

# Archaeological and Historical Background of the Frio Street Fueling Station, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

**DRAFT**



*by*  
Kristi Miller Ulrich



*Prepared for:*  
Ford, Powell, and Carson  
1138 East Commerce Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78205

*Prepared by:*  
Center for Archaeological Research  
The University of Texas at San Antonio  
Technical Report, No. 26

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## **Abstract:**

The Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio (CAR-UTSA) was contracted by Ford, Powell and Carson Inc. to conduct an archival and background review for a property located in downtown San Antonio slated to serve as the location of the new Department of Public Safety Frio Street Fueling and Vehicle Washing Facility. As part of the archival and background review, the CAR staff consulted the reports and records produced by previous architectural surveys and archaeological investigations, examined historic maps, and reviewed the deed history of the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Prior to the 1870s, the project area had been used primarily for agricultural production. The Alazan *Acequia* is the only remaining feature from this pre-1870s period. It runs south of the APE and under Frio Street. It will not be impacted by the proposed project. However, the APE has been substantially modified following the arrival of the railroad in the 1870s. During the majority of the late 1800s and the early 1900s, the APE consisted mainly of stockyards and warehouses located next to the railroad tracks. The sprawling railroad complex and substantial construction activities that occurred during the latter part of the 1900s have resulted in significant impacts to the APE. It is highly unlikely that intact architectural features and significant intact cultural deposits will be found in the APE; therefore, the CAR does not recommend archaeological investigations within the APE prior to the initiation of construction. However, to ensure that hitherto undocumented significant cultural deposits are not inadvertently disturbed during construction, the CAR recommends monitoring of ground disturbing activities during the preparation of the tract for construction.

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## Area of Potential Effect

The Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio (CAR-UTSA) contracted with Ford, Powell and Carson Inc. to conduct a historical and archaeological background review of the proposed site of the Department of Public Safety Fueling Station and Vehicle Washing Facility located at the southeast corner of Frio Street and Durango Boulevard. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) of the current project is located in downtown San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The APE is located on the San Antonio West (2998-244) USGS 7.5 Minute Series Quadrangle Map (Figure 1). The project area is bounded on the north by W. Durango Boulevard, on the east by S. Frio Street, and on the west by S. Salado Street. The project area is contained in two full New City Blocks (NCB), 241 and 269, and a portion of two NCBs, 240 and 270. Currently, the property is the site of the San Antonio Municipal Court and parking area (Figure 2).



Figure 1. *The current project area shown on the San Antonio West, Texas (2998-244) 7.5 Minute Series Quadrangle Map.*





Figure 2. Modern aerial showing the Area of Potential Effect.

### **Previous Archaeological Investigations**

In 1983, the CAR was contracted by the City of San Antonio to conduct an intensive archival and archaeological survey of approximately 150 acres in downtown San Antonio. The project area for that 1983 survey included the APE of the current project. In 1981, prior to the archaeological survey, two architectural surveys of the area were conducted to document historically significant structures. An example of one of the structures documented is shown in Figure 3. Unfortunately, the criteria for what was deemed significant were not fully defined and/or explained. The second architectural survey, conducted in the same year, used the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) when evaluating standing structures. This second survey did not document every structure, but it highlighted a select number of “representative” properties that were found within the same city block. Neither of the architectural surveys were consistent in recording observations and documenting structures, leaving many properties without proper documentation. In addition, the two reports did not agree on which structures were considered significant. By the time the archaeological survey commenced two years later, many of the structures that were identified as worthy of additional research, and possibly NRHP eligibility testing, had been demolished. One of the principal flaws of the two architectural surveys was their failure to investigate the

potential of the properties to retain significant buried cultural deposits. The archival research indicated that the portion of downtown examined during the architectural surveys had high potential for producing buried cultural deposits relating to the nineteenth-century occupation of the area. The lack of archaeological investigations during the architectural surveys may have resulted in the loss of significant archaeological deposits during the later revitalization of the area (Labadie 1987).



*Figure 3. Example of structures recorded during 1981 Architectural Survey. This structure was located to the east of APE.*

Prior to the 1983 pedestrian survey of the project area, archival research was conducted focusing on the land-use and ownership of the area. Historic maps, deeds, and articles were consulted to provide a broad understanding of the history of the 150 acres. Structures noted on the historic maps and Koch's Bird's Eye View were marked for further investigation in the field, and city and county records were consulted for further information. At the time of the survey, surface conditions within the project area were poor as many structures had been razed and the debris left on the lots and/or dispersed to level tracts.

During the pedestrian survey of the project area, each city block was treated as a separate survey unit. Shovel testing was conducted to investigate the potential for subsurface deposits in areas that were identified as having high research potential. Survey and archival research found that the architectural reviews missed a great deal of the history of the area. The results that pertained to the current APE are summarized below.



NCB 241 (the northwest portion of the current APE) was bisected by a set of railroad tracks that appears to have serviced blocks to the north. At the time of the survey, the block had been cleared of structures, though a parking lot still remained. Koch's 1886 Bird's Eye View of the area depicted NCB 241 as having several structures adjacent to the railroad tracks (Figure 4). Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps also confirmed that the majority of this block was occupied by railroad tracks from at least 1896. The structures were also present on the Sanborn maps. No evidence of these structures were uncovered during the archaeological survey. Shovel testing of the block consisted of two tests in areas of the block that appeared least disturbed. The shovel tests revealed that the block had undergone grading and filling over the years to create a level surface. No significant archaeological deposits were noted in NCB 241.



Figure 4. *This current APE on the 1886 Koch's Birds Eye View.*

NCB 269, located to the east of NCB 241 (Figure 5), contained several structures that were intact at the time of the survey. A few buildings had been razed, with the debris scattered across the portions of the block not occupied by structures. Recently dumped piles of gravel were noted in several areas. Though the 1886 Bird's Eye View depicted several structures on the block, no evidence of these structures were noted during the archaeological survey. No shovel testing was conducted in this block. No evidence of significant archaeological deposits were noted.

