

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

September 06, 2023

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2023-362  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** River Road Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** City of San Antonio – Office of Historic Preservation  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Historic Design Guidelines  
**CASE MANAGER:** Cory Edwards

### REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting HDRC review and recommendation of proposed district-specific guidelines for the River Road Historic District to be adopted as an addendum to the Citywide Historic Design Guidelines.

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Sec. 35-608. Certificate of Appropriateness.

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#### (e) Approval Criteria.

1. Alteration, Restoration, Rehabilitation, and New Construction on a Landmark or Contributing Property. In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application for a certificate to alter, restore, rehabilitate, or add to a building, object, site or structure designated a historic landmark or located in a historic district, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation and provisions adopted by city council as provided in this article. The commission shall also utilize the Historic Design Guidelines as adopted by the city council, and any specific design guidelines adopted pursuant to the Unified Development Code and this article...

### FINDINGS:

- a. BACKGROUND – In 2012, the City adopted Citywide Historic Design Guidelines that apply to all local historic districts and individual historic landmarks. They are the primary review criteria for projects impacting historic properties. The Citywide guidelines also established a framework for incorporating additional district specific elements as needed. Since 2012, the City has adopted additional guidelines for the School of Aerospace Medicine and Mission Historic District.
- b. GUIDELINES FOR RIVER ROAD – The River Road Neighborhood Association began development of guidelines in 2019. The Neighborhood Association contracted with a private consultant to draft the guidelines. OHP staff provided consultation throughout the process and has vetted the draft for consistency with the established Citywide provisions. The proposed guidelines establish priorities and guiding principles specific to River Road and are intended to provide clear guidance for residents and developers. New, proposed language will provide more-concise guidance on issues like new construction and additions. The document also elaborates on the historic context of River Road which can also be considered in future decision making.
- c. ADOPTION PROCESS – In order to be enforceable, the guidelines require adoption by City Council. Following a recommendation from the HDRC, the Zoning Commission will be asked to provide an additional recommendation to Council prior to adoption. This process will be managed by the Office of Historic Preservation. A draft of the document is currently available on OHP's webpage and will be maintained throughout the public hearing process.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.

# River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual

## DRAFT

City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines

Office of Historic Preservation



September 2023





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# Introduction

The area known today as the River Road neighborhood in San Antonio, Texas, was a gathering place for indigenous people who hunted, fished, and camped by the San Antonio River for over 11,000 years, well before the establishment of a permanent Spanish settlement in 1718. The River Road Historic District, established in 2010, and the surrounding neighborhood are bordered by Brackenridge Park on the north and south, the San Antonio River on the east, and to the west U.S. Highway 281, which cut a swath through the western portion of the neighborhood in the early 1970s.

Today, the River Road neighborhood is a tranquil, tree-shaded sanctuary near the center of one of the country's largest and fastest-growing cities. While other portions of the San Antonio River have seen significant channelization and development, the stretch of river from the Blue Hole Spring, the River's source, which flows south through Brackenridge Park, remains the city's last natural riparian section of the river, home to an abundance of birds and other wildlife. This portion of the River preserves and embodies the unique pre-historic, historic, cultural, and ecological natural area which lies adjacent to the River Road neighborhood. It is a place where all San Antonio residents and visitors alike may reflect, recreate, appreciate the verdant tree canopy, watch migrating birds, and learn from the natural and human environments that give meaning to our world and very existence.

Today's River Road residents are a diverse mix of people. These include descendants of families who purchased the original 1920s-era homes, neighbors who grew up in the area and inherited homes, anthropologists who have studied the area's pre-history, and a mix of owners and renters of all ages. For decades, residents have faithfully renovated and maintained properties, respecting the historical character of the neighborhood while modernizing the functionality of well-built homes.

The purpose and intent of the River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual are to facilitate both the application and approval of alterations proposed for design review by providing the owners of historic properties assistance in making decisions about maintenance and improvements. It also provides the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and the Historic Design Review Commission (HDRC) with a framework for evaluation of proposed improvements within the River Road Historic District.



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# Executive Summary

This design manual includes guidelines and recommendations for alterations and new construction in the River Road Historic District in San Antonio, Texas. The manual was developed by the River Road Neighborhood Association in 2021 and 2022 through a contract awarded to the consulting firm of HHM & Associates, Inc. of Austin, Texas. The scope of work for the project called for the development of a design manual paralleling the organization and content of the City of San Antonio's 2011 citywide Design Guidelines, as well as the 2018 Mission Historic District Design Manual. To that end, this design manual includes:

- An overview discussion of purpose and goals;
- Descriptions of the historic and architectural character of the district;
- Design development recommendations;
- Guidelines and recommendations for exterior alterations to existing buildings, structures, and landscapes;
- Guidelines and recommendations for additions to existing buildings;
- Guidelines and recommendations for new construction; and
- A series of appendices with additional information about the history of River Road and resources for further research.

The River Road Neighborhood Association formed a special *ad hoc* committee devoted to oversight, management, and review of this project. Together, the team worked with City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation staff and neighborhood stakeholders to gather input about relevant issues faced by property owners in San Antonio at the time of this project. Public engagement efforts occurred from April 2021 through February 2023, including public meetings, a series of public questionnaires, and extensive individual outreach through neighborhood block captains. The consulting team then synthesized public input to develop a series of design guidelines tailored to the historic character and current needs of the River Road Historic Districts. Drafts of the design manual were submitted for review and comment in the fall of 2021 and the spring of 2022, followed by revisions and completion of this final design manual in October 2022.

The City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation intends to present this final document to the City Council for formal adoption in the fall of 2023.

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## **River Road Neighborhood Association Board of Directors (2020, 2021, and 2022)**

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# Section 1: Overview

## 1.1. Design Manual Purpose and Goals

### Purpose

The intent of the River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual is to clarify relevant areas in the *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines* and apply their interpretation specifically in River Road to further guide the application of the citywide guidelines. It is also the intent of the River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual to provide flexibility to property owners for additions/alterations/new construction within the spirit of the citywide guidelines. **This design manual should be considered to supplement the citywide guidelines.**

The River Road Neighborhood Historic District Design Guidelines Manual provides a guide for decision-making to allow for sustainable development while preserving and protecting the district’s architectural, historical, social, cultural, archaeological, and ecological features. This Design Manual serves as a consolidated resource for design requirements within the district, articulates unique and character-defining features of the district, and demonstrates best practices concerning both private and public project development. This Design Manual will be used by all relevant City of San Antonio departments, boards, commissions, and other governmental entities when reviewing proposed plans within the River Road Historic District. **The guidelines within this Design Manual are legally enforceable by reference within the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code.**

#### Legal Enforcement of Design Guidelines per the Unified Development Code

Within the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code, Section 35-608(e), states that, within a historic district, “Applications shall be reviewed for consistency with the historic or district specific design guidelines adopted by city council...Applications should be approved if in general conformance with the guidelines but denial of an application by the city manager or the city manager's designee may be based on any inconsistency or nonconformance with the approved guidelines.”<sup>i</sup>

#### Key Vocabulary: Guidelines versus Recommendations

**Guidelines** – Within this design manual, guidelines are considered to be legally enforceable approval criteria per Section 35-608(e) of the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code (as cited above).

**Recommendations** – Within this design manual, recommendations are considered voluntary but encouraged to promote compatibility with the unique historic and natural character of the River Road Historic District.

### Goals

The River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual aims to help promote preservation and manage ongoing change within the River Road Historic District. The manual provides a clear framework to communicate appropriate and inappropriate approaches to alterations, landscaping, construction of additions, and construction of new buildings in the district. During the development of this manual, the River Road ad Hoc Historic Design Project Committee worked collaboratively to establish the specific goals listed below. The foundation of these goals is the Committee’s commitment to seeking consensus among property owners about the guidelines that will apply in the historic district boundaries into the future.

- Goal #1: Protect and Preserve the architectural, historical, social, cultural, archaeological, and ecological resources
- Goal #2: Provide clear guidelines for River Road Historic District design review process
- Goal #3: Provide useful resources for current and future property owners
- Goal #4: Communicate the significance of the natural landscape
- Goal #5: Achieve the City of San Antonio's purpose for the development of district-specific guidelines unique to individual historic districts

## Guiding Principles

The River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual aims to help promote preservation and manage ongoing change within the River Road Historic District. The Design Manual provides a clear framework to communicate appropriate and inappropriate approaches to alterations, landscaping, and construction of additions and new buildings in the district.

- Principle #1: Understand and enhance interconnections with the San Antonio River
- Principle #2: Preserve and promote design features that encourage social and cultural connections
- Principle #3: Sustain the focus on cultural, ecological, and historic assets in the district

## 1.2. Applicability

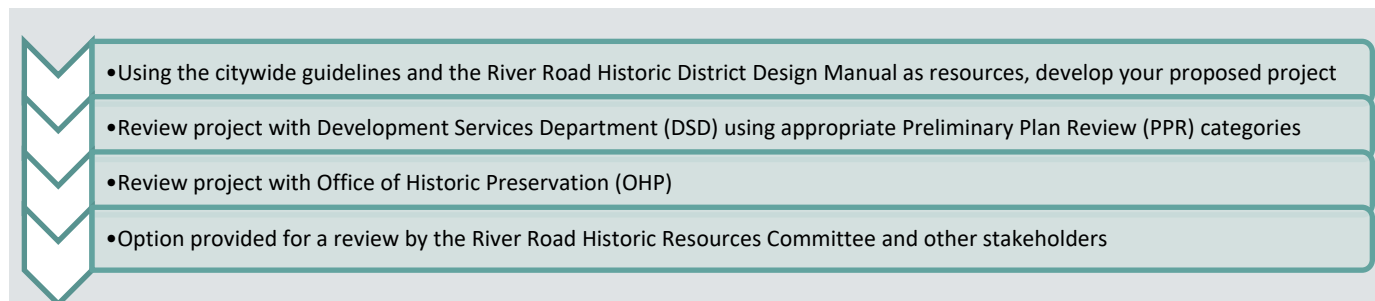
The River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual applies to all exterior alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, and new construction in the historic district. This includes projects that impact landscape features and accessory buildings in addition to primary dwellings. Work will be reviewed for consistency with this Design Manual and any other applicable standards or guidelines as adopted by the City of San Antonio as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness application process (further described below).

### Background: The River Road Historic District

The history and culture of settlement in the River Road Historic District date back to the earliest development of San Antonio. Appendix A provides a Summary History of the River Road Neighborhood. In 2010, the historic and cultural significance of River Road was recognized through local designation of the City of San Antonio River Road Historic District. Appendix C provides a map of the historic district boundaries and additional background about prior planning efforts in the River Road Historic District.

