacked organization, structure, and power. When Congress threatened to pull federal funding, the Texas Highway Department reevaluated their role in road construction and focused on connecting major cities.

- This bill financed state road construction and provided a stimulus fund for states hesitant to begin road building.

- It standardized engineering practices as state departments had to create a systematic measure for design and construction.

- Finally, the bill addressed the need for both state and federal approval for road projects to create an organized, national system of roads.

- Signed by President Woodrow Wilson, this bill was approved, enacted, and implemented in less than a year!
  - Wilson: “The happiness, comfort, and prosperity or rural life, and the development of the city, are alike conserved by the construction of public highways. We therefore favor national aid in the construction of post roads and roads for military purposes.”

- Between 1919 and 1920, three national military convoy trips drove US Army trucks across the country. These trips showed politicians the wisdom of federal funding for roads to address military preparedness lessons learned during World War I.

- The 1920 Motor Transport Corps convoy traveled the Bankhead Highway route and stopped in many towns for celebrations. Officers in charge of the convoy used their expedition as an example to Congress that the federal government should maintain a national highway system.
The Bankhead Highway, connecting Washington, D.C., to California, began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

Building the Bankhead using brick pavement between Weatherford and Mineral Wells, 1938.
THEME II

BUILDING THE BANKHEAD IN TEXAS

Over five years, Texas received $4,515,750 toward road construction, over 6% of the total federal funds set aside by the Bankhead Bill. The newly formed Texas Highway Commission quickly began road construction throughout the state. Rumblings of the construction of a second transcontinental highway in America rippled throughout transportation industries. The Lincoln Highway, the first transcontinental highway in the north, was not a reliable route. Blizzardy weather required portions of the highway to shut down during the winter as many steep mountain grades became impassible. The newly proposed route would span Washington, DC, to San Diego, California, creating an all-weather southern route. The Bankhead National Highway Association formed with the mission to create “an all-weather, cross-country highway as an economic link between the Deep South states.”

SUBTOPIC I:
TEXAS HIGHWAY COMMISSION

In 1917, this organization proposed 26 highway routes throughout Texas. One route, over 850 miles long, stretched from Texarkana to El Paso.

– This area of highway, known as Texas Highway 1, was Texas’ contribution to the transcontinental highway in America.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

**SUBTOPIC II:**
**BANKHEAD USE**

- Congress supported the idea that a transcontinental road could easily move people and equipment from coast to coast. As World War I and, later, II approached, the transcontinental highway access was crucial to America’s military success.

- The Bankhead Highway fostered a sense of tourism throughout Texas. This route boosted local community economies and connected farms to markets. As the highway ran through many towns in Texas, cities expanded and, tourism grew.

- Commerce increased as connections between rural areas and urban centers developed around the highway. Many car-related businesses opened like gas stations, automobile repairs, tire stores, motor courts, and restaurants.

**SUBTOPIC III:**
**THE BANKHEAD TODAY**

- In 2009, the State Historic Roads and Highways program designated the Bankhead as a Texas Historic Highway. This designation fosters heritage tourism programs under the guide of the Texas Historical Commission.

- Today the route is a part of U.S. Route 67 and 80, as well as I-20 and I-10.

- Much of the old road has been replaced by newer roads or bypassed. Many routes are now local roads again and are no longer on the TxDOT road system.

- The Bankhead Highway, also known as the Broadway of America, continues to cultivate tourism through historic drive-ins, festivals, and military convoy reenactments.

U.S. 67 near Texarkana, circa 1940. A gas station sits at the intersection of the Bankhead between Granbury and Weatherford.
THEME III

CULTIVATING TOURISM

As the Bankhead Highway finished construction in 1920, many hotels and roadside attractions in Texas opened to accommodate tourists traveling along the new route. As more families purchased cars, road-trips became more common. There is a lot of history along the Bankhead Highway in Texas, and these are a few examples of structures you can still visit today.

Top O’Hill Terrace, Arlington
- Beulah Adams Marshall purchased property on the Bankhead Highway in the early 1920s to open a tea room. Shortly after, Fred and Mary Browning took ownership of the property and converted it into a casino.
  - The Brownings even added an escape tunnel and secret room to hide gambling materials during raids.
- Top O’Hill operated as a restaurant and tea garden, though it secretly featured a casino, brothel, and horse barn.
  - Arlington Downs Racetrack, a nearby horse track, attracted a lot of business to the underground casino.
- In 1947, Captain M.T. “Lone Wolf” Gonzauillas led a raid to Top O’Hill and successfully caught the gamblers in action.
  - The Bible Baptist Seminary purchased the property in 1956. Arlington Baptist University still uses the property today and many of the original architectural features and structures still stand today.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

**Hotel El Capitan, Van Horn**
- This historic hotel opened in 1930 under Charles Bassett as a means to encourage tourism in small towns surrounding El Paso, like Van Horn.
- Designed by Henry Trost, this building features wrought iron banisters, fourteen-foot ceilings, and Spanish-style beams.
- In 1973, the building was converted to the Van Horn state bank. When the bank took over the facility, several staircases and approximately 50 yards of underground tunnels were permanently closed. During renovations in 1973, builders found secret passageways hidden in the walls.
- The only artifacts from the original hotel found during the 1973 renovations were some vintage monogrammed El Capitan dishes and 1930’s beer cans.
- Lanna and Joe Duncan purchased the building from the bank and converted it back into the El Capitan hotel.