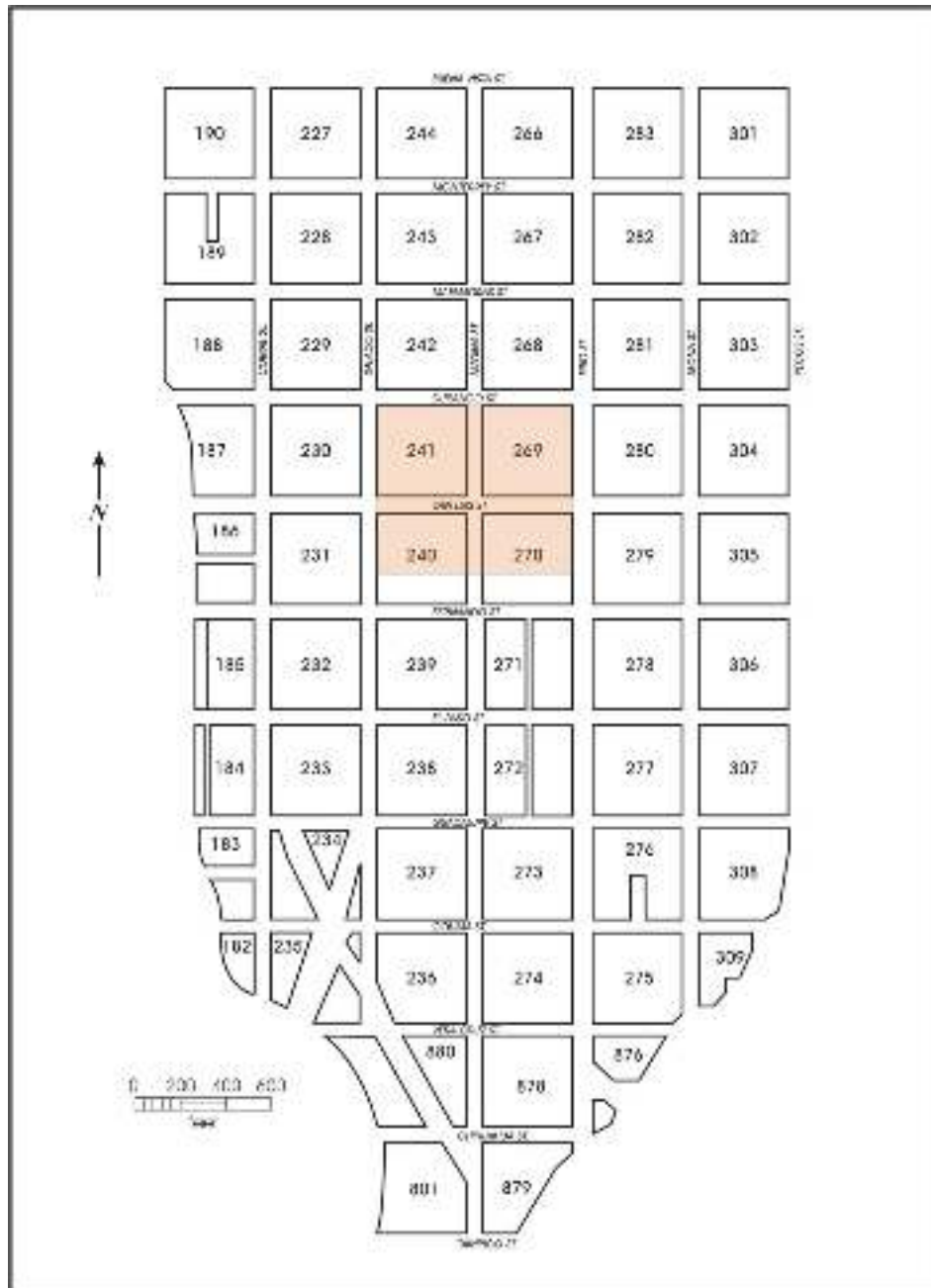


Figure 5. NCB Designations of the section of downtown investigated during the Vista Verde South Project. Current APE is located in portions of NCB 240, 241, 269 and 270.

The current APE contains a portion of NCB 240. NCB 240 is located to the south of NCB 241 (Figure 5). At the time of the archaeological survey, the block was devoid of structures. The architectural survey of the block revealed that the block was empty in 1981 as well. The 1886 Bird’s Eye View of the area (Figure 4) showed no structures. Surface reconnaissance of the block resulted in the recovery of one chert flake, though it appeared to have been mechanically created. Shovel testing did not produce evidence of significant cultural deposits.

The current APE also includes a portion of NCB 270. NCB 270 is located to the south of NCB 269 (Figure 5). At the time of the archaeological survey in 1983, the block appeared to have been cleared of all structures. In addition, the debris of the razing of the structures had been cleared as well. The architectural survey had noted that there were five structures standing in 1981. The 1886 map of the block revealed that it was vacant at that time. Archaeological survey of the block found that it was highly disturbed with areas of fill and leveling. Material noted on the surface consisted of modern items such as asphalt, glass, and plaster. According to archival evidence, the *Alazan Acequia* runs beneath S. Frio Street, parallel with the eastern section of NCB 270. The *acequia* was not noted in the survey of this block, but it was uncovered at S. Frio Street and Tampico Street (Labadie 1987).

### **Nearby Archaeological Sites**

Three archaeological sites are located within a one block radius of the current APE. All three of these sites were recorded as a result of the architectural and archaeological surveys conducted in 1981 and 1983. Site 41BX602, Merchants Ice Company, is located to the north of NCB 269. Ceramics, glass fragments, and metal were collected from the surface and shovel tests. The site information was submitted for nomination to the NRHP, though the application was turned down (THC 2010).

Site 41BX603 was recorded as the Jacob Richardson House. The site is located to the east of NCB 269. The site was identified during the architectural and archaeological surveys of the area. The structure was considered eligible for listing on the NRHP and was nominated in February of 1983 (THC 2010). Although it was considered eligible, the structure is not found on the current listing.

Site 41BX610 was recorded as the Lischike/Duerler House. This site was also located in the block to the east of NCB 269. The archaeological survey recovered ceramic and glass fragments, buttons, marbles, and porcelain doll fragments. Though the house was considered eligible for listing on the NRHP and was nominated in February of 1983 (THC 2010), it does not appear to have been listed.

Sites 41BX603 and 41BX610 were both located on NCB 280. During the archaeological survey conducted in 1983, the lot had three structures standing. The architectural survey conducted in 1981 had recorded a total of 26 structures, of which approximately 25 percent were considered from the Victorian Era of Texas, 1874-1901 (THC 2010).

### **Historic Background of the APE**

San Antonio began with the establishment of Mission San Antonio de Valero in 1718. Fray Antonio de San Buenaventura y Olivares had briefly visited the site several years prior and petitioned to set up a mission

at the headwaters of the San Antonio River to act as a waypoint in the journey to East Texas. The Marques de Valero, Viceroy of New Spain, granted Olivares permission (de la Teja 1995). Mission Valero occupied at least two locations before being relocated to its current spot in the heart of what today is downtown San Antonio in 1724.

Five days after Mission Valero was founded, Presidio de Bexar was established. The presidio was to house the Spanish soldiers who had come along with the expedition to found the mission. Typically, the families that followed the soldiers lived just outside the presidio.

Two years later, in 1720, Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo was established on the opposite bank of the San Antonio River and to the south of Mission Valero and Presidio San Antonio de Bexar. This mission was established to help Mission Valero serve the local inhabitants, though the help was unwanted by Valero. The original location of Mission San José was along the east bank of the San Antonio River, approximately three leagues from Mission Valero. The mission was then moved to the opposite bank sometime between 1724 and 1729. The mission relocated to its present location during the 1740s due to an epidemic (Scurlock et al. 1976:222).

In 1722, just two years after Mission San José was founded, Mission San Francisco Xavier de Nàjera was established. The mission was to serve a group of fifty Ervipiame families that came from the Brazos River area (Schuetz 1968:11). Mission San Francisco Xavier de Nàjera was located near or on the present site of Mission Concepción. The mission was unsuccessful due to a lack of funding. An attempt was made to convert the mission into a sub-mission of Valero, but it was not successful (Habig 1968:78-81). Its doors closed in 1726 as a result (Schuetz 1968:11), though Ivey (1984:13) argued that it was due to the natives' lack of interest in entering mission life.

Within the next few years, three other missions were established within the San Antonio area. The remaining three missions were established in San Antonio within weeks of each other in 1731. These three missions, Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción, Mission San Juan de Capistrano, and Mission San Francisco de la Espada, were originally missions established in east Texas. When each failed along the eastern border, they were removed to San Antonio.