## Coordinating with the Citywide Guidelines

The River Road Historic District Design Guidelines Manual is intended to be the *first* point of reference for owners and residents seeking to improve properties within the River Road Historic District. For ease of reference, the citywide guidelines that are most applicable to the River Road Historic District are reproduced in this manual. After reviewing this manual, property owners and residents should refer to the City of San Antonio’s Historic Design Guidelines for additional information.<sup>ii</sup> The two documents are intended to complement one another, but this design manual provides a higher level of detail, as well as helpful background specific to the River Road Historic District. In some instances, this district-specific manual provides precise guidelines that are more prescriptive than the general guidance in the citywide document. In those instances, **this design manual shall overrule the citywide guidelines**. The City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation is available to assist with interpretation upon request.



**Figure 1.2.1.** Flow chart illustrating the process for using this design manual in tandem with citywide guidelines. Additional tips for design development are provided in Section 3.



### Foundation for District-Specific Design Manuals within the Citywide Guidelines

The concept of supplementing the citywide guidelines with district-specific guidelines is founded upon the citywide guidelines document, which states:

*With the Historic Design Guidelines in place, individual historic districts may consult with City staff to determine whether additional district-specific design tools may be necessary to supplement the citywide guidelines. City staff may assist individual districts in drafting district-specific guidelines prior to City Council action to ensure that no conflicts exist between district-specific guidelines and the citywide provisions.*

*District-specific guidelines will not conflict with the citywide guidelines; rather they will address more specific items such as... construction materials and landscaping elements.<sup>iii</sup>*

## Certificate of Appropriateness Review Process

When submitting a Certificate of Appropriateness, applicants should carefully document how the proposed work complies with both this *River Road Historic District Design Manual* and the *City of San Antonio's Historic Design Guidelines*. Specific sections, page numbers, and figure numbers from these documents should be referenced whenever applicable. When reviewing Certificate of Appropriateness applications, various City of San Antonio offices, boards, and commissions all will refer to this adopted design manual—as well as the citywide guidelines—to determine appropriateness. The process for review and approval (and appeal if needed) are described in detail in Section 1 of the citywide guidelines ([https://sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1\\_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf](https://sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf)) and summarized in Figure 1.2.2 below.

### Exceptions and Special Circumstances

The City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation considers interior work and some limited types of routine maintenance exempt from review, as listed in Table 1.2.1.

In addition, the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code (UDC) gives the Historic and Design Review Commission flexibility to consider whether following guidelines is “reasonable” in special circumstances.<sup>iv</sup>

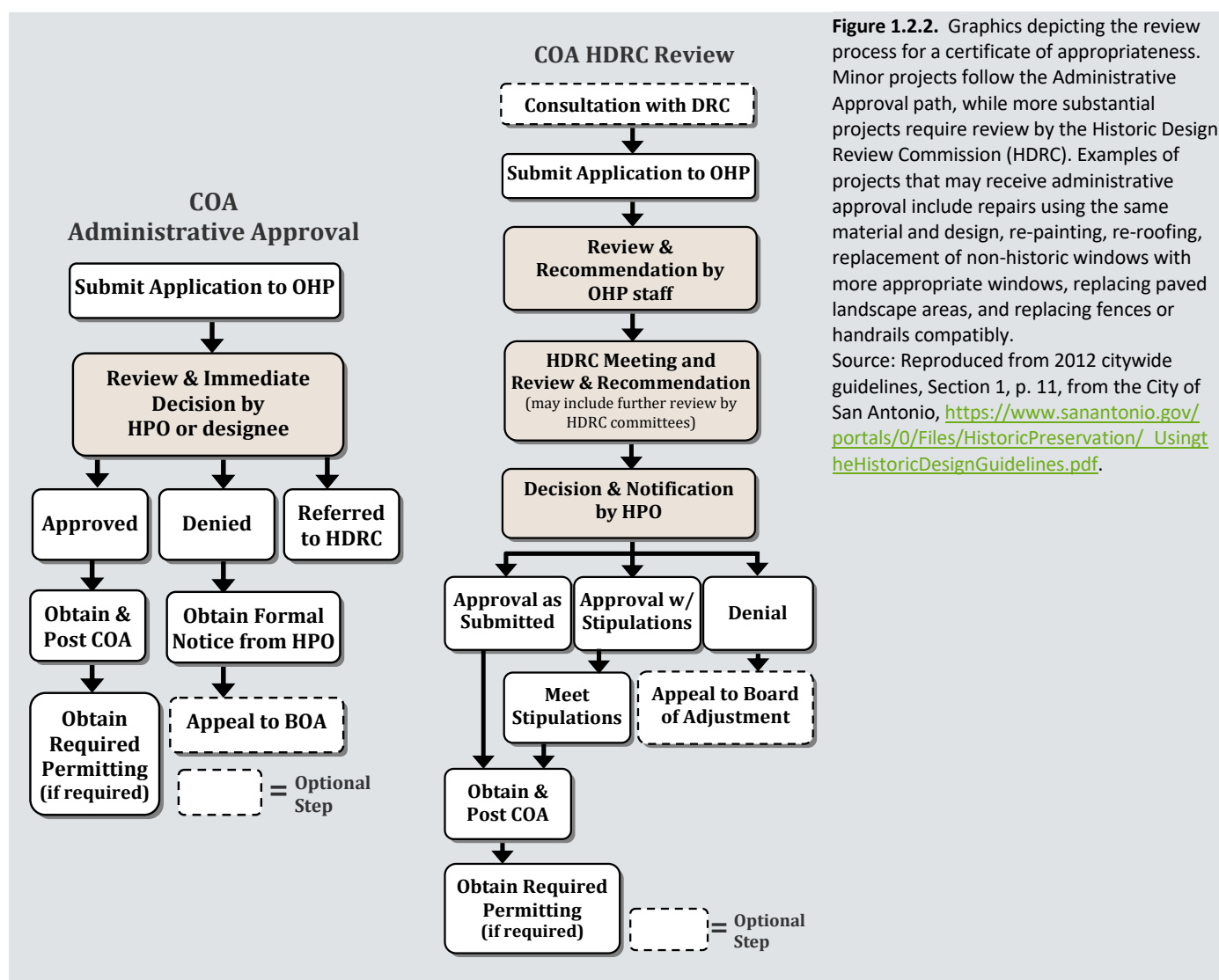


Table 1.2.1. Work items exempt from the Certificate of Appropriateness application process (current as of 2022). Note that these exemptions are matters of administrative policy rather than code articles embedded in the UDC and, therefore, are subject to change.

Buildings and Structures	Landscapes
Interior alterations not visible from the exterior	Routine landscape maintenance and clean-up
Installation of electrical, plumbing, or mechanical fixtures that do not affect the exterior	Trimming plants and trees away from buildings and structures
Cleaning porch floors, roofs, and gutters using the gentlest means possible	New plantings that do not entail removing historic plantings or historic structures
Routine paint touch-ups	Routine touch-ups of fence or deck paint or stain

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> *San Antonio, Texas – Unified Development Code*, Sec. 35-451, from Municode, accessed February 15, 2022, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR\\_DIV5HIDERE\\_S35-451CEAP](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR_DIV5HIDERE_S35-451CEAP).

<sup>ii</sup> Clarion Associates and Hardy-Heck-Moore, Inc. (HHM), *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, prepared for the City of San Antonio, 2012, from the City of San Antonio, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/HDRC/HistoricDistrictGuidelines>.

<sup>iii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 1, page 5, [https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1\\_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf).

<sup>iv</sup> UDC Sec.35-608(a), from Municode, accessed February 18, 2022, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE\\_DIV2HIPR\\_S35-608CEAPCOAPEN](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE_DIV2HIPR_S35-608CEAPCOAPEN). This code section states that “the historic and design review commission shall consider the current needs of the property owner and whether the plans will be reasonable for the property owner to carry out.”

# Section 2: Historic Character

## 2.1. Architectural Styles

The overall historic character and significance of the River Road Historic District arise from a rich layer of historic and cultural associations, natural landscape features, and manmade cultural resources (as further described in the Summary Background of the River Road Neighborhood in Appendix A). The architecture in the River Road Historic District constitutes one aspect of this rich significance, and the architectural style of each individual building plays an important role in helping to contribute to the character of the district – creating an overall sense of character that is greater than the sum of its parts. The section below describes each architectural style found within the River Road Historic District, building upon the Architectural Character section within the *City of San Antonio's Historic District Guidelines* (excerpted below), customized to discuss the architecture and landscape features that characterize the River Road Historic District. Each style listed below has unique “character-defining features,” which all need to be maintained in order to preserve the overall historic character and integrity of the house. Figure 2.1.1 depicts the process for identifying the character-defining features for each specific historic resource within the River Road Historic District. Some buildings within the River Road Historic District clearly show the influences of one architectural style, while others employ a mix of styles or no distinguishable style – yet all contribute to the overall character and significance of the district.

For a glossary of architectural terms used in this section, see Appendix B.

### Architectural Styles Excerpt from the City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines

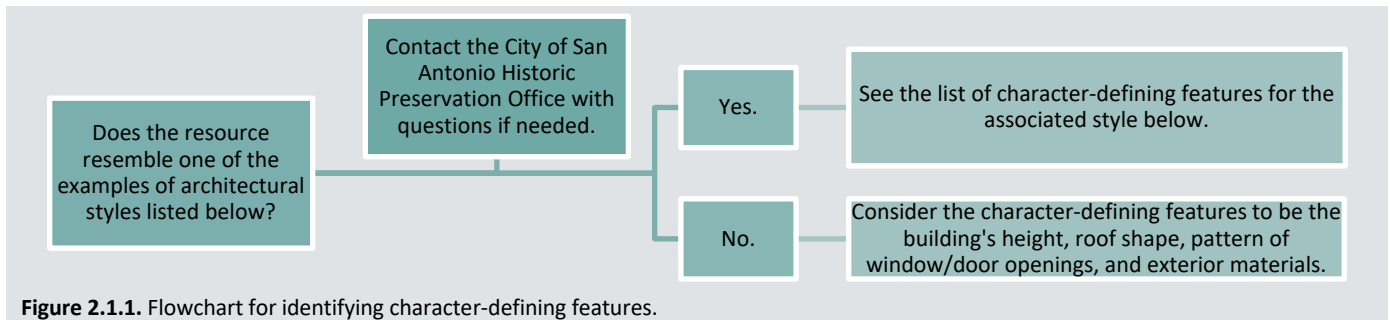
Architectural styles are useful categories for analyzing general types of historic resources. The analysis within this section sets forth typical character-defining features of architectural styles. Note that many examples of historic resources do not strictly fit any architectural style classification. Some are purely utilitarian and reflect no style at all. Others eclectically combine several styles. Similarly, a typical example of an architectural style may exhibit some of the character-defining features defined in the following pages, but not all. This analysis of architectural styles seeks to find commonalities among general trends, though the buildings within a historic district inevitably will include exceptions.