**Texas Centennial Exposition, Dallas**
- Built in 1936, Fair Park hosted an exposition on 178 acres to celebrate and advertise Texas.
- The buildings are Art Deco architecture and the grounds featured impressive landscaping and structures.
  - The celebration entertained over six million people with performers, unique sculpture, and speakers.
  - Visitors were quite impressed with the lights, as 24 different-color searchlights created a fan shape that moved over the fair.
- One particular highlight at the exposition was the “Hall of Negro Life.” This was the “first recognition of African American culture at a world’s fair.”
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

**Sands Motel, El Paso**

- The Sands Motel, built in approximately 1940, sits on Alameda Avenue in El Paso.
- As Texas became more automobile-driven, there was a rise in motor courts.
  - These provided travelers lodging and a hot meal during their journeys.
  - The architecture of stagecoach inns modified to fit the needs of its visitors and their cars. Sands Motel provided each guest a parking spot in front, or near, their room.
- Alameda Avenue is noted for its architectural contributions to transportation in El Paso.
- The “Sands Motel is one of the best remaining examples of this type of mid-twentieth century roadside architecture in the El Paso area” according to a National Park Service Bulletin.
- Sands Motel features Pueblo Revival architecture.
- Since its original construction, the motel has been modified, though the architectural plan still represents a typical motor court used by Bankhead Highway tourists.

**Rest Stop, IH 20**

- Between Ranger and Thurber, Texas, on IH 20 sits a TxDOT rest stop that shows visitors part of the historic Bankhead Highway route.
  - Inside the rest stop, visitors can enjoy viewing a Model T, educational displays, a gas station replica, and interactive videos.
- In 2016, a historic marker was added to highlight the area.

**Baker Hotel, Mineral Wells**

- Opened in 1929, the Baker Hotel attracted guests by promoting the “healing waters” that ran in the town.
- The hotel is 14 stories tall with nearly 450 rooms, making it the largest resort in Mineral Wells.
  - Famous guests included Judy Garland and the Three Stooges
- After three years of construction, the hotel featured an outdoor Olympic-sized swimming pool, bowling alley, veranda, gym, coffee shop, dining room, solarium, roof garden, shuffleboard, tennis, and badminton. Guests could also hike and ride horses in a nearby facility.
- The main attraction included a mineral bath, steam cabinet, steam room, and massage therapists.
  - Historic brochures show that the mineral wells could aid “rheumatism, fatigue, nervousness, and stress caused by poor posture.”
- The hotel closed in 1973 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The hotel was recently reopened as a new Baker hotel Resort and Spa.

Baker Hotel seen on the left.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

**SPOTLIGHTS**

Along the original Bankhead and other historic roads in Texas, you can find original restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and roadside parks that have unique architectural styles and features.

**Art Deco**  
The decoration is often full of zigzags and other geometric shapes against a smooth and sleek exterior surface. This style is characterized by a linear design that has a geometric appearance.

**Craftsman Bungalow**  
A traditional bungalow is a relatively small one-story home with a larch porch with thick supports. You can often see the beams extending past the roof. The chimneys are made with rubble, cobblestone, or brick.

**Classical Revival**  
These buildings are often banks, schools, churches, and government offices. They are very symmetrical in design and have a full height porch with classical columns.

Art deco style gas station along other historic highways, Shamrock.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

Streamlined Moderne
Look for soft or rounded corners, flat roofs, and smooth walls. Sometimes these buildings have a horizontal band of windows and feature aluminum or stainless-steel window and door trim.

Prairie School
Horizontal lines and bands are a characteristic of this style. It has a pyramidal roof that hangs over large, square porch supports. The center of the structure usually sits higher than the extending wings of the home.

Pueblo Revival
Battered walls, rounded corners, and flat roofs with projecting round beams are characteristics of this style.

Mid-Century Modern
The architectural styles following World War II – often called “contemporary” – reflected an emphasis on flight, the space age, and new methods of construction, like with the butterfly roof line depicted below.

Example of “atomic” mid-century modern along the other historic highways, Austin.
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

---

**Romanesque Revival**
This style has many semi-circular arches for window and door opening. Often these buildings are built with stone or brick and have a few large square or polygonal towers.

**Spanish Colonial Revival**
This style often has red-tiled hipped roofs with stone or brick exteriors. Spanish Colonial Revival has many ornate carvings that highlight arches, columns, and windows.

**Tudor Revival**
This style is easy to recognize because it has a picturesque chimney and entryway, and the top half of the home is decorated with half-timbering.