In addition to the five missions, the community outside of the mission and presidio, Villa San Fernando de Bexar was established by the Canary Islanders. Prior to the establishment of Villa San Fernando, Villa de Bexar had been settled by 30 presidial soldiers, seven of whom were married and brought their families. Archival research indicates that the Canary Islanders immediately took over the land surrounding the garrison. There had been a lack of cleared land at the time of their arrival, leading Captain Juan Antonio

Pérez de Almazan to allow the Canary Islanders the use of the property (de la Teja 1995). The initial plan was for additional Canary Island settlers to be sent to San Antonio after the first group was established. Due to high costs to the Spanish Crown, no more groups were brought to Texas. The Canary Islanders bickered with the current inhabitants of the area and among themselves. In 1731, the Canary Islanders established their own villa, named San Fernando de Bexar, with their own church. The arrival of the Canary Islanders resulted in the first clearly defined civilian settlement in San Antonio.

No formal titles were issued as the property was distributed during the formative years of Villa de Bexar (de la Teja 1995). If a presidial soldier and his family occupied the property, they likely did not own it. Prior to 1731, soldiers and settlers were issued licenses to build houses on and farm the land surrounding the garrison. The area was considered the royal property of the presidio (Ivey 2008).

Once land grants were issued to the original settlers and the Canary Islanders, the property that was granted changed hands several times. The Canary Islanders requested more property in the Labores and attempted to hinder the original settlers from obtaining any more property. Though their efforts were not entirely successful, they did slow the amount of property given to the non-Canary Islanders (de la Teja 1995). As grants were passed out, it appears that the Canary Islanders would sell their original grants to incoming settlers, or current non-Canary Islander inhabitants, then request an additional grant from the government. By the 1800s, seven families had control of approximately half of the *suertes* that had been distributed during the mid- to late-1700s (de la Teja 1995).

The project area falls within a portion of land labeled as the *Ejido* on early maps of San Antonio (Figure 6). The parcel of land was located outside the center of town and left unprotected from the frequent raids of the Apaches and Comanches during the time period. The *Ejido* was communal land used by the residents of the Villa de Bexar for farming and grazing. The land was not deeded to one particular person or family. The documents from the period between 1733 and 1842 indicated that this portion of the town was unpopulated, though it was possible that squatters could have occupied the area (Labadie 1987). Those that chose to reside on the *Ejido* likely constructed *jacaes*.



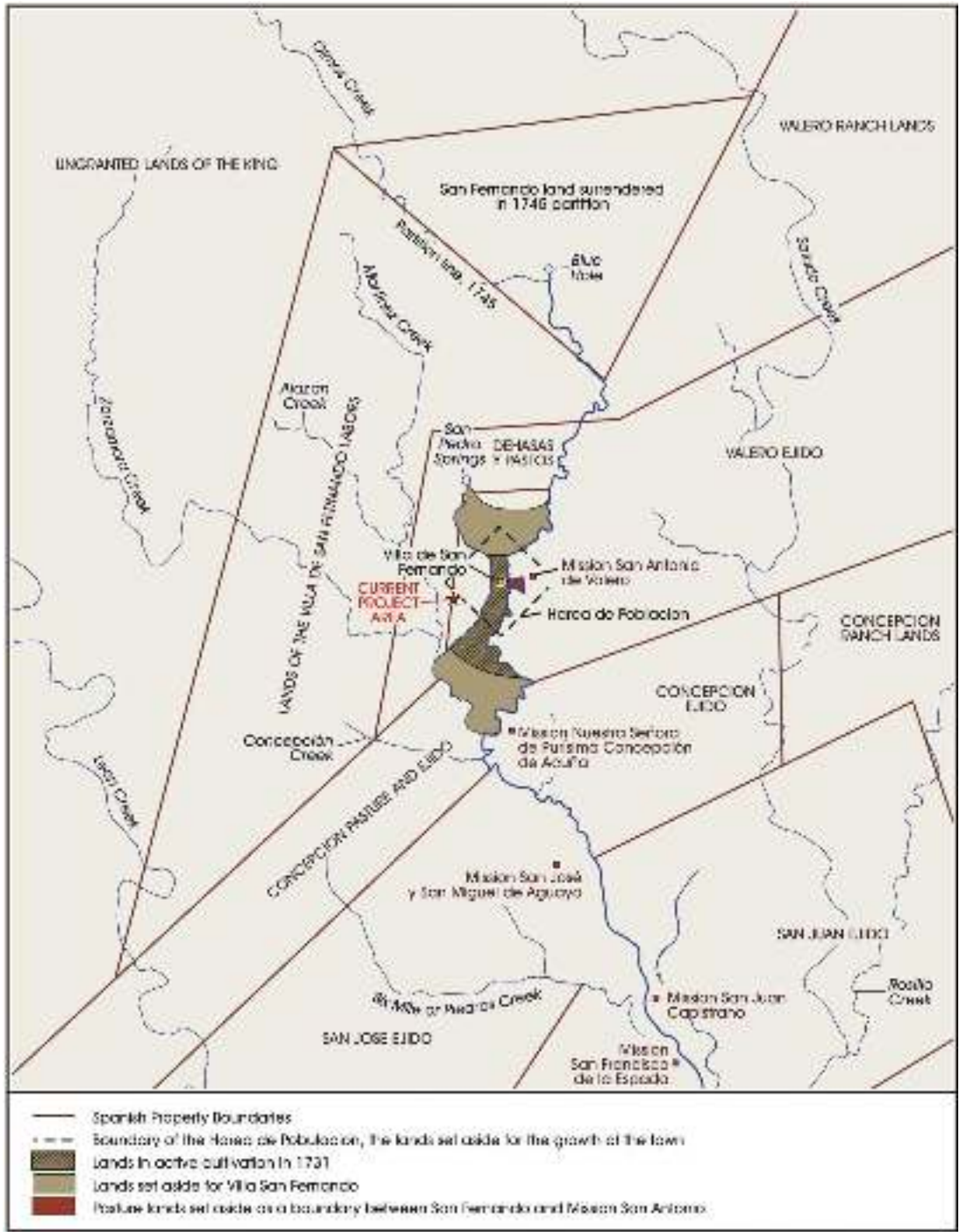


Figure 6. Map showing cultivated area of what is now San Antonio after 1731, including the proposed surveyed area set aside for the growth of the town (Harea de Poblacion). Location of project area is noted (adapted from Ivey 2008).

In 1793, a decree was issued that required that the missions of Texas be abandoned and their property to be distributed among the native families. This marked the beginning of the end of the mission system in Texas. Secularization did not occur instantly at every mission, but the mission period was over in San

Antonio by the early nineteenth century when most missions were fully secularized. The mission buildings, including that of Mission San Antonio de Valero, were abandoned.

In December of 1802, a Spanish Cavalry unit known as the Compañia Volante of San Carlos de Parras de Alamo was assigned to San Antonio. The company chose to utilize the old Mission Valero compound as their headquarters. It is believed that the occupation of the Compañia at the abandoned mission is what led the complex to be referred to as “The Alamo” from this point on.

San Antonio witnessed much political unrest throughout the next three decades culminating in the March 1836 Battle of the Alamo, at which the Mexican troops defeated the Texans. The outcome of the battle proved to be the driving force that led the Texans to victory at the Battle of San Jacinto, effectively ending the Texas Revolution. At the time, San Antonio was almost deserted. The political skirmishes and the hostile natives had forced many of the inhabitants to leave (Ulrich et al. 2010:13). Despite its reduced population, San Antonio was incorporated in 1837 and officially recognized by the Republic of Texas in 1842. Though Texas was no longer under Mexican rule, it did not immediately lead to a peaceful atmosphere. Over the next few years various groups invaded the city (Fox and Renner 1999:10) causing inhabitants added stress.