Architectural styles may be applied to any number of different building forms. For instance, architectural details influenced by the Classical Revival style may be applied to a single-family house, a multi-story commercial building, a warehouse, or even a gas station. Architectural styles may sometimes be related to a building's use, but not necessarily. Instead, they tend to be related to the building's era of construction and popular regional trends. Architectural styles can be integral to the form and materials of the building or can be displayed through decorative ornament applied to a building.

Some typical character-defining features of each architectural style are listed in the section below. A building does not need to display all of the listed character-defining features to be considered a good example of a style; however, when these character-defining features are intact, they must be preserved in order to retain the overall character of the architectural style. Buildings also may exhibit different stylistic elements due to changes over time. If these changes occurred during the historic district's period of significance, such changes should be respected and possibly retained during restoration or rehabilitation projects.

Standard classifications for architectural styles are set forth by the National Park Service in Bulletin No. 16a, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, and are derived from seminal texts in American Architectural History such as *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to Architectural Styles* by Marcus Whiffen; *Identifying American Architecture* by John J. G. Blumenson; *What Style Is It?* by John Poppeliers, S. Allen Chambers, and Nancy B. Schwartz; and *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester.<sup>i</sup>





## Spanish Colonial

Eighteenth Century to Early Nineteenth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One story.
- Form: Linear footprint, sometimes with several linear wings grouped around an interior courtyard. Since examples typically pre-date the street grid and subdivision, they are often set on larger lots than typical and are oriented at angles inconsistent with adjacent properties. Utilitarian outbuildings often present.
- Exterior Walls: Examples often use stucco over masonry (which may use rammed earth, adobe brick, or stone).
- Foundations: Typically skirted with brick or stone.
- Porches: Often not original, but sometimes added later during the historic period.
- Roofs: Low-pitched or flat, sometimes altered during the historic period to have a higher-pitch roof; often with exposed rafter-ends.
- Windows: Small window openings; windows may be casement or double-hung, typically with wood sashes
- Doors: Wood, sometimes with decorative carving.
- Chimneys: If chimneys are original, usually located on the gable ends, projecting further out than the exterior wall plane.



**Figure 2.1.2.** Example of the Spanish Colonial style house (Zambrano House) in the River Road Historic District.<sup>ii</sup> Note that this example uses rammed earth construction. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. One-story
2. Linear footprint
3. Set on a large lot, oriented at an angle to the street
4. Stucco over rammed earth exterior walls
5. Partial-width front porches likely added in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
6. Original flat roof form and exposed rafter ends evident, with side-gabled roof likely added in the nineteenth century
7. Small window openings
8. Multiple exterior doors

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# National Folk

Late Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property types: Residential.
- Height: One or one-and-a-half stories.
- Form: L-plan, modified L-plan, and/or square-plan.
- Exterior Walls: Use of milled lumber, often horizontal wood clapboard siding but sometimes vertical weatherboard.
- Foundations: Pier-and-beam with wood or pressed-metal skirting.
- Porches: Partial-width or full-width porches; usually with simple, square wood porch posts and railings.
- Roofs: Hipped, pyramidal, or gable-on-hipped roof forms; simple wood soffits, fascia boards, and bargeboards.
- Windows: Tall and somewhat narrow window openings; typically double-hung wood-sash windows, sometimes with wood shutters.
- Doors: Wood front doors, often with glazing, sometimes with transom and sidelight windows.
- Chimneys: Simple brick chimneys or stovepipes, often projecting from the center of the roof ridge.



**Figure 2.1.3.** Example of a National Folk style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. One-story
2. Square building footprint
3. Exterior walls with milled horizontal wood clapboard siding
4. Full-width porch with square support posts and decorative brackets
5. Pyramidal roof form
6. Tall window openings with double-hung wood-sash windows
7. Central brick chimney

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



## French Eclectic

Late Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: Ranging from one story to two-and-a-half stories.
- Form: Irregular form with asymmetrical projections and modulations (like turrets).
- Exterior Walls: Brick or stone masonry, sometimes finished with stucco. Ornamental stone windows, sills, and door and window surrounds may be present.
- Foundations: Typically pier-and-beam, skirted with brick or stone.
- Porches: If present, typically partial-width with masonry supports; sometimes absent, with a patio or portico instead.
- Roofs: Hipped or mansard roof forms with a steep pitch. Originally, often clad with slate. Dormer windows and turrets common.
- Windows: Varied sizes and shapes of window openings. Windows may be casement or double-hung, with wood or metal sashes. May feature decorative transoms, leaded glass, or stained glass.
- Doors: Typically wood, sometimes with glazing, transoms, and/or sidelights.
- Chimneys: Brick or stucco, often especially tall with decorative corbelled brickwork or caps.



**Figure 2.1.4.** Example of a French Eclectic style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Stucco wall finish
2. Front patio and portico
3. Half-timbering in front gable
4. Hipped roof with steep pitch
5. Turret with narrow arched window
6. Tall chimney visible at right-hand gable
7. Curved walkway

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# Colonial Revival

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential
- Height: Ranging from one to two-and-a-half stories.
- Form: Rectangular, symmetrical.
- Exterior walls: Typically brick, but may be wood siding.
- Foundations: Typically pier-and-beam skirted with brick or stucco.
- Porches: Often include partial-width or full-width porches, with front-gabled or flat roof supported by wood or stone columns. May include a front-gabled or arched portico over the main entrance, supported by brackets or columns.
- Roofs: Typically side-gabled or gambrel. Wood cornice and enclosed eaves, often painted white. Slate shingles sometimes present. Dormer windows common on residential examples.
- Windows: Typically double-hung wood sash, painted white, often paired. Often flanked by wood shutters.
- Doors: Typically wood, sometimes topped with fanlights. Commonly include sidelights, transoms, and/or ornate door surrounds with detailing inspired by the American Colonial Era.
- Chimneys: Typically brick, located at the gable end(s).



**Figure 2.1.5.** Example of a Colonial Revival-style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Rectangular footprint
2. Entrance portico with pediment, supported by slender columns
3. Side-gabled roof form with dormer
4. Double-hung wood windows, paired front door with side lights and transom with fanlights

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



# Tudor Revival

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: Ranging from one to two-and-a-half stories.
- Form: Asymmetrical, often with an L-plan or modified L-plan.
- Exterior Walls: Usually brick masonry in varying colors, patterns, and textures. Sometimes wood, stone, or stucco. Faux half-timbering often adorning gable-ends. Wing walls or buttresses sometimes accenting front façade.
- Foundations: Pier-and-beam, usually skirted with brick.
- Porches: If present, partial-width, sometimes including low-sloped segmental arches or Gothic arches supported by brick piers.
- Roofs: Gable-on-hip or cross-gabled. Often complex. Eaves sometimes swept. Bargeboards concealing rafter ends.
- Windows: Usually double-hung wood sash, often paired. Window openings sometimes feature low-sloped Gothic arches. Sometimes featuring picture windows with leaded glass in a lattice pattern.
- Doors: Wood doors, sometimes with small lites, often arched.
- Chimneys: Prominent brick chimneys, often on front façade. Sometimes featuring chimney caps with corbelling or crenellations.



**Figure 2.1.6.** Example of a Tudor Revival style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Asymmetrical footprint
2. Brick exterior walls with contrasting colors and textures
3. Pier-and-beam foundation skirted with brick
4. Partial-width porch with arched openings supported by brick piers
5. Cross-gabled roof form with steep pitch and bargeboards
6. Arched window openings with paired double-hung wood-sash windows
7. Arched main entry with heavy wood front door

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# Mission Revival

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One-story or two-story.
- Form: Rectangular footprint, sometimes with projecting central front entrance.
- Exterior Walls: Usually finished with stucco, either smooth or textured. May feature terra-cotta or cast concrete ornamentation, typically at door and window surrounds and belt/string courses. May include wing walls at façade edge.
- Foundations: May be pier-and-beam skirted with stucco or slab-on-grade.
- Porches: If present, partial-width porch supported by columns or pilasters with decorative capitals. May have second story balcony. Porch may also be an arcade at ground level, often with a loggia.
- Roofs: Low-pitched clay tile or flat, typically with a Mission-shaped dormer or roof parapet with terra-cotta or cast concrete coping.
- Windows: May feature Roman or segmental arch openings. Wood casement or double-hung wood sash windows, often paired. Decorative iron trim often present.
- Doors: Heavy wood doors, sometimes with small lites or decorative carving. May feature Roman or segmental openings. Decorative stone, terra-cotta, or iron trim often present.
- Chimneys: Clay tile hoods.



**Figure 2.1.7.** Example of a Mission Revival style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Rectangular footprint with projecting front entrance
2. Exterior walls with textured stucco
3. Portico with decorative cast concrete or terra cotta ornamentation
4. Flat roof with parapet
5. Paired double-hung wood-sash windows with arched surrounds
6. Arched heavy wood door with small lite

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# Spanish Eclectic

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: Ranging from one story to two-and-a-half stories.
- Form: Rectangular main core, often with projecting wings; may be symmetrical or asymmetrical.
- Exterior walls: Stucco, sometimes with texture or molded decorative wall elements. Tile detailing common.
- Foundations: Typically skirted with masonry finished with stucco.
- Porches: Sometimes lack porches or sometimes use partial-width porches with arched openings, often supported by masonry piers. Often feature heavy hardware, such as handrails and light fixtures. Second-story balconies or roof decks sometimes present.
- Roofs: Typically flat or low-sloped hipped, often covered with clay tile.
- Windows: Double-hung or casement windows with metal or wood sash. Sometimes featuring wrought iron grates or balconies.
- Doors: Typically heavy wood, sometimes with small lites. Often feature heavy hardware. Stone door surrounds common.
- Chimneys: Stucco, often with tile cap.