---

Spanish Colonial Revival, Cisco.
The Bankhead Highway
Connecting Washington, D.C., to California, the Bankhead Highway began in response to a growing transportation-driven nation. As more people rode bicycles and purchased automobiles, there was an increasing need for better roads in the United States. Unfortunately, many state and federal officials were unclear about who was in charge of creating better, safer roads. Prior to the early 1900s, roads were constructed with dirt that became impassible in poor weather conditions like heavy rain. In Texas, these roads were built by cities and county government, often relying on private investments to fund construction. A series of laws and the construction of a new road brought economic prosperity to Texas communities in a time of need.

RESOURCES


Dawson, Carol, Roger Allen Polson. Miles and Miles of Texas: 100 Years of the Texas Highway Department. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2016.


Smith, Dan. Broadway of America, 100 years along the Bankhead Highway. Authentic Texas, Texas Heritage Trails LLC, 2016.


WEBSITES

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Hotels of America – www.historichotels.org

Preservation Texas – www.preservationtexas.org


Texas Department of Transportation, Beyond the Road – https://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/division/environmental/beyond-the-road.html

Texas Escapes – www.texasescapes.com


Texas Mountain Trail – http://texasmountaintrail.com/

Texas State Historical Association – https://www.tshaonline.org/home/

Texas Time Travel – http://texastimetravel.com/

The Portal to Texas History provides primary source materials about Texas. This site also offers many resources for educators – https://texashistory.unt.edu/

OTHER RESOURCES

1. Bankhead Highway Mobile App Tour
Download this mobile tour to watch narrated videos of sites along the road. It also provides a map of historic sites across Texas and a playlist of road tripping songs! Visit http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-texas-highways/bankhead-highway/fun-bankhead for more information!

2. Download the Bankhead Highway Brochure
The Texas Historical Commission has a “Bankhead Highway: The Broadway of America” brochure that you can download for free. It provides some history of the road, historic roads, and a map of the highway. Visit http://www.thc.texas.gov to download the brochure.

3. Visit the Bankhead Highway Visitor Center in Mount Vernon, Texas
The center resides in the home of Henry Clay Thruston, the tallest soldier in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. Along with artifacts and a gift shop, the center also offers historic quilting demonstrations.

4. Media
The Texas Historical Commission provides a short introduction to the resources they have available about the Bankhead Highway: https://youtu.be/Qs0H10u7NNQ
A brief look at the booming oil industry in Texas and its relationship to the Bankhead Highway: https://youtu.be/H4avvdsgZkg
Dan Smith’s look at the “lost remnants of what used to be the most important highway in America”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OKVxc54fQ
Historypin provides a unique experience to examine historic pictures and stories from communities. Find your neighborhood here: https://www.historypin.org/en/
TxDOT’s StoryMap about historic gas stations in Texas can be found here: http://txdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=43b3c9a21de54873b5985d8bb0346e743
SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

In accordance with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) established by the Texas Education Agency, the following is a sample of lesson plans for educators about transportation in Texas as it relates to the Bankhead Highway.

**Elementary (K – 5th Grade)**

Social Studies, Geography 5B-C; use a scale to determine the distance between places on maps and globes; identify and use the compass rose, grid system, and symbols to locate places on maps and globes.

After discussing the creation of the Bankhead Highway in Texas, use the maps provided by the Texas Historical Commission to have your students identify different towns along the Bankhead in relation to your community. Is your community North, South, East or West of the Bankhead? Using the scale, can students determine the distance between your community and the nearest town on the Bankhead? [http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-texas-highways/bankhead-highway/bankhead-highway-maps](http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-texas-highways/bankhead-highway/bankhead-highway-maps)

**Middle School (6th – 8th Grade)**

Science 8C; calculate average speed using distance and time measurements. Social Studies 21H; use appropriate mathematical skills to interpret social studies information such as maps and graphs.

Portions of the Bankhead Highway did not have set speed limits as engineers continued to alter the materials used to create the road. Students will practice reading distance on a map between major towns in Texas along the Bankhead Highway. Then, the teacher will create scenarios where students calculate the approximate time it would take a car to travel between two towns at varying speeds. You can find maps of different segments along the Bankhead on the Texas Historical Commission’s website: [http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-texas-highways/bankhead-highway/bankhead-highway-maps](http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/historic-texas-highways/bankhead-highway/bankhead-highway-maps)

**High School (9th – 12th Grade)**

English Language Arts 8; Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author’s purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the controlling idea and specific purpose of an expository text and distinguish the most important from the less important details that support the author’s purpose.

Students will read The Original Texas Road Trip and answer the following questions: What is the author’s main purpose in writing this article? What do you think the author means by “Broadway of America”? What are three important details from this text? Then, have students write a short summary of this article, which can be found here: [http://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/survey/highway/2015%20Original%20Texas%20Road%20Trip%20by%20TX%20Hwys.pdf](http://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/survey/highway/2015%20Original%20Texas%20Road%20Trip%20by%20TX%20Hwys.pdf)