In 1846, The Republic of the United States annexed Texas. Though this solved a few of the floundering territory’s problems, it did not stop the military conflict. Mexico continued to contest the border-line, eventually leading to war with the United States (Fox and Renner 1999:10). The United States military decided to use the Alamo as the headquarters for the entire southwest. To accommodate the military troops and offices, the complex was altered, and the chapel was given the famous façade that is known to the region today (Labadie 1987). San Antonio finally began to see some expansion and growth due to the influx of soldiers and American immigrants (Labadie 1987; Fox and Renner 1999:11).

The part of San Antonio that includes the current APE was not included within the boundaries of the city until 1856 (Labadie 1987). The area would have been a prime spot as it was located between the San Pedro Creek and the Alazan Creek. By the late 1870s, it appears that enough people had been attracted to the area that the neighborhood was listed in the second city directory (Labadie 1987).

### ***Alazan Acequia***

The Alazan *Acequia* (or Alazan Ditch) was one of the last irrigation ditches to be created within San Antonio during the nineteenth century. The increase in the residential occupation of the area and need to irrigate agricultural fields prompted the City Council to begin designs for the ditch in 1872 (Labadie 1987). The

Alazan *Acequia* was created in 1875 and spanned 4.4 miles. The ditch cost the City a total of \$33,000 to complete. The ditch branched off of the Upper Labor *Acequia* near San Pedro Springs and headed west, then south, skirting a portion of Frio Street. The creation of the Alazan *Acequia* was fraught with many problems. The initial route had grade and design problems, which forced the city engineer to look for an alternate path (Cox 2005).

The Alazan *Acequia* probably had one of the shortest lifespans of all the ditches created in San Antonio. The ditch was closed in 1890 due to the developing residential and commercial neighborhoods and the increasing costs of keeping the *acequia* running. The ditch was filled as the city developed. The railroad arrived in the vicinity of the project area in 1881, and by 1890, the agricultural use of the area ceased.

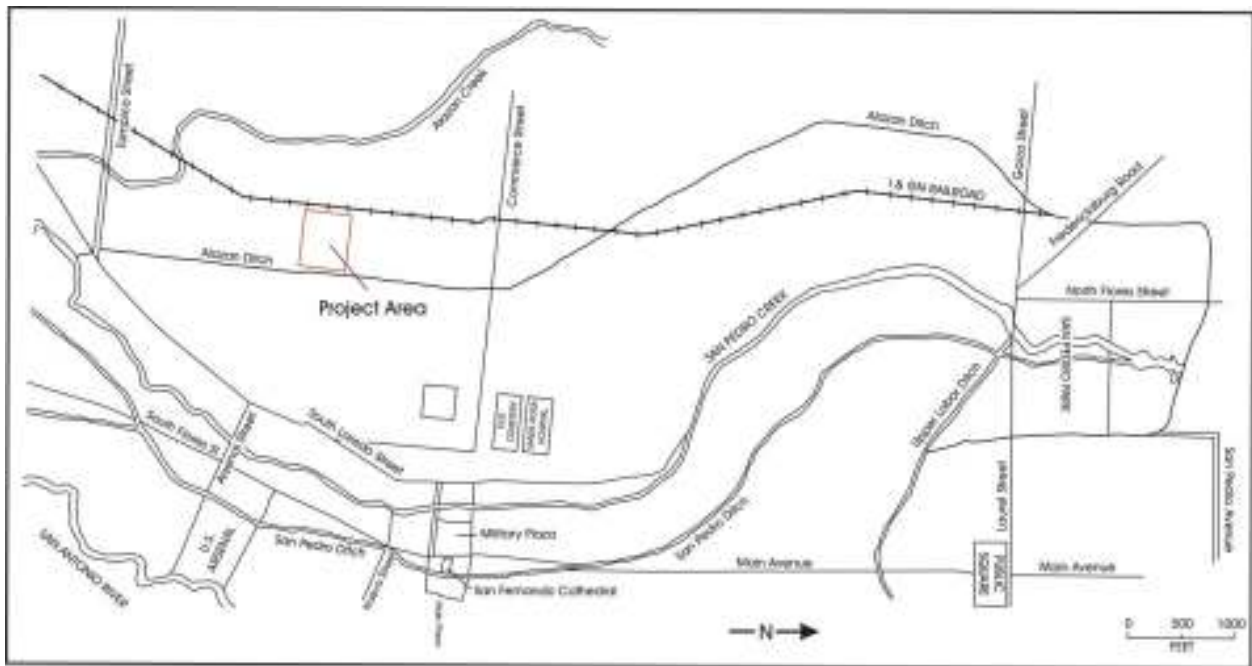


Figure 7. The location of the Alazan *Acequia* in relation to the APE.

The remnants of the Alazan *Acequia* are buried beneath the current path of Frio Street (Figure 7). Archaeological investigations in 1983 opened a portion of the *acequia* beneath Frio and Tampico Streets, showing that the stone-lined ditch was still intact. No further work was suggested as the majority of the *acequia* lies beneath the current road.

### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

An examination of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps shows how the project area has changed throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. The first map that depicts the APE was created in 1888. Earlier maps do not include this portion of San Antonio, likely due to the lack

of development in the area. Only a portion of the APE is shown on the 1888 map (Figure 8). In 1888, the city block designations were different than the current designations. The city blocks that comprised the project area were 92 and 93, with portions of 94 and 95. Two businesses occupied Lot 92. One was the R.D. Insho Stock Yards, and the other was the J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouses. The stockyards took up the majority of the southern half of City Block 92, located between Durango Boulevard and San Luis Street. The warehouses are depicted as occupying the northwest corner of the lot. Block 93, located to the west of Block 92, shows only the portion of the block that is situated along S. Medina Street. A railroad track in the western portion of the block appears to be a switch track.



Figure 8. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing a portion of the project area in 1888.

One structure is noted on the 1888 map, and it appears to be a feed shed associated with the R.R. Stockyards that occupied the block. Block 94 was located to the south of Block 92, just south of San Luis Street. Only the northern portion of the block was depicted in 1888. The Trader's National Stockyard occupied this portion of the block, complete with feed and horse sheds. The southern portion of the block was shown as vacant, as was Block 95 located to the west of Block 94.

The 1892 Sanborn map did not show this area of town, but it was depicted in the 1896 map (Figure 9). The map showed that all four blocks had been given the NCB numbers. The block at the corner of Durango

Boulevard and S. Frio Street was now NCB 269 (previously Block 92). This block still housed the J.E. Muggé & Company Warehouses, though it appears that Muggé purchased the property to the west on NCB 241 to add another warehouse that was closer to the railroad tracks.