**Figure 2.1.8.** Example of a Spanish Eclectic style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Rectangular main footprint with projecting wings
2. Stucco exterior walls
3. Low-pitched clay tile roof
4. Wood casement windows
5. Stucco chimney with tile cap

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



# Monterey Style

Early to Mid-Twentieth Century

## Typical Presentation

- Property Type: Residential.
- Height: Two stories.
- Form: Rectangular or L-plan.
- Exterior Walls: May be wood siding, asbestos shingle, brick, stone, or stucco.
- Foundation: Typically skirted with wood or brick. Skirt walls sometimes battered.
- Porches: Full-width or partial-width cantilevered balconies, often featuring exposed rafter ends, sometimes with carved detailing and/or decorative wrought iron.
- Roofs: Low-sloped hipped or gabled, with deep eaves, often with exposed rafter ends.
- Windows: May be double-hung wood sash, wood casement, or metal casement, sometimes with wood screens. Shutters often present.
- Doors: Typically wood with glazing, sometimes with transoms and sidelights.
- Chimneys: Brick, stone, or stucco, sometimes with corbelling or stone coping.



**Figure 2.1.9.** Example of a Monterey-style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Two stories in height
2. Rectangular footprint
3. Low-pitched side-gabled roof
4. Partial-width cantilevered balcony that also covers porch below
5. Exposed rafter ends at balcony
6. Wood windows
7. Brick chimney visible toward the rear, left of center

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# Craftsman

## Early Twentieth Century

### Style versus Form: The Craftsman Bungalow

The “bungalow” is a common residential building form found throughout the United States from about 1915 through about 1945. The form is typically one-story or one-and-a-half stories. The bungalow’s key feature is a compact interior floor plan that organizes public spaces on one side of the house and private spaces on the other without using a corridor, which helps conserve space. Many different styles were applied to the bungalow form, varying according to the construction date and region. The Craftsman style is the most common style applied to the bungalow form. However, bungalow forms in the River Road also may display Mission Revival, Tudor Revival, or Minimal Traditional stylistic influences.

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One or one-and-a-half stories.
- Form: **“Bungalow,”** usually with an L-plan or rectangular footprint.
- Exterior Walls: Typically wood siding, sometimes brick. Sometimes featuring wood shingle detailing.
- Foundations: Typically pier-and-beam skirted with wood, stucco, or brick. Skirt walls sometimes battered.
- Porches: Porches are a character-defining feature. Partial-width or full-width, often with front-gabled roof, often supported by tapered wood, brick, or stone columns.
- Roofs: Low-sloped hipped or gabled (front-gabled, side-gabled, or cross-gabled), with deep eaves, often with exposed rafter ends.
- Windows: Typically double-hung wood sash, often paired, and often with wood screens with geometric detail.
- Doors: Typically wood with glazing, sometimes with transoms and sidelights.
- Chimneys: Brick, sometimes with corbelling or stone coping.



**Figure 2.1.10.** Example of a Craftsman-style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. “Bungalow” form with L-shaped footprint created by projecting porch
2. Wood exterior siding
3. Pier-and-beam foundation with stucco skirting
4. Partial-width front porch with front-gabled roof
5. Low-pitched cross-gabled roof with wide eaves and triangular braces
6. Paired double-hung wood windows with decorative screens
7. Wood door with geometric grid of glazing

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

# Minimal Traditional

## Mid-Twentieth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One story.
- Form: L-plan or rectangular.
- Exterior Walls: Wood siding or asbestos shingle. Decorative wood shingles or board-and-batten siding sometimes present at gable ends. Brick or stone veneer sometimes present at water table.
- Foundations: Pier-and-beam with wood skirt, or concrete slab-on-grade.
- Porches: Typically partial-width, supported by simple wood posts, geometric wood posts, or metal posts, sometimes adorned with decorative wrought iron. Porch floor typically concrete.
- Roofs: Cross-gabled or gable-on-hip, sometimes with shingles or contrasting siding at the gable end.
- Windows: Casement or double-hung, wood or metal sash. Fixed picture windows sometimes present at front façade. Decorative wood shutters common.
- Doors: Wood, often with small lites in geometric patterns or fan lights.
- Chimneys: If present, simple brick or stone.



**Figure 2.1.11.** Example of a Minimal Traditional style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. L-shaped footprint
2. Exterior walls with horizontal wood siding
3. Slab-on-grade foundation with concrete porch floor
4. Partial-width porch supported by decorative wrought iron posts
5. Cross-gabled roof with contrasting vertical siding at gable ends
6. Double-hung wood windows with larger picture window at front façade
7. Decorative wood shutters
8. Wood door with small lite and geometric paneling

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



# Ranch

## Mid-Twentieth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One story typically, sometimes one-and-a-half or two stories if split-level on a slope with a walk-out basement.
- Form: Rectangular or L-plan, typically wider than it is deep.
- Exterior Walls: Often brick or stone masonry, often using Roman brick or flagstone; sometimes wood siding or asbestos shingle siding.
- Foundations: Typically concrete slab, but sometimes pier-and-beam.
- Porches: If present, typically recessed under main roof form and supported by simple wood posts or metal posts, sometimes adorned with decorative wrought iron. Floor typically concrete. Integral stone or brick planters often are evident. Details may exhibit influences of the Colonial Revival or Tudor Revival Styles.
- Roofs: Low-sloped hipped, side-gabled, or cross-gabled, with deep eaves. Clerestory windows sometimes present at gable ends or below eaves. Details may exhibit influences of the Colonial Revival or Tudor Revival Styles.
- Windows: Double-hung, casement, awning or jalousie, with wood or metal sash. Picture windows often present at front façade.
- Doors: Wood, often with small lites in geometric patterns. Metal or wood screen doors.
- Chimneys: If present, broad and simple brick or stone.



**Figure 2.1.12.** Example of a Ranch style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Wide L-shaped footprint
2. Brick exterior walls
3. Slab-on-grade foundation
4. Recessed porch
5. Low roof pitch with broad eaves
6. Metal windows
7. Broad chimney

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



## Mid-Century Modern

Mid- to Late Twentieth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: Typically one-story, sometimes two-story if split-level or on slope with walk-out basement.
- Form: Rectangular or L-plan, often with integrated carports.
- Exterior Walls: Concrete, stucco, or brick with no applied ornament.
- Foundation: Concrete slab-on-grade.
- Porches: Flat-roof or low-sloped porches, often recessed under the main roof form but sometimes using cantilevered roofs or roofs supported by narrow metal columns.
- Roofs: Flat, A-frame, or low-pitched roof forms.
- Windows: Metal windows, typically casement, sliding, jalousie, or fixed.
- Doors: Typically wood or metal, often with glazing.
- Chimneys: If present, typically brick or stone with a horizontal emphasis.



**Figure 2.1.13.** Example of a Mid-Century Modern style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. L-plan footprint with integrated carport
2. Brick exterior walls
3. Slab-on-grade foundation
4. Porch recessed under main roof
5. Flat roof

Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## 1960s and 1970s Contemporary

Mid- to Late Twentieth Century

### Typical Presentation

- Property Types: Residential.
- Height: One or two stories.
- Form: Varied, ranging from rectangular to irregular and organic, often with integrated carports.
- Exterior Walls: Concrete, stucco, wood, Roman brick, flagstone, glass, or tile. No applied ornament. Often curving or angular. Structural elements often exposed.
- Foundation: Concrete slab. Ground floor may be elevated on a plinth.
- Porches: If present, cantilevered flat awnings or recessed under flat roof.
- Roofs: Flat, A-frame, angular, vaulted, or irregular.
- Windows: Double-hung, casement, or fixed, with metal or wood sash. Fixed window walls are common.
- Doors: Typically wood or metal, often with glazing.
- Chimneys: If present, typically brick or stone.



**Figure 2.1.14.** Example of a 1960s and 1970s Contemporary style house in the River Road Historic District. Character-defining features found on this selected example include:

1. Rectangular form with integrated carport
2. Slab-on-grade foundation
3. Flat roof
4. Window wall

Source: Photo by from Google Street View, 2021.

## 2.2. Landscape Features - Natural and Manmade

The section below describes the landscape features—both natural and manmade—that characterize the River Road Historic District. Preserving the character-defining features of the landscape helps to protect the overall historic character of the district.

### San Antonio River, River Structures, and Features

#### Natural Riverbed and Tributaries

##### Pre-historic to Present Day

##### Typical Character-Defining Features

- **Location:** Immediately to the east of the River Road Historic District lies the last section of the San Antonio River within the city limits remaining in its natural state. Traveling from headwaters at a cluster of springs north of Brackenridge Park in a south/southeasterly direction until joining with the Guadalupe River near the Texas Gulf Coast;<sup>iii</sup> the river flows just east of the boundaries of the River Road Historic District, and many small tributaries travel through the district to drain into the river.
- **Heights/widths:** The terrain of the River Road Historic District slopes downward toward the river so that the western boundary of the district is roughly 689 feet above sea level, the eastern boundary is roughly 656 feet above sea level, and the river's water level is roughly 649 feet above sea level – a decline of around 40 feet over approximately 0.22 miles. The river's width varies with the water level but typically is about 60 feet wide today.
- **Form/plan:** Organic, curvilinear.
- **Materials:** Water and riverbed of primarily Houston black clay loam soil, which expands and contracts based on water content but erodes only moderately, creating a river alignment that fluctuates somewhat but remains relatively constant over time.<sup>iv</sup>



**Figure 2.2.1.** Example of a natural riverbed in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo courtesy of the San Antonio River Authority.



