**PRESS RELEASE**

**Morganza Revitalization Project Takes Next Step**

MORGANZA, Louisiana-March 27, 2018

The initiators of the Morganza Revitalization project took a big step on Tuesday. Jeanie Andre, Director of Pointe Coupee Parish Office of Tourism, Clarence “Woots” Wells, Village of Morganza’s Mayor Pro Tem, and Natalie Thompson, Baton Rouge resident and descendant of the Serio family in Morganza, applied to the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development for official state recognition as a cultural district. If approved, residents and business owners within the district would become eligible for both state historic rehabilitation tax credits and tax exemptions on the sale of original works of art.

According to the state Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, the Louisiana cultural district program has provided business opportunities for government, opened new markets for artists, increased artistic production and encouraged renovations of older buildings [in 35 parishes since it was created by the Legislature in 2007.](http://www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/arts/culturedistricts/annualreports/2016%20CD%20AR%20Exec%20Summary.pdf) The report shows a strong return on investment, especially through state historic tax credits, which were created to "spark renovations and reuse" of buildings for cultural purposes.

A resolution to create the Morganza cultural district was passed unanimously by the council in February. Mr. Wells stated “Morganza and the area surrounding us have a very rich history that we take for granted. Becoming a cultural district and highlighting our assets is a great way to bring people back into our town.”

The revitalization team also attended the Pointe Coupee Police Jury meeting Tuesday night. Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser joined them at the meeting to speak on behalf of the revitalization project and encourage the parish of Morganza’s potential to successfully revive. The team is also requesting access to the Morganza High School gymnasium for town hall meetings and community events. The jurymen present offered their support and encouragement for the revitalization efforts.

A Morganza town hall meeting will be announced in the coming weeks. The purpose of the meeting will be to encourage residents of Morganza, as well as residents of Pointe Coupee Parish in nearby areas, to be a part of the revitalization effort. Mr. Nungesser will be a guest speaker at the upcoming meeting.