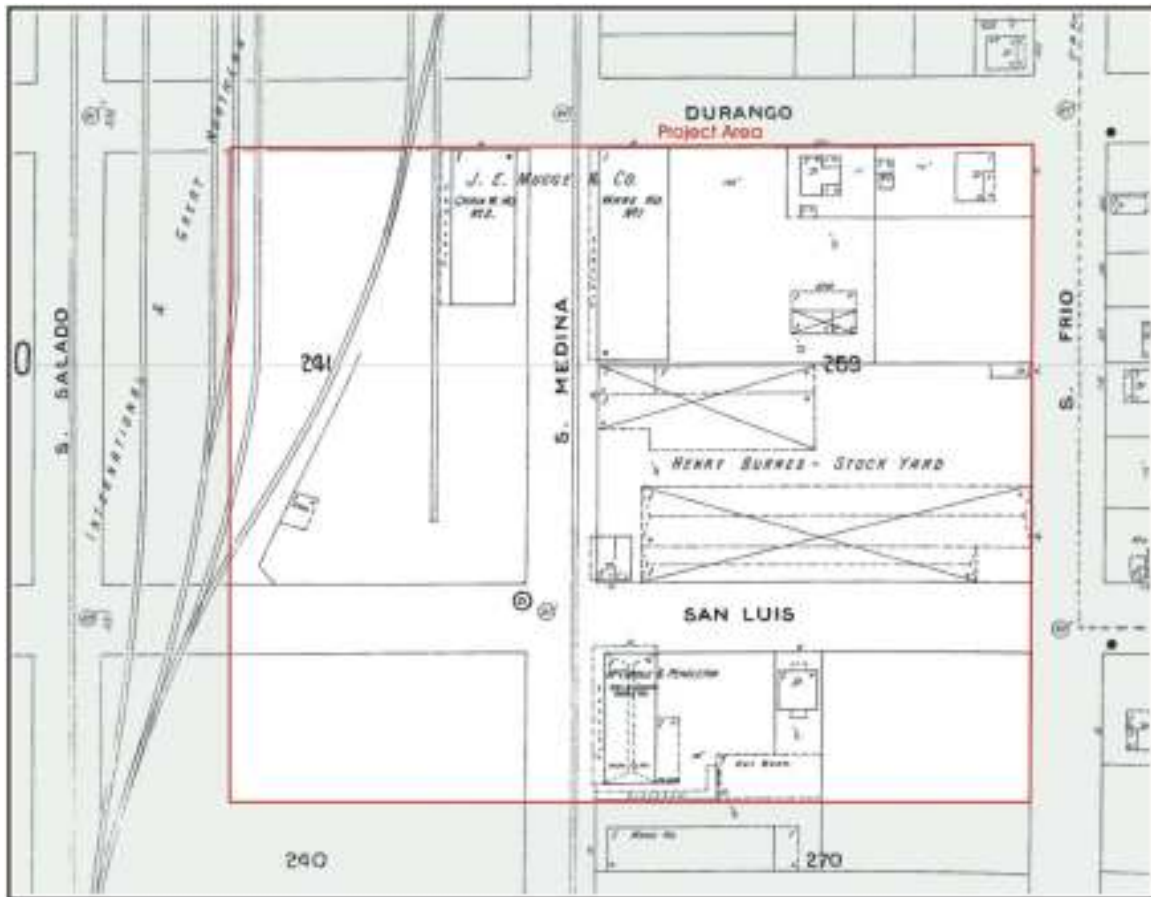


Figure 9. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the project area in 1896.

Two dwellings were depicted on the map in the north-central and northeastern portion of the block. These were one-story structures with associated outbuildings. The southern portion of NCB 269 continued to be a stockyard, though it was now the Henry Burnes Stockyard. The majority of NCB 241 was occupied by the tracks of the International and Great Northern Railroad Yards. NCB 240, located to the south of NCB 241, also had tracks but only on the northwestern portion of the block. The portion of the block that falls within the current APE was otherwise vacant. The portion of NCB 270 located within the current APE had a complex of structures in the northwestern quadrant of the block. These were associated with the McCardle & Pendleton Hay and Grain Warehouses.

The area was included in the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Figure 10). As in the previous version of the map, Block 241 mainly consisted of railroad tracks. The eastern portion of the block contained two



structures at this time. The northeastern structure was labeled as the J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouse No. 2 Grain Storage. This remains consistent with the previous map. To the south of this structure is a coal shed belonging to the Car Wood & Coal Company. It appears that the remainder of the block was used as a wood yard. NCB 240, located to the south of NCB 241, also consisted mainly of tracks. The northeastern portion of the block contained a coal shed and office belonging to the W.C. Silliman Coal Yard. NCB 240 contained a few tracks, but the portion of the block that is part of the current APE was vacant at this time.

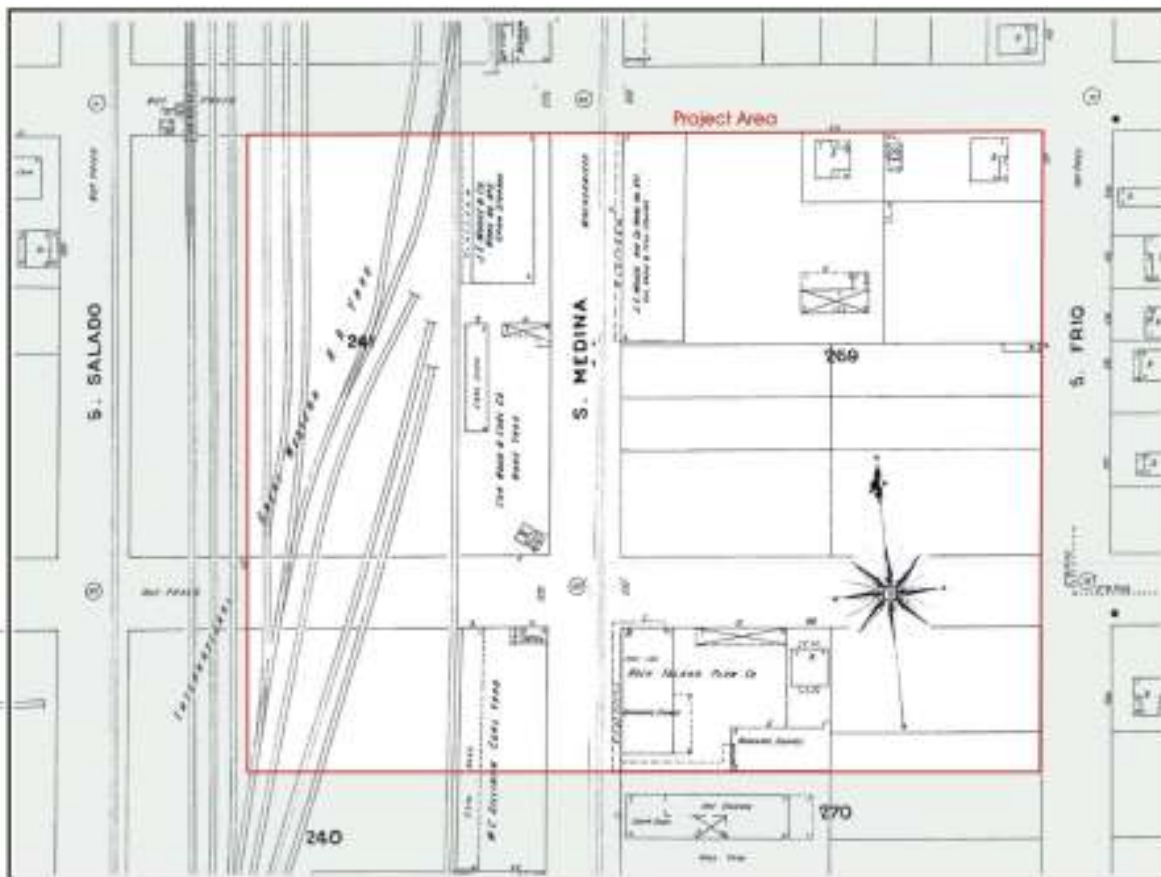


Figure 10. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the project area in 1904.

NCB 269 has seen some changes, but most have been in the southern portion of the block. The stockyards are absent from the map created in 1904. The two one-story dwellings are still located in the north-central and northeastern portion of the block, and the J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouse continued to occupy the northwestern edge of the property. The northeastern portion of NCB 270 that falls within the current APE was depicted as vacant in 1904. The McCardle & Pendleton Hay and Grain Warehouses no longer occupy the block. Rather, the Rock Island Plow Company took over the structures. A hay storage warehouse was added just to the south of the Plow Company.