## Acequias

Around 1776 to Present Day

### Learn about Acequias

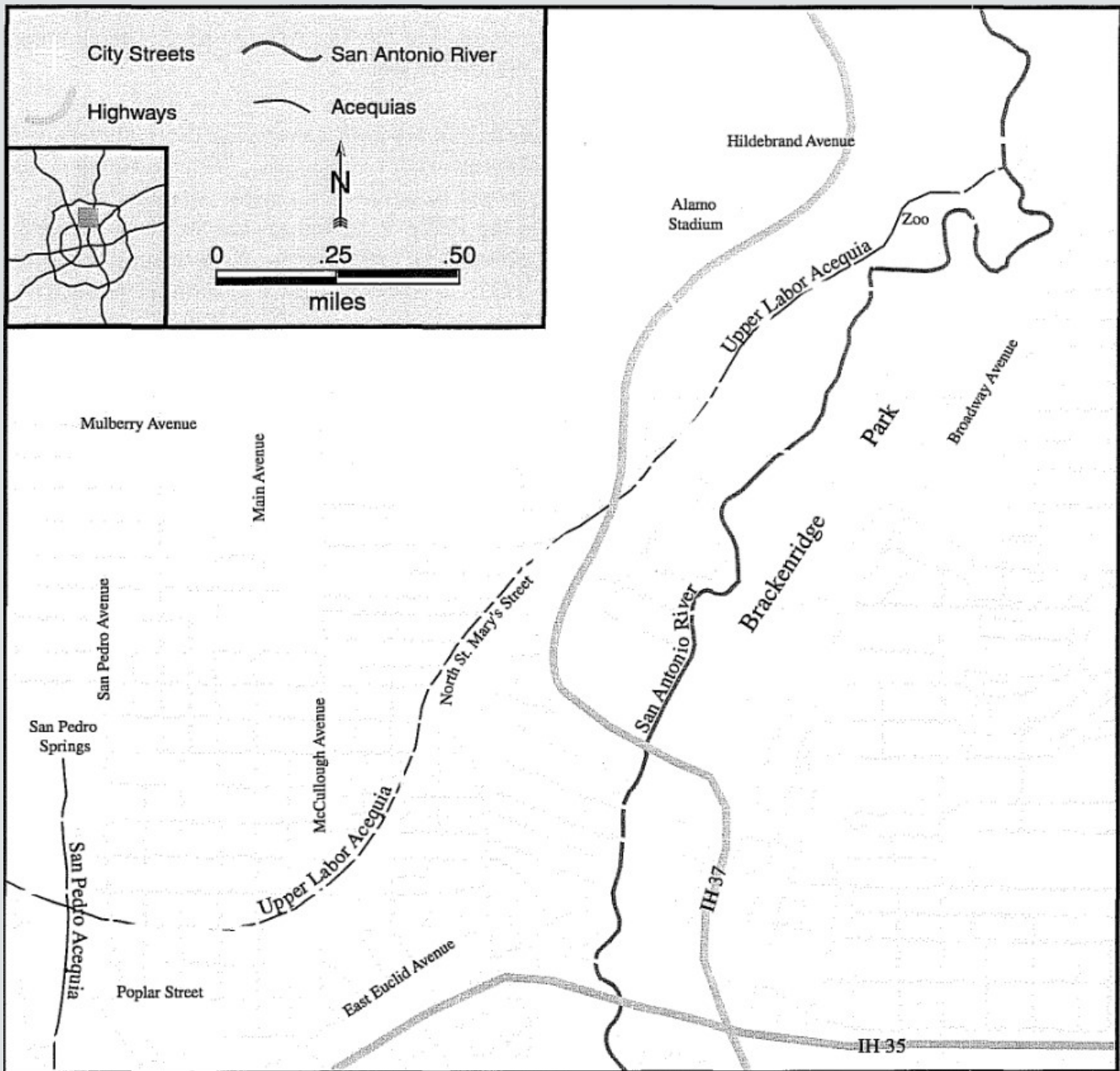
For further definitions of acequias and their key parts—canals, desagues, swales, and dams—refer to the glossary in Appendix B. For additional information about the history and character-defining features of the acequia system in the River Road Historic District, refer to *Excavation for the Upper Labor Dam Site, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas* by Wayne Cox, Edgar D. Johnson, and C. Britt Bousman.<sup>v</sup>

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- **Locations:** Multiple acequia systems are present throughout San Antonio, connecting the San Antonio river and tributaries to areas of historic settlement needing irrigation (fig. 2.2.3). The acequia system that travels through the River Road Historic District is known as the “Upper Labor Acequia.” Acequia features are present above ground in the northern section and eastern sections of the River Road Historic District, with portions traveling beneath streets via culverts. (See the description of culverts below on page 2-18).
- **Heights/widths:** The canals in River Road sink about 2 feet below the adjacent landscape and measure about 8 feet in width; swales sink about 3 feet below the adjacent ground plane and measure about 20 feet in width.
- **Form/plan:** Rectilinear, curvilinear.
- **Materials:** Canals are typically made of brick and mortar, while swales are earthen, desagues are concrete or terracotta, and dams are brick or stone (sometimes with mortar, and sometimes constructed of dry masonry).



**Figure 2.2.2.** Section of a canal comprising part of the acequia in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 2.2.3.** Map of the Upper Labor Acequia, which travels through the River Road Historic District (no date). Source: Cox, Johnson, and Bousman, *Excavation for the Upper Labor Dam Site, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas*.

## Low-Water Crossing

### Early Twentieth Century

#### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Connecting roads and trails between E. Woodlawn Avenue at River Road (west of the San Antonio River) and Avenue A (east of the San Antonio River); maintains the connectivity between the Historic District and the urban green space (Brackenridge Park).
- Heights/widths: approximately 130 feet in width; height above the river level varies dependent upon rainfall.<sup>vi</sup>
- Form/plan: Rectilinear.
- Materials: Cast concrete.



**Figure 2.2.4.** Example of a low-water crossing in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## Culverts

### Early Twentieth Century to Present Day

#### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Typically at the intersection of streets and drainage ditches on the eastern and northern district boundaries.
- Heights/widths: Roughly four feet below the street level in height; steeply sloped away from the street. Between 20 and 30 feet in width, depending on the width of the street above.
- Form/plan: Cylindrical piping arranged in a linear or curvilinear pattern, depending on the roadway alignment above.
- Materials: Cast concrete.



**Figure 2.2.5.** Example of an earthen swale leading to a concrete culvert that allows two desagues (drainpipes) to allow water to flow beneath the roadway. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



## Street and Lot Layout Features

Around 1720 through the Mid-Twentieth Century

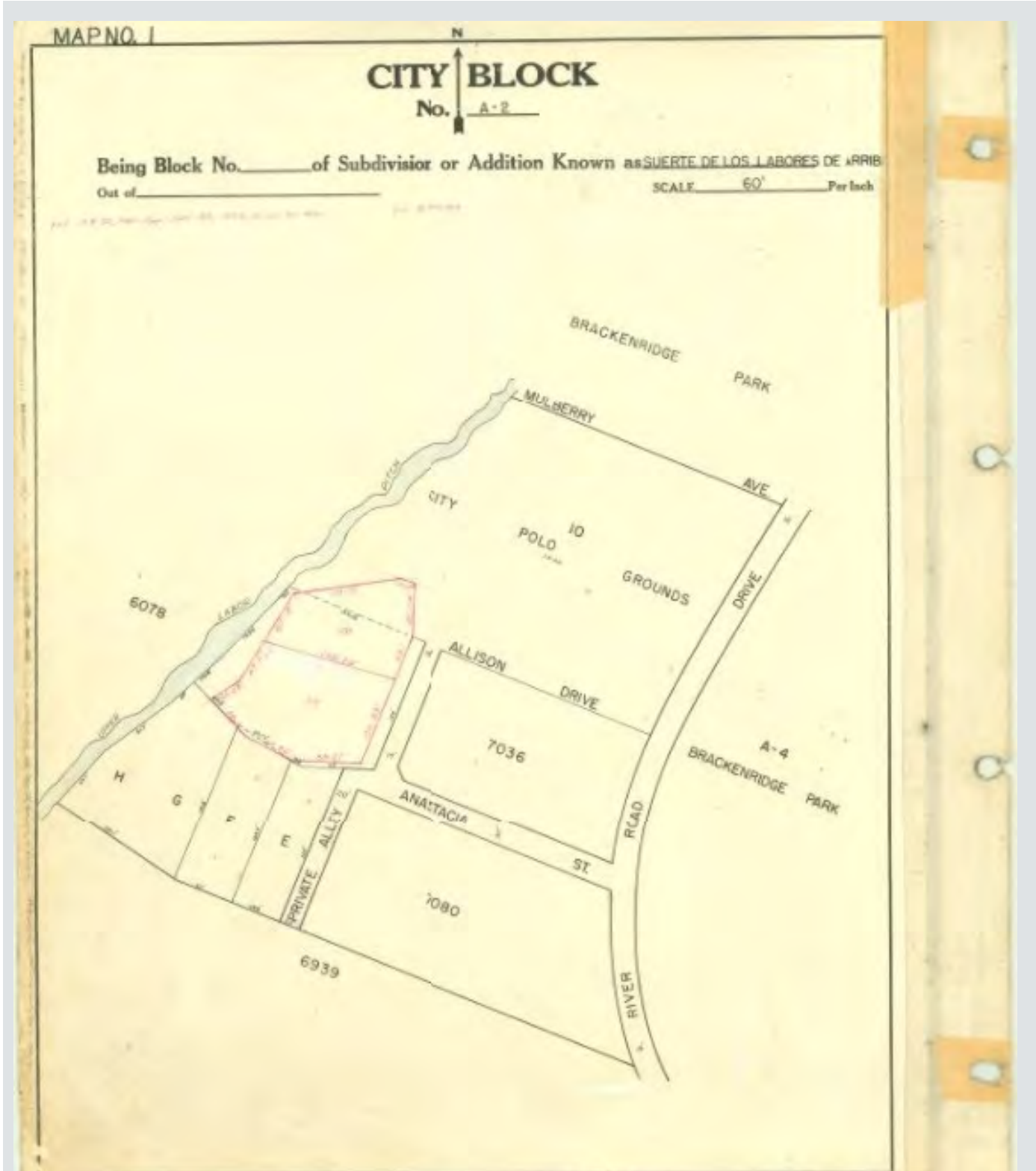
### Remnants of Spanish Colonial Land Divisions

#### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Along Allison Drive and E. Magnolia Avenue, both of which follow the boundaries of Spanish colonial divisions of land fronting the San Antonio River (figs. 2.2.6 and 2.2.7), as well as the east-west streets aligned parallel with the historic land-division boundaries (including Anastacia Place, Magnolia Drive, Armour Place, E. Woodlawn Avenue, and E. Craig Place).
- Heights/widths: At street-grade level; width not applicable.
- Form/plan: Linear.
- Materials: Currently demarked by asphalt streets.



**Figure 2.2.6.** This map shows lots 1 through 10 of the “Suerte de Los Labores de Arriba” subdivision; lots 6 through 9 fall in the boundaries of the present-day River Road Historic District (exact date unknown, likely between 1895 and 1954). Source: *New City Block Red Tax Maps A-1 through A-69-Page 1 of 88* [map], from the City of San Antonio Municipal Archives, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://webapp9.sanantonio.gov/ArchiveSearch/Viewer2.aspx?Id={701E3C54-56A5-492E-84A0-3F6CD472F6E1}&DocTitle=New%20City%20Block%20Red%20Tax%20Maps%20A-1%20through%20A-69&PageNo=1&TotalPages=88&MimeType=image/jpeg&RelatedDocs=>.



**Figure 2.2.7.** Tax map showing the further subdivision of Lot 9 of Suerte de Los Labores de Arriba, including the alignment of Allison Drive and Anastacia Streets, as well as the Zambrano House property (1979). Source: *New City Block Red Tax Maps A-1 through A-69-Page 3 of 88* [map], May 30, 1979, from the City of San Antonio Municipal Archives, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://webapp9.sanantonio.gov/ArchiveSearch/Viewer2.aspx?Id={DFE14ED4-928F-472C-BF40-294CD6DCFAFE}&DocTitle=New%20City%20Block%20Red%20Tax%20Maps%20A-1%20through%20A-69&PageNo=3&TotalPages=88&MimeType=image/jpeg&RelatedDocs=>.



