

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 07, 2025

HDRC CASE NO: 2025-096
ADDRESS: 331 CHANNING
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 3819 BLK 25 LOT 33 THRU 44
ZONING: R-6
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 3
APPLICANT: Beth Wells/Bender Wells Clark Design
OWNER: Desiree Salmon/CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
TYPE OF WORK: New park construction
APPLICATION RECEIVED: April 09, 2025
60-DAY REVIEW: June 08, 2025
CASE MANAGER: Bryan Morales

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct a new park located at 331 Channing.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

UDC Sec. 35-641. - Design Considerations for Historic and Design Review Commission Recommendations.

In reviewing an application, the historic and design review commission shall be aware of the importance of attempting to find a way to meet the current needs of the City of San Antonio, lessee or licensee of public property. The Historic and Design Review Commission shall also recognize the importance of recommending approval of plans that will be reasonable to implement. The best urban design standards possible can and should be employed with public property including buildings and facilities, parks and open spaces, and the public right-of-way. Design and construction on public property should employ such standards because the use of public monies for design and construction is a public trust. Public commitment to quality design should encourage better design by the private sector. Finally, using such design standards for public property improves the identity and the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhoods.

UDC Sec 35-642. – New Construction of Buildings and Facilities:

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

(a) Site and Setting.

(1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2) Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3) Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, berms, plantings or other means.

(4) Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b) Building Design.

(1) Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio

and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

(2) Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in harmonious conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.

(3) Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.

(4) Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.

(5) Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.

(6) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.

(7) Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.

(8) Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

FINDINGS:

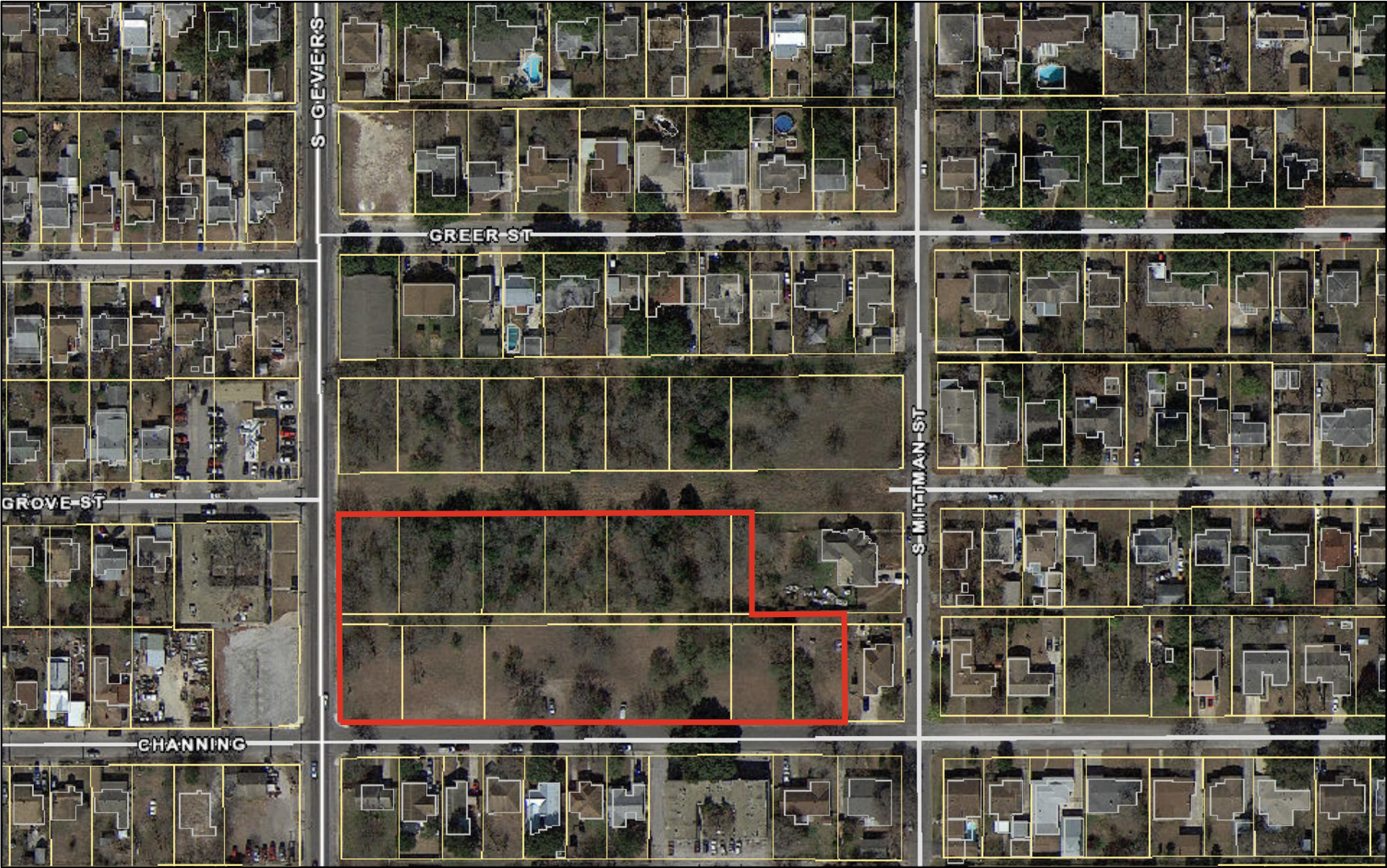
- a. The site currently proposed for the new Channing and Gevers Park is located east of S Gevers St, north of Channing, and west of S Mittman St. The new park will feature a new accessible concrete walk looping the existing drainage basin and connect to the existing sidewalk along Gevers St, new seating with large cut limestone blocks, decorative fencing to replace existing chain link fencing along the basin, new landscape elements, and new pedestrian lighting along the proposed concrete walkway.
- b. PARK AMENITIES – The applicant is requesting approval to construct a park with the following amenities: a walking concrete loop trail, new limestone block seating, wire mesh panel fencing, new lighting, and landscape modifications. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with UDC Sec. 35-642.
- c. WALKWAYS – The applicant has proposed to install a walking concrete loop trail with lighting within the proposed park. UDC Sec. 35-642(b)(8) states that the site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with the UDC Sec. 35-642.
- d. FENCING – The applicant has proposed to install wire mesh panel fencing to replace an existing chain link fence blocking access to the drainage basin. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with the UDC.
- e. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

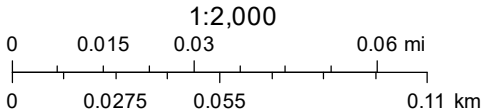
Staff recommends approval of the proposal to develop Channing and Gevers Park as a new public park based on findings a through e with the following stipulation:

- i. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable.

City of San Antonio One Stop



April 17, 2025



GEVERS & CHANNING GREENSPACE – 331 Channing Ave. IMPROVEMENTS

The applicant is requesting final approval for construction of new improvements at the Channing & Gevers Greenspace.

Bender Wells Clark Design and their sub-consultants have developed Construction Documents for these proposed improvements. Components of this project will include:

- 1) A new accessible concrete walk looping the existing drainage basin and connecting to the existing sidewalk along Gevers St.
- 2) Seating with large cut limestone blocks
- 3) Decorative fencing to replace existing chain-link fence around basin
- 4) New tree planting and irrigation
- 5) New Pedestrian Lighting along the loop concrete path.

All the proposed improvements will be accessible and constructed of long-lived materials. All the improvements were approved through neighborhood meetings.

Channing & Gevers St. Greenspace Improvements



Aerial Photo of site



Existing Site Along Gevers St.



Existing Site Along Channing Ave.



Proposed New Fencing



Proposed stone seating



Proposed Path Lighting