In 1912, NCB 241 mostly consisted of railroad tracks associated with the International and Great Northern Railroad Yards (Figure 11). J.E. Mugge & Company continued to have a grain warehouse located in the northeastern corner of the block. The coal shed noted in the 1904 map was removed, and a new structure labeled as United States Seed Company was constructed in the southeastern portion of the block. Located to the south of NCB 241 is NCB 240. The coal yard that was noted on the 1904 map was converted to the John Deere Plow Company. The remainder of the block that falls within the current APE consisted of railroad tracks. Located to the east of NCB 241 is NCB 269. The northern half of the block remained the same as in 1904. The J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouse still occupied the northwestern corner of the block. Two one-story dwellings with minor alterations lined the Durango Boulevard front in the northern portion of the block. Though the southern half of the block was found vacant in 1904, two new structures were present by 1912. The structures were related to the Price-Booker Manufacturing Company Pickle Factory. NCB 270 was located to the south of the pickle factory. The previous map had a plow company located in the portion of the block within the current APE. In 1912, drastic changes were made, and the northern portion of the block consisted of several buildings associated with the R.M. Hughes & Company Vinegar Factory.

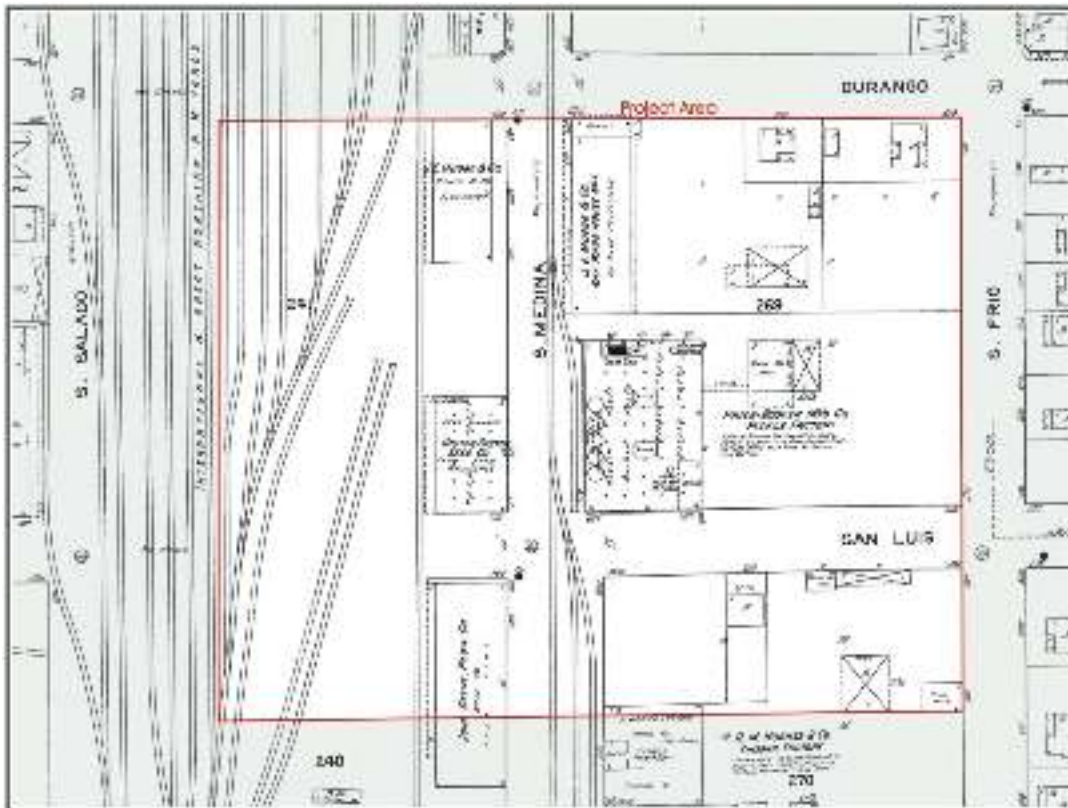


Figure 11. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the project area in 1912.

The next set of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps were made between 1912 and 1951 (Figure 12). The area appears to have undergone a development boom in between these dates. Individual dwellings have been removed from the lots, and commercial structures are all that occupied the current APE. Though the majority of NCBs 241 and 240 are still covered by the railroad tracks, the entire eastern portion of each lot is occupied by commercial businesses. J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouses no longer occupy the northeastern portion of NCB 241. Rather, the new businesses include Mineral Fertilizer Manufacturer, Wholesale Grocery Produce, and Waste Paper Warehouse. The northern portion of NCB 240 that falls within the current APE was occupied by a Burlap Bag Warehouse, Hay and Grain Warehouse, and the Crowley Feed Company. The entirety of NCB 269 appears to have undergone some drastic changes. The two dwellings in the northern portion of the block were removed. The J.E. Mugge & Company Warehouse was replaced with a company that appears to be called Brown Express. New buildings were added to the northwestern portion of the APE that included a Transfer and Storage Warehouse and another unidentified warehouse. The northeastern portion of the block appears to be related to auto and truck repairs. The southwestern portion of NCB 269 is occupied by the Southern Transfer and Storage Company with the adjacent Motor Freight Station. The northern portion of NCB 270 that falls within the current APE has undergone a few changes as well. The R.M. Hughes & Company Vinegar Factory still occupies a portion of the block, but it appears that additions to the northeastern corner of the lot were small businesses and dwellings. A row of four dwellings, possibly apartments, are noted between a refrigerator repair shop and a storage facility. A larger, one-story dwelling was constructed just south of the San Luis Street and Frio Street intersection. Because the structure located in the northeastern corner is not labeled, its use is not known. The northwestern portion of the block had a larger warehouse identified as Wholesale Electrical Appliance.