## Curvilinear Adaptations of the Street Grid to Topography

- Location: Areas where the original grid pattern was altered to curve along the topography – such as the area along River Road and E. Magnolia Avenue (fig. 2.2.8).
- Heights/widths: Streets generally at-grade with the surrounding ground plane, ranging from 20 to 25 feet in width.
- Form/plan: Curvilinear.
- Materials: Asphalt with concrete curbs.



**Figure 2.2.8.** Map with redlines showing the additions of River Road and the angled portion of E. Magnolia Avenue to the original grid layout of the neighborhood (exact date unknown, likely between 1895 and 1954). Source: *New City Block Red Tax Maps A-1 through A-69-Page 2 of 88* [map], date unknown, from the City of San Antonio Municipal Archives, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://webapp9.sanantonio.gov/ArchiveSearch/Viewer2.aspx?Id={BBE6700F-0874-49F5-9924-4B12D5AA9FD5}&DocTitle=New%20City%20Block%20Red%20Tax%20Maps%20A-1%20through%20A-69&PageNo=2&TotalPages=88&MimeType=image/jpeg&RelatedDocs=>.

## US Highway 281 (McAllister Freeway) Boundary and Buffer

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Along the western River Road Historic District boundary; east of the US Highway 281 off-ramp. A barrier that distances the highway from the neighborhood.
- Heights/widths: Gradually sloping down from US Highway 281 at a gradient of about 3 feet down per 200 feet across. Trees approximately 20 to 25 feet tall. Greenspace between district boundary and highway roughly between 45 and 60 feet wide.
- Form/plan: Organic, curving.
- Materials: Grass, various tree species, steel chain-link fencing.



**BEFORE (1963)**



**AFTER (1973)**

**Figure 2.2.9.** Aerial photographs from 1963 (above) and 1973 (below) showing the impact of the construction of US Highway 281 on the River Road Historic District. Over 100 houses of neighborhood stock were removed to accommodate construction of US 281. Note the connectivity between River Road and the neighborhood to the west in 1963, versus the impenetrable western barrier created by US 281 by 1973. Source: United States Geographic Survey (USGS), aerial photos, 1963 [Entity ID AR1VAPO00020039] and 1973 [Entity ID AR1VDDC00020050], from the USGS Earth Explorer, <https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>.

## Landscape Structures and Objects

Late Nineteenth Century to Late Twentieth Century

### Fences and Landscape Walls

#### Learn about Fences and Landscape Walls

For definitions of fences and landscape walls, refer to the glossary in Appendix B.

#### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Side and back yards, and occasionally front yards, bordering the perimeter of the property. Historically, the majority of front yards were open, without front-yard fences. Typically, there is little setback from the property line.
- Heights/widths: Typically between three feet tall (front yard) and a maximum of six feet tall (back and side yard).<sup>vii</sup> Typically between two inches and one foot wide.
- Form/plan: Linear or curvilinear.
- Materials: Wood, brick, limestone, metal. Masonry more common around Mission Revival style homes; metal chain-link fences more common around Minimal Traditional or Ranch style homes.



**Figure 2.2.10.** Example of a historic-age stone wall at the rear of a property in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

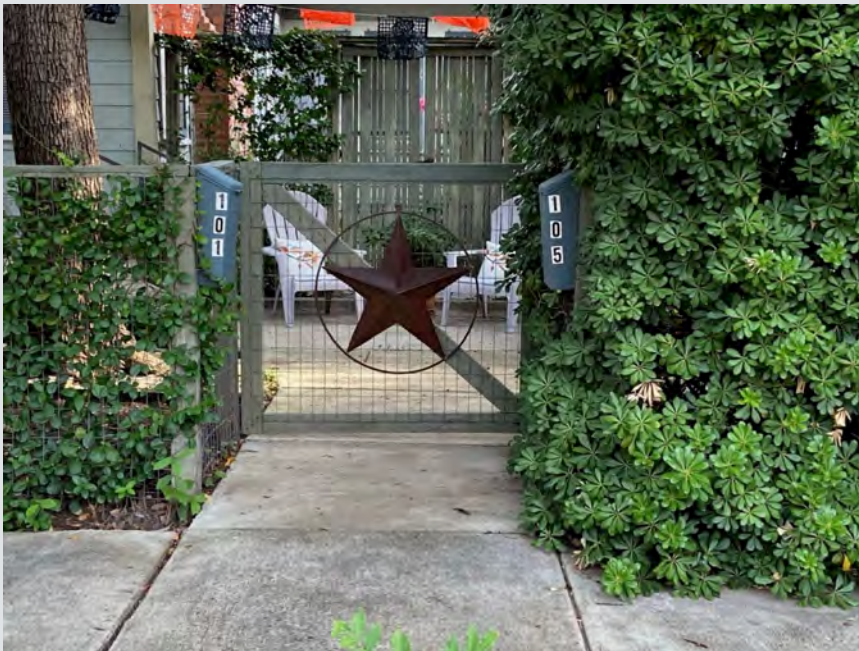


**Figure 2.2.11.** Example of a historic-age chain-link fence surrounding the front and backyards of a property in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.





**Figure 2.2.12.** Example of a landscape wall within the River Road Historic District that was constructed later than the original house but follows the patterns set by earlier examples compatibly. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



**Figure 2.2.13.** Example of a new fence within the historic district that follows historic patterns compatibly. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



## Retaining Walls

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Along or near the periphery of the property line on the front or side yard lawn, where there is a difference in grade between the lawn and the adjacent street or sidewalk.
- Heights/widths: Typically a maximum of two feet in height and one foot in width.
- Form/plan: Linear or rectilinear.
- Materials: Cast concrete, stone.



**Figure 2.2.14.** Example of a retaining wall in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## Driveways

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Aligned with either side of the house on the property, in a way that parked vehicles do not obstruct the view of the primary façade from the public right of way.
- Heights/widths: Graded on a lower level than the main house, but a higher level than the street. Historically no more than 12 feet wide for solid driveways or 2-feet-six-inches wide per ribbon for ribbon driveways.
- Form/plan: Linear, curvilinear.
- Materials: Pebbles, lawn grass, sand, concrete.



**Figure 2.2.15.** Example of a concrete ribbon driveway in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



## Curbs

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Street-side of neighborhood green stripes. On most neighborhood streets, curbs mark the boundary of both sides of the street. Park roads (River Road, Allison, Anastasia, and Huisache) do not have curbs.
- Heights/widths: Usually four inches tall measured from the street and one foot wide.
- Form/plan: Linear, curvilinear in form; round-edged in profile in some locations and square-edged in others.
- Materials: Concrete.



**Figure 2.2.16.** Example of a curb on E. Magnolia Avenue transitioning to the uncurbed border of River Road in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



**Figure 2.2.17.** Detail of a historic curb profile in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.

## Bollards

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Cedar bollards define the shoulder of the road along River Road from Mulberry to the low-water crossing.
- Heights/widths: Varied, between one and two feet in height and about six inches in diameter.
- Form/plan: Roughly cylindrical.
- Materials: Wood (cedar).



**Figure 2.2.18.** Example of bollards on the east side of River Road, between the road and the river. Also note the lack of curbing. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.

## Sidewalks and Walkways

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Front lawns – with sidewalks typically paralleling the street (often separated from the street by a planting strip), while walkways lead from the sidewalk to the front door; walkways sometimes also leading through side yards (between houses).
- Heights/widths: Sidewalks usually leveled with the adjacent curb; walkways level with lawn, sometimes with steps if the lawn is higher than the street.
- Form/plan: Linear or curvilinear.
- Materials: Historically primarily concrete or gravel.





**Figure 2.2.19.** Example of a sidewalk and walkway in the River Road Historic District, with steps to navigate the change in grade between the street and the lawn. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## Front and Side Patios

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: In front of houses, near the front door, or to the side of houses, accessed via a side door.
- Heights/widths: Usually slightly raised from the lawn and walkway, historically measuring up to 20 feet wide by about 10 feet deep.
- Form/plan: Rectilinear.
- Materials: Concrete (grade-on-slab), brick, stone.



**Figure 2.2.20.** Example of a brick side patio in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



# Vegetation

## Pre-historic to Present Day

### Plant Material

#### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Front lawn, side yards, rear yards, roundabout, riverbed, public right of ways.
- Height/width: Trees typically trimmed so that the canopy rises over the roofline of one-story houses. Front yard plantings typically trimmed in height and width so that at least half of the front façade of the adjacent house is visible from the street.
- Form: Organic.
- Common tree species: Oak, Pecan, Magnolia, Ashe Juniper, Huisache, Mesquite, Arizona Ash, Hackberry, Texas Persimmon, Texas Redbud, Texas Mountain Laurel, Crepe Myrtle, Loquat, Condalia, Possum Haw, Hawthorne.
- Common plant species: agave, prickly pear and other cactus, xeriscape plantings, bamboo, plumbago, firecracker, salvia, pride of Barbados, Esperanza, and other drought-tolerant species.



**Figure 2.2.21.** Example of drought-tolerant vegetation in the River Road Historic District. Although the plantings are not historic, the overall landscape plan follows historic patterns of vegetation versus hardscape. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.

## Tree Canopy

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Front lawn, side yard, community lands, overarching streets.
- Heights/widths: Height increasing over time; generally tall enough that the crown of each tree is above the height of the roofline of nearby houses. Width also varying over time, growing from about 25 percent coverage of the air space in aerial photos from 1955 to about 50 percent in 1986 and about 75 percent between 2004 and 2010, then decreasing to about 50 percent again between 2012 and 2020.<sup>viii</sup>
- Form: Organic.
- Materials: Trees of various species (refer to Plant Material heading above).



**Figure 2.2.22.** Example of the tree canopy in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



**Figure 2.2.23.** Example of the tree canopy in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.



## Lawns

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Front lawn, green stripes.
- Heights/widths: One to one-and-a-half inches tall, mowed, and maintained; varying widths.
- Form/plan: Organic geometric shapes, defined boundary, angled corners.
- Materials: Grass, rocks, soil.
- Grass species: St. Augustine grass (primary grass during historic period), Zoysia grass, Buffalo grass.



**Figure 2.2.24.** Example of a lawn in the River Road Historic District, following landscaping patterns prevalent historically in River Road, with decorative plantings clustered in beds near the house and grass stretching from the beds to the curb. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## Gardens

### Typical Character-Defining Features

- Location: Front, rear, or side yards of private lots; shared areas in public open spaces.
- Heights/widths: Varied.
- Form/plan: Rectilinear, square, organic.
- Plant species: Various shrubs, flowers, trees, and other plants (refer to Plant Material heading above).



