

Revised May 27, 2025

May 16, 2025


Environmental Variance Request

City of San Antonio

Planning Commission

1901 S. Alamo, San Antonio TX 78204

Re: South Central SAPD Substation
8801 South Flores Street, San Antonio, Texas 78221
COM-PRJ-APP24-39802422
Article V, Division 5, Sec. 35-523 Tree Preservation

 Environmental Variance

Dear Members of the Commission:

The Landscape Ordinance Plan that we have prepared for the project listed above follows the spirit of the current Unified Development Code (UDC). However, we are requesting an Environmental Variance due to site constraints that limit our ability to preserve the minimum requirement of floodplain buffer trees (Article V, Division 5, Section 35-523 Tree Preservation).

The Owner is developing a police substation on the 2.44-acre site, located along South Flores Street, and requires substantial surface parking for public and police use. Only four (4) existing trees are within the floodplain buffer. Two (2) of those trees are in the footprint of the main driveway, which lines up with an existing intersection on Flores Street. Removal of those trees brings the preservation percentage of floodplain buffer trees down to 41%.

The project site poses challenges to saving the trees. The alignment of the main driveway with an intersection is important for police response, allowing safer left turns and a direct link to Roosevelt Avenue. The low, spreading structure of the existing trees also conflicts with vehicle operation. Building the driveway around them would require frequent trimming that would disfigure the trees and remove the bulk of their branches.

We fully recognize the significance of tree preservation and the valuable role trees play in supporting the ecological health and aesthetic appeal of our city. Because of the excessive removals, the project is planned as an asset to the urban forest. Although camera surveillance of the parking lots has limited the locations for tree planting, the Design Team has planted 86% of the mitigation trees

(representing 267 caliper inches). The team has also increased biodiversity by adding 6 tree species not yet present onsite. These species are chosen to suit the site's prairie soil conditions and mitigate urban heat by shading the building and pavement wherever possible.

Under the base bid design, here is a summary of the preservation, removals and mitigation for the floodplain buffer/Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA):

- 21 ESA inches preserved (41%)
- 30 ESA inches removed (59%)
- 19.8 ESA inches to be mitigated by planting of new trees

We believe that granting this variance request is in the public's interest, as the Design Team finds this is the safest and most efficient location for the driveway. Our planting plan ensures that the core principles of tree preservation and care are maintained. This variance request is narrowly focused and provides the relief necessary for the successful completion of this project, without compromising the broader goals of tree protection in San Antonio. We have made every effort to comply with the UDC's requirements wherever possible.

In my professional opinion, the proposed Environmental Variance remains in harmony with the spirit and intent of the UDC as it will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of the public.

Best regards,



Bobby Eichholz, ASLA
Principal

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DSD – Director Official Action:		
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