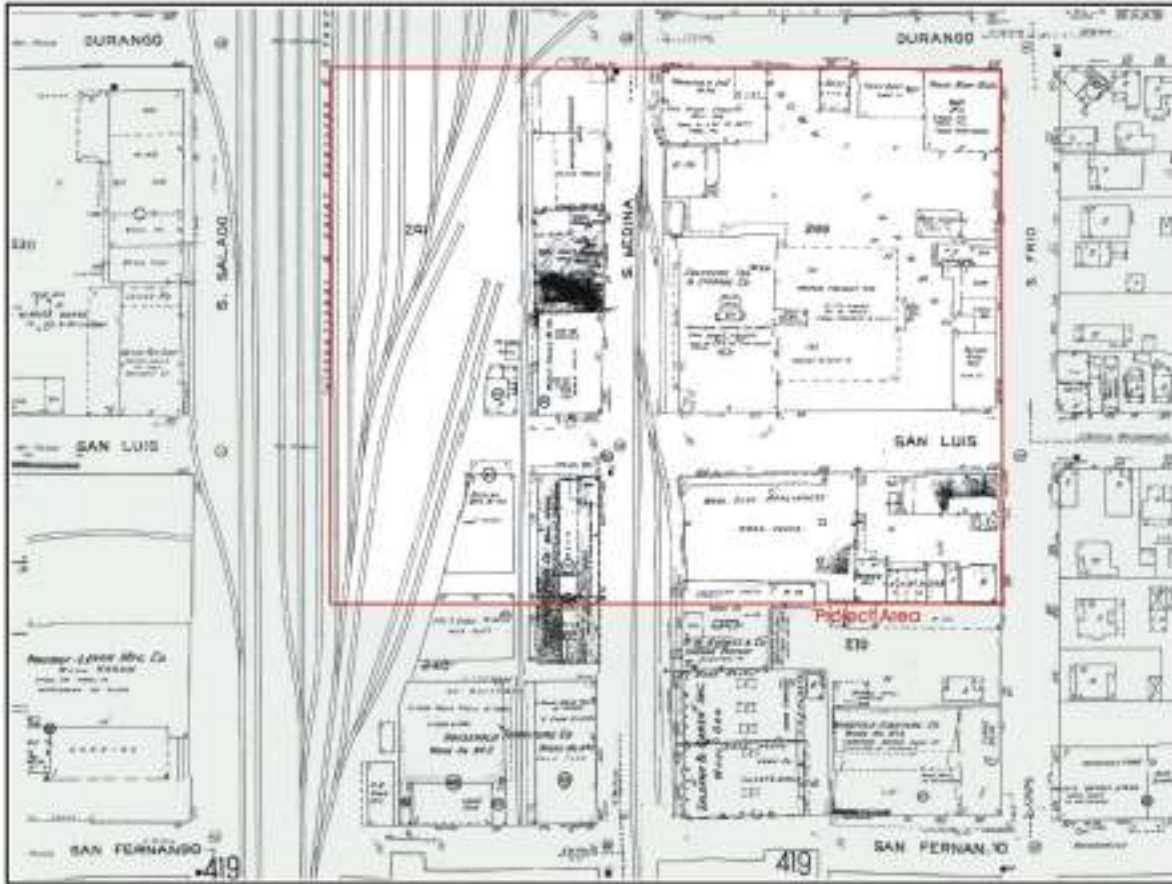


Figure 12. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the project area in 1952.

A brief review of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of the current APE shows that the area was predominately a commercial area of town. The few dwellings that were noted in NCB 269 were removed by 1912-1951 and replaced with commercial businesses. The Frank Wing Municipal Courthouse currently occupies the portion of the block that would have originally housed the dwellings. The construction of the courthouse likely destroyed any subsurface evidence of these structures. The presence of railroad tracks for the majority of the use of NCBs 241 and 240 indicates that the western portions of the blocks are likely disturbed. The remainder of the current APE is paved for use as a parking lot.

### **Deed Role**

In the early part of the 1880s, it appears that the IGNR had possession of City Block 92, and possibly 93. In November of 1880, H.B. Adams and E.D.L. Wickes purchased Block 92 from the IGNR (BCDR 20:428-429). Adams and Wickes were land speculators who had been purchasing and selling land in Bexar County for approximately 20 years prior to this transaction. In December of 1887, Adams and Wickes conveyed Lot 38 of Block 92 to T. Hines Clark and R.D. Inscho for a sum of \$600 (BCDR 57:293-294). In April of

1888, Clark and Inscho sold the property to Inscho's wife, Anna, for the same price and stipulations set forth in the previous deed (BCDR 67:278). The Inschos sold the property by the end of the same year to William L. Smith and George Redmon for a sum of \$2500 (BCDR 67:280).

Lot 43 of Block 92 was conveyed by James Moore to Smith, Redmon, and Inscho in 1889 for a sum of \$2000 (BCDR 91:118). Moore had purchased the property from T.H. Clark and Phil Clark in December of 1888 (BCDR 67:283). The Clarks had purchased the lot from J.R. Murray in February of 1886 (BCDR 44:440-441). These transactions set up a partnership between Smith, Redmon, and the Inschos. By 1889, the group owned the entire southern portion of Block 92 (Lots 37, 38, 43, and 44).

In May of 1891, the group sold the four lots of Block 92 to Elizabeth Vining for a sum of \$5000. It was uncommon for a married woman at the time to purchase property of her own, and in the deed it is stated that she had her husband's consent. John Vining had to sign the deed stating that the purchase was solely his wife's and he made no claim to the property (BCDR 93:464). Vining sold the property to J.L. Vining in May of 1901 (BCDR 231:631-632). In May of 1904, the property was sold to the Price Booker Manufacturing Company by J.L. Vining, his wife, and Elizabeth Vining (BCDR 231:1). The Price Booker Manufacturing Company conveyed the property to S.D. Price in May of 1915 (BCDR 503:409-410). Price and his wife, Elizabeth, sold the four lots in Block 92 to J.A. Robertson for a sum of \$14,500 in cash and the assumption of the payment of a promissory note in the sum of \$15,000 and three notes in the sum of \$450 in March of 1917 (BCDR 509:23-24). Robertson sold the property to Jourdan Campbell in January of 1919 (BCDR 548:491-492). Campbell sold all four lots to A.G. Castanola in May of 1921. Castanola agreed to take on several promissory notes as part of the agreement (BCDR 638:401-402).

After her husband's death, Esther Castanola negotiated with C.A. Goeth to extend the payments due on the property (BCDR 1359:334-336). By 1933, repeated requests for payment lead Goeth to request that the property be put up for auction. Fred Goeth complied with the request, and C.A. Goeth purchased the property for a sum of \$10,000. These proceedings noted, though, that a portion of Lots 37 and 38 had been sold to P.K. Dunbar in 1928, and in addition, the notes on the property were transferred to Fred Goeth (BCDR 1053:107-108). In August of 1937, C.A. Goeth sold the four lots, excepting the portions of Lots 37 and 38 previously conveyed to Dunbar, to the Southern Transfer & Storage Company (BCDR 1599:301-302).

Lot 41 in the northern portion of Block 92 was conveyed to J.E. Mugge by Adams and Wickes in March of 1889 for a sum of \$750 (BCDR 27:193-194). Lots 39 and 40 were conveyed to Mugge by Wickes and Adams for the sum of \$1400 in October of 1889 (BCDR 67:615). It appears that Lot 42 was purchased



from Wickes and Adams in January of 1876 (BCDR 1:518-519), though the deed is highly faded and barely legible. These three deeds resulted in J.E. Mugge owning the entire northern portion of Block 92. Mugge held on to the property until his heirs sold the property to R.W. Morrison in July of 1926. According to the deed, all four lots were conveyed to Morrison at that time (BCDR 901:38). The conveyance of Lots 39 through 42 was confirmed again in a deed between S.A. Clark, representing Bexar County, and R.W. Morrison (BCDR 1089:406-407). In November of 1941, Morrison sold the four lots to the Southern Transfer & Storage Company for a sum of \$40,000 (BCDR 1857:630-631).

In September of 1967, the Southern Transfer & Storage Company conveyed the entirety of Block 92, though now referred to as NCB 269, to Marie Craig Brown (BCDR 5899:943-946). It appears that the Southern Transfer & Storage Company had obtained the portions of Lots 37 and 38, which had been conveyed to P.K. Dunbar, and were able to sell them during this transaction. In 1980, Marie Craig Brown Kelley sold the property to the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of San Antonio.