**Figure 2.2.25.** Example of the community garden in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by RRNA, 2021.

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Clarion Associates and Hardy-Heck-Moore, Inc. [currently HHM & Associates, Inc.], “A Guide to Antonio’s Historic Resources [Chapter 7],” *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, prepared for the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation, 2012, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/HDRC/HistoricDistrictGuidelines>.

<sup>ii</sup> “Zambrano House (Atlas Number 5029005938) [Registered Texas Historic Landmark],” Texas Historic Sites Atlas, Texas Historical Commission, accessed Sept. 21, 2021, <https://atlas.thc.texas.gov/Details/5029005938>.

<sup>iii</sup> “Rivers,” Texas Almanac, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://texasalmanac.com/topics/environment/rivers>; “San Antonio Springs and Brackenridge Park,” The Edwards Aquifer Website, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://www.edwardsaquifer.net/saspring.html>.

<sup>iv</sup> US Bureau of Soils, *Soil map, Texas, San Antonio sheet* [map] (Washington D.C., n.p., 1904), from The Portal to Texas History crediting UNT Libraries Government Documents Department, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth19677/m1/1/>.

<sup>v</sup> Wayne Cox, Edgar D. Johnson, and C. Britt Bousman, *Excavation for the Upper Labor Dam Site, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas* [Report #268] (San Antonio: Center for Archaeological Research, The University of Texas At San Antonio). This report is available online from the University of Texas at San Antonio’s Center for Archeological Studies (<http://car.utsa.edu/CARResearch/Publications/ASRFiles/201-300/ASR%20No.%20268.pdf>) or in hard copy from the San Antonio Public Library’s Texana Collection, located on the sixth floor of the Central Library at 600 Soledad Street downtown (catalog link <https://mysapl.bibliocommons.com/v2/record/S172C164942>).

<sup>vi</sup> Aerial imagery from Google Earth dated 01/11/2019 shows the water level of the river approximately three feet below the low-water crossing. Note that the river level today varies less than it did historically, given upstream flood control measures and diversion for irrigation.

<sup>vii</sup> City of San Antonio, Unified Development Code Section 35-514, “Fences.”

<sup>viii</sup> [Aerial photographs, 1955-2016], Historic Aerials by NetOnline, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://historicaerials.com/viewer>; Google Earth, accessed September 29, 2021, <https://earth.google.com/web/@29.45292425,-98.48069581203.78666375a,1199.72232835d,35y,-0h,0t,0r>.

# Section 3: Design Development Recommendations

## 3.1. Guiding Principles

The tips listed below aim to provide a smooth process for design development within the River Road Historic District. Familiarizing yourself with these recommendations at the outset of project planning—prior to beginning design development—can enhance understanding of the many factors that underlie this Design Manual. Design development can be complicated, but there are many helpful resources that can simplify the process. Investing time in reviewing the tips below can significantly streamline the design development process in the long run.

The design development process in San Antonio is summarized in Figure 1.2.1 above in Section 1.

## 3.2. Recommendations

### 3.2.1. Learn about the benefits of historic preservation.

Across the globe, decades of studies have demonstrated proven benefits of preservation – including economic development, promotion of cultural understanding, community cohesion, and environmental sustainability. The resources below all provide background information about preservation’s benefits:

- Shanon Shea Miller [City of San Antonio Historic Preservation Officer], “Why Preserve?” in Clarion and HHM, *Citywide Historic District Guidelines*, Section 1, p. 1, [https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1\\_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/1_UsingtheHistoricDesignGuidelines.pdf).
- “Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Texas” prepared by the University of Texas and Rutgers University, 2015, from the Texas Historical Commission, <https://www.thc.texas.gov/news-events/economic-impact-historic-preservation-texas>.
- Power of Preservation Foundation, <https://powerofpreservation.org/>.
- City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation, “Preservation as Sustainability,” in *Sustainability Guide for Older Structures* [DRAFT], January 2020, from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide\\_Sustainability.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide_Sustainability.pdf).

### 3.2.2. Communicate early and frequently.

The River Road Neighborhood Association actively monitors and reviews building permit applications within the River Road Historic District. Talking with your neighbors about a planned project early can help ensure that they provide valuable support throughout the permitting process. Since the River Road Historic District was designated in 2010, all exterior changes have been required to apply for a Certificate of Appropriateness (as described in Section 1). We encourage all prospective applicants to take their ideas and desired project outcome to the River Road Historic Resources Committee for review to ensure that the District Specific Guidelines and Recommendations are being interpreted as intended. The Committee can help guide property owners through the City’s Certificate of Appropriateness approval process for historic buildings. Find contact information for the River Road Neighborhood Association at <https://www.riverroadna.org/>.

The City of San Antonio has jurisdiction over the review and approval of Certificate of Appropriateness applications and building permits. Both the City of San Antonio Development Services Office and the Office of Historic Preservation offer preliminary consultation. Scheduling consultation meetings early in design development can be especially helpful. Seeking consultation about the proposed site layout for an addition or new construction can be especially helpful. Consider first asking for a preliminary review of the site plan from the Development Services Office, then following up with a preliminary review from the Office of Historic Preservation. Seek consultation again around both the 30 percent design development phase and the 60 percent design development phase. Early and frequent communication will help minimize the risk of devoting time to the development of a design that runs counter to this Design Manual and/or other City regulations.

### **3.2.3. Find out about regulations that overlap with this Design Manual.**

This design manual is only one layer of the many regulations governing development within the River Road Historic District—such as the Unified Development Code (UDC), the River Road Neighborhood Plan, the San Antonio Strategic Historic Preservation Plan, the *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, and overlapping historic designations (like the Registered Texas Historic Landmark Designation for the Zambrano House). The River Improvement Overlay (RIO) District zoning overlay also has special site design standards – especially for properties located close to the historic acequia. The Office of Historic Preservation can help you identify requirements relevant to your property. Reviewing relevant documents prior to initiating a design project can help ensure compliance and streamline the review and permitting processes.

### **3.2.4. Understand the relationship between the River Road Historic District and the San Antonio River watershed.**

The location of the River Road Historic District adjacent to the only remaining natural section of the San Antonio River forges an important connection between the buildings and the watershed. Protecting the watershed and the river’s natural ecology is essential for protecting the district’s character-defining landscape elements (as described in Section 2). Understanding the concept of “Low Impact Development” can help guide design of new construction to minimize impacts on the river and its watershed. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides a number of resources that explain the principles of Low Impact Development at <https://www.epa.gov/nps/urban-runoff-low-impact-development>.

In addition, the City of San Antonio offers preliminary review of Storm Water Plans for new construction.<sup>i</sup> Seeking a Storm Water Plan review early during design development is highly recommended.

### **3.2.5. Make a landscape plan.**

Natural and manmade landscape features significantly contribute to the historic character of the River Road Historic District. It is important that all new alterations to the landscape thoughtfully consider their impacts on the historic character of the district. Landscapes also affect historic buildings by changing the movement of water and shifting underlying soils. Making a landscape plan and sharing it with the Historic Resources Committee of the River Road Neighborhood Association and City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation can help ensure the protection of the district’s significant landscapes and overall historic character.

## **Endnotes**

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<sup>i</sup> “Storm Water Plan Review,” City of San Antonio, accessed November 8, 2021, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/PublicWorks/Services/Storm-Water-Plan-Review>.



# Section 4: Exterior Alterations

## Contents: Exterior Alterations

4.1.	4.2.	4.3.	4.4.	4.5.	4.6.	4.7.	4.8.
Applying this Design Manual	Exterior Walls	Doors & Door Openings	Windows & Window Openings	Roofs & Roof Features	Porches	Landscape & Site Features	Energy Efficiency Features

## 4.1. Applying this Design Manual

### Guiding Principles

The *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines* provide the foundation for evaluating alterations in all San Antonio Historic Districts – including the River Road Historic District. These are provided in Section 2, available online at [www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/2\\_ExteriorMaintenanceandAlterations.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/2_ExteriorMaintenanceandAlterations.pdf). The citywide San Antonio *Historic Design Guidelines* set forth the following General Principles for Alterations, which also inform this Design Manual as well:

- Principle #1: Routine Maintenance is Essential for Preservation
- Principle #2: Preservation of Features in Place is Preferred over Replacement
- Principle #3: More Flexibility in Treatment and/or Replacement May be Considered in Locations Not Visible from the Public Right-of-Way<sup>i</sup>

In the River Road Historic District, Principle #3 is especially relevant in many locations, since houses are sited close to one another, limiting visibility of the side and rear façades of many buildings.

The citywide guidelines for Exterior Alterations also note opportunities for customization by individual historic districts like River Road. Customization must be consistent with the citywide guidelines, as well as the nationwide best practices established by the National Park Service and set forth in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*.

### Guiding Principles from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*

Each of the principles above is founded upon the *Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation*. To learn more, refer to the Preservation Resource Toolkit in *Appendix E*, which includes the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*. The *Secretary's Standards* establish nationwide best practices for historic preservation.

### Key Vocabulary: Deterioration beyond Repair

One core concept of the Secretary's Standards is that historic building materials should be preserved in place unless deteriorated beyond repair. The citywide guidelines present the term "deteriorated beyond repair" – a key term repeated throughout this design manual. An individual building component is considered "deteriorated beyond repair" if more than 50 percent of the component is decayed to the point where it cannot serve its structural purpose(s), as determined by the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). Examples of elements deteriorated beyond repair include, but are not limited to:

- An individual wood window muntin decayed so that it cannot hold a pane of glass as intended; decay is documented by probing the core with an awl and lifting up irregular pieces of wood.
- An individual wood weatherboard decayed to the point where it cannot hold paint to keep the building watertight; decay is documented by probing the core with an awl and lifting up irregular pieces of wood.
- An individual porch column decayed so that it can no longer support the porch roof; decay is documented by a sag in the porch roof even when the porch foundation is shown to be level.
- A metal decorative railing corroded so that it threatens to expand and crack the adjacent surface; corrosion is documented by a bubbling texture and/or probing the metal with a sharp object and digging out brittle strands.

# Applicability

## Guidelines versus Recommendations

### Key Vocabulary: Guidelines versus Recommendations

**Guideline** – Within this design manual, guidelines are considered to be legally enforceable approval criteria per Section 35-608(e) of the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code.<sup>ii</sup>

**Recommendation** – Within this design manual, recommendations are considered to be voluntary but encouraged to promote compatibility with the unique historic and natural character of the River Road Historic District.