In October of 1881, the IGNR purchased Lots 49 through 52 of City Block 95 (NCB 240) from M.A. Lewis for a sum of \$1200 (BCDR 19:337-338). In addition, Block 8 of the A.M. Dignowity subdivision Original City Lot 95 was also conveyed at this time. The deed states that the property had been conveyed to M.A. Lewis by A.C. Montgomery in November of 1874. In February of 1881, the IGNR purchased from Richard A. Currey Lots 61 and 62 of Block 95 for the sum of \$600 (BCDR 15:518-519). The IGNR then purchased Lot 63 of Block 95 from Currey in March of 1881 (BCDR 12:181). The deed states that the property was originally part of the land conveyed to A.M. Dignowity by the City of San Antonio in 1850. Dignowity was a Czech writer who immigrated to the United States to escape the Austrian conscription laws (Machann 2010). Dignowity found his way to San Antonio where he became a successful businessman. He had strong abolitionist views and was very outspoken, and by the 1850s, he became a very controversial figure in San Antonio (Machann 2010). He was convicted of a real estate swindle, though some believe it was a result of persecution for his political views. His friend, Governor Sam Houston pardoned him. Dignowity's political views caused him many problems, though he had a short reprieve after publishing an autobiography in 1859. By the 1860s, though, his Unionist views led to more problems. He escaped hanging in San Antonio by running off to Washington, D.C. After the Civil War, Dignowity returned to San Antonio but was never able to rebuild his wealth. He died in April of 1875 (Machann 2010).

The IGNR also purchased another lot of land in March of 1881. John Eckford sold Lot 64 of Block 95 to the IGNR for the sum of \$300 (BCDR 12:184). The deed states that the property was originally that of the A.M. Dignowity tract that was conveyed to Anton Staubacher, then to May L. Desmuke, then to Richard

A. Currey. It appears that the IGNR kept the property in their possession throughout the years. At the time that the designations of the NCBs occurred, the railroad had possession of NCB 240 (Block 95), NCB 241 (Block 93), NCB 242 (Block 91), NCB 243 (Block 89), and NCB 244 (Block 87). All of these were conveyed to the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of San Antonio by the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company in September of 1981 specifically for the Vista Verde South Urban Renewal Project (BCDR 2419:18-26).

The first located record concerning Block 94 (NCB 270) is the conveyance of the block from M.L. Oppenheimer to Richard Pruitt in February of 1905 (BCDR 239:128). It is possible that the property was conveyed to Oppenheimer in 1871 by A.M. Dignowity, though the description of the block and lot numbers do not seem to match (BCDR W2:169-170). The lot and block designations used by Dignowity, as seen in Old City Block 95 (NCB 240), was slightly different as well. Pruitt and his wife kept the property in their possession until his death. In February of 1943, Addie Pruitt conveyed the property to Alfonso Garza for a sum of \$8718.81 (BCDR 1949:86-89). In April of 1955, the property was conveyed by Garza and his wife to Saldana and Garza, Inc., which appears to be a corporation that Garza helped to form (BCDR 366:189-191). Saldana and Garza, Inc. held onto the property for the next few decades, when it appears that the corporation released the holdings back to Alfonso Garza in October of 1980 (BCDR 2104:936-938). In 1984, after his death, the Garza heirs conveyed the property to the Urban Renewal Agency of the City of San Antonio for a sum of \$270,000 (BCDR 3110:453-454). The Urban Renewal Agency conveyed the property to the City of San Antonio in April of 1989 (BCDR 4555:155).

### **The International and Great Northern Railroad Company**

The IGNR played an important part in the ownership and development of the current project area. The company was a component of the Missouri Pacific Railroad lines in Texas. On September 30, 1873, the International Railroad Company and the Houston and Great Northern Railroad merged to form the IGNR Company. At the time of the consolidation, the two lines operated a total of 429 miles of track. After consolidation, the company slowly expanded to extend services to Austin and Rockdale. The tracks did not actually reach San Antonio until 1881 (Werner 2010).

The company faced financial and organizational problems from its inception. In 1873, financial panic slowed the expansion of the company and its lines. It acquired the Georgetown Railroad Company in 1879 and merged it into the IGNR in 1882. The land acquired through the various mergers was valued at approximately \$4,668,850 during the late 1800s (Werner 2010). According to the company's charter, the State of Texas was to grant \$10,000 bonds for every mile of track completed. When the company proceeded to apply for the bonds, the comptroller refused to acknowledge them. After much discussion, the State of

Texas and the company reached a compromise, exempting the company from paying state taxes for twenty-five years (Werner 2010). Though this seemed like a decent agreement, the railroad company still faced financial hardship. In 1878, the company was sold at foreclosure. A new company reorganized under the same name and original charter late in 1879. A second financial reorganization occurred in 1892, though it was not sold (Werner 2010).

Under the control of Jay Gould, the INGR worked closely with the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company and the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company during the late 1800s and into the early 1900s. In the 1920s, Gould's interest in the company was not enough to keep all three aligned (Werner 2010). In 1924, the New Orleans, Texas, and Mexico Railway Company acquired the International. Within the year, Missouri Pacific acquired the New Orleans, Texas, and Mexico Railway Company. Though the IGNR was under the umbrella of Missouri Pacific, it operated independently. The two were finally consolidated in 1956, after many years of financial struggle for the IGNR (Werner 2010).

## **Summary and Recommendations**

The CAR was contracted to conduct archival and background research of a portion of land located in downtown San Antonio that is to be the future site of the Frio Street Fueling Station. In 1983, the current APE was investigated as part of a larger project that focused on researching and surveying a section of downtown for future revitalization. The survey of the portion of the project, which included the current APE, found the blocks had been cleared of all previous structures, and only debris from the demolition remained. No further work was recommended for that portion of the investigation.

A portion of the Alazan *Acequia* runs past the APE. Investigations conducted in 1983 found that the portion in the APE is likely buried under Frio Street. A portion of the short lived *acequia* was excavated in 1983, though at a location not within the current APE.

Archival research of the current APE revealed that the property was not recognized as part of the San Antonio until the 1870s. People likely resided in the area, but the location was deemed unworthy of inclusion in the City Directory. This appears to have changed after the introduction of the railroads to San Antonio. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps began including the APE in 1888. The use of the area appeared to be more commercial than residential due to the presence of the railroad tracks in a portion of the APE. A review of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps shows that the majority of the APE either consisted of railroad tracks or stockyards until the 1900s. After the turn of the century, commercial buildings, such as warehouses and factories, dominate the APE. The archaeological survey of the APE conducted in 1983 found that all structures that previously existed on these tracts of land had been razed.

CAR finds that though the APE has an interesting history relating to the use and influence of the railroads on San Antonio's early commercial development, the same factors have likely led to significant impacts to any evidence of the earlier use of the APE. The installation of railroad tracks, as seen in the 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, would have significantly impacted the buried, intact cultural deposits in the western portion of the APE. In addition, the construction of the Municipal Courthouse would have disturbed deposits in the northeastern portion of the APE. This appears to have been the area of the APE that was occupied by residential and commercial buildings since Koch's 1886 Bird's Eye View. The potential for encountering remnants of these early structures is low as a result of the anticipated impact that the construction of the courthouse in 1980s likely had on cultural deposits. The remainder of the tract is currently occupied by a parking lot (Figure 2). The chances of encountering intact, buried deposits may perhaps be higher in this area although until relatively recently San Luis Street ran through the middle of the APE. In addition, the sequence of construction and demolition shown in the series of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps also reinforces the perspective that evidence of structures predating 1900 would likely have been destroyed by the mid-1900s.

Based on these findings, it is highly unlikely that intact architectural features and significant intact cultural deposits will be found in the APE. Therefore, the CAR does not recommend archaeological investigations within the APE prior to the initiation of construction. However, to ensure that hitherto undocumented significant cultural deposits are not inadvertently encountered and disturbed during construction, CAR recommends monitoring of ground disturbing activities during the preparation of the tract for construction.

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