In keeping with the guiding principles that emphasize the need to identify areas of flexibility, this design manual provides both *guidelines* and *recommendations*. Guidelines are regulatory—legally enforceable per reference in the UDC—while recommendations are advisory. Guidelines only apply to work required to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). Guidelines versus recommendations also are tiered depending on the visibility from the public right-of-way.

**Certificate of Appropriateness applications should comply with all applicable *guidelines* herein for approval by the Historic Design and Review Commission (HDRC).** Recommendations should not be considered essential for approval.

## Citywide versus District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

The selected citywide guidelines that are considered the highest priorities in the River Road Historic District are reproduced below. These guidelines should be interpreted as legally enforceable within the River Road Historic District. Alterations will be held accountable to meet these specific guidelines as part of the City’s permitting process. **Note that the citywide guidelines may be revised over time. For the most current version, refer to the Office of Historic Preservation’s website, [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic).**

### Additional District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

This design manual also presents some district-specific guidelines and recommendations that provide greater detail than the citywide guidelines. The district-specific guidelines and recommendations are presented in Section 4.2.2. Provisions flagged as “Guidelines” are intended to be mandatory per UDC reference in the River Road Historic District. Provisions flagged as “Recommendations” are advisory.

## Visibility from the Public Right-of-Way

Since the River Road Historic District’s call for various levels of flexibility in different situations, this manual breaks down each district-specific recommendation for exterior alterations to customize the recommendation for the following categories:

- Visible from the public right-of-way
- Not visible from the public right-of-way

The intent of this breakdown is to allow more flexibility for applications that are not visible from the public right-of-way and do not disrupt the overall visual character of the district. However, note that **some historic assets may have designations with overlapping regulations that do not accommodate flexibility for areas not visible from the public right-of-way** – like the Zambrano House, which is designated as a Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) and must comply with RTHL regulations in addition to the guidelines in this design manual.<sup>iii</sup>

### Key Vocabulary: “Visibility”

Within this design manual, the term “visible from the public-right-of-way” includes façades currently hidden by vegetation and other temporary structures. In most situations, a building feature should be considered visible if (a) it is on the front façade, (b) it is on a street-facing side façade on a corner lot, or (c) it is within the front 15’ of a side façade on an interior lot. The Office of Historic Preservation may provide assistance in interpreting whether a façade is visible in unique situations.

## Historic Age

This design manual **applies to all properties within the River Road Historic District**, regardless of age or contributing status. All requests shall be reviewed for impacts to historic resources or historic-age features. Generally, features that are of historic age are either original to the time of construction, were introduced within a timeframe that contributes to the historic significance of the property or district, and/or are character-defining features of the property or district.

### Glossary: Appendix B

For more definitions of key terms used throughout this design manual, refer to the Glossary in Appendix B.

## 4.2. Exterior Walls

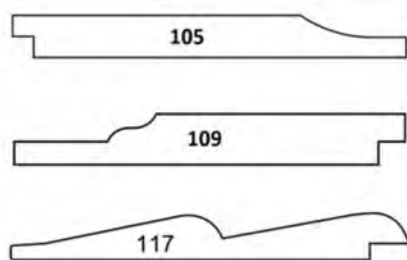
### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>iv</sup>
	<b>All Exterior Walls</b>
4.2.1.	"Avoid removing materials that are in good condition or that can be repaired in place." <sup>v</sup>
	<b>Wood</b>
4.2.2.	"Use in-kind materials when possible or materials similar in size, scale, and character when exterior woodwork is deteriorated beyond repair. Ensure replacement siding is installed to match the original pattern, including exposures" (fig. 4.2.1)." <sup>vi</sup>
	<b>Masonry and Stucco</b>
4.2.3.	"Repair masonry or stucco by patching or replacing it with in-kind materials whenever possible. Utilize similar materials that are compatible with the original in terms of composition, texture, application technique, color, and detail, when in-kind replacement is not possible. EIFS [an External Insulation and Finish System] is not an appropriate patching or replacement material for stucco." <sup>vii</sup>
4.2.4.	"The removal of old or deteriorated mortar should be done carefully by a professional to ensure that masonry units are not damaged in the process." <sup>viii</sup>
4.2.5.	"Use mortar that matches the original in color, profile, and composition when repointing. Incompatible mortar can exceed the strength of historic masonry and results in deterioration. Ensure that the new joint matches the profile of the old joint when viewed in section. It is recommended that a test panel is prepared to ensure the mortar is the right strength and color." <sup>ix</sup>
4.2.6.	"Take care when removing paint from masonry as the paint may be providing a protectant layer or hiding modifications to the building. Use the gentlest means possible, such as alkaline poultice cleaners and strippers, to remove paint from masonry." <sup>x</sup>
	<b>Garage [and Outbuilding] Walls</b>
4.2.7.	"Repair [historic-age] outbuildings and their distinctive features in-kind. When new materials are needed, they should match existing materials in color, durability, and texture." <sup>xi</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.2.8.	When historic exterior walls are deteriorated beyond repair, the smallest area possible should be replaced. For example, if siding is deteriorated, one board should be replaced rather than an entire wall of siding.	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.9.	Only replace an entire wall of siding/trim on a historic building if more than 50 percent of the original siding is deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement siding/trim should match the original in profile, dimension, and texture. <sup>xii</sup>	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.10.	When replacing deteriorated patches of wall materials or trim, match the original element in profile, dimension, and texture (fig. 4.2.1).	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.11.	Patches that are visible or partially visible from the public right-of-way generally should use the original material if available (e.g., wood to replace wood). Consider matching the original wood hardness and/or species, evaluating the benefits for longevity and durability. This guideline applies to side façades that are partially visible from the public right-of-way.	Guideline	N/A

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.2.12.	If the original material is no longer available or no longer meets building codes (such as historic asbestos shingle siding), substitute materials are appropriate, provided that they mimic the dimension and texture of the original as closely as possible (figs. 4.2.2).	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.13.	Substitute materials may be appropriate in limited areas subject to continuous water infiltration or vegetative growth, or where prior replacement with the original material has proven ineffective – even if visible from the public right-of-way. For example, foundation skirting that is deteriorated beyond repair may be replaced with stucco or cement board, provided that the replacement matches the original profile, dimension, texture, and character-defining decorative features. <sup>xiii</sup>	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.14.	If the entire wall plane is hidden from view from the public right-of-way <i>and</i> more than 50 percent of the original siding is deteriorated beyond repair, modern substitute materials (like fiber-cement siding) may be appropriate, provided that they match the original materials in profile, dimension, and texture. Any salvageable material from the non-visible façade should be prioritized for placement on visible façades. This excludes side-facing façades that are partially visible from the public right-of-way. <sup>xiv</sup>	N/A	Guideline
4.2.15.	When existing wall materials are non-historic, siding and trim may be replaced with alternative materials not found on the building historically, provided that the materials are generally compatible with other siding materials found within the district historically.	Guideline	Guideline
4.2.16.	On an auxiliary building where more than 50 percent of the original siding is deteriorated beyond repair, siding and trim may be replaced with substitute materials, provided that they match the profile, dimension, and texture of the original.	Guideline	N/A
4.2.17.	Keep the original texture of exterior walls when painting, replacing stucco, or otherwise refinishing historic wall materials (fig. 4.2.3).	Guideline	Recommendation



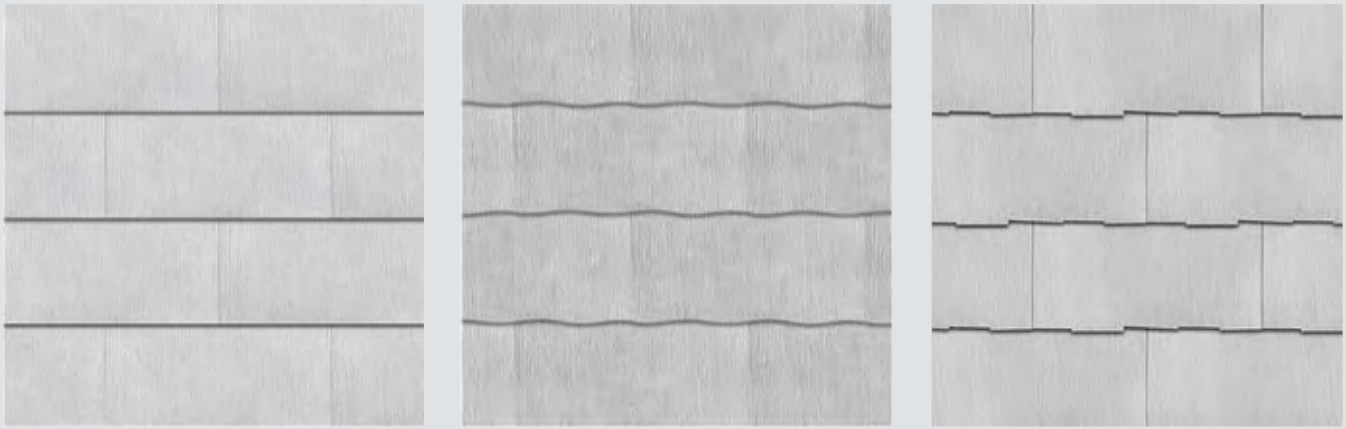
105 Drop Siding (Dutch/Cove Lap)

109 Drop Siding

117 Drop Siding (Waterfall/Double Teardrop)

**Figure 4.2.1.** Examples of common siding profiles to be matched as closely as possible when replacing wood siding that is deteriorated beyond repair. Source: Office of Historic Preservation “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020].





**Figures 4.2.2.** Examples of available options for textures of cementitious siding—like these—may not match the original profile and dimension of historic siding exactly, but the closest match available should be selected. Source: “Purity Fiber-Cement Siding,” GAF, accessed January 24, 2021, [www.gaf.com/en-us/roofing-products/residential-roofing-products/fiber-cement-siding/siding-shingles/weatherside-purity-fiber-cement-siding](http://www.gaf.com/en-us/roofing-products/residential-roofing-products/fiber-cement-siding/siding-shingles/weatherside-purity-fiber-cement-siding).



**Figure 4.2.3.** Example of a house preserving the original stucco exterior and terra-cotta roof tiles. Keeping the original texture of the stucco exterior is important to preserve this architectural style, as is preservation of the character-defining historic roof tiles. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## 4.3. Doors and Door Openings

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>xv</sup>
4.3.1.	“Preserve existing window and door openings. Avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes or air conditioning units. Avoid filling in historic door or window openings. Avoid creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way.” <sup>xvi</sup>
4.3.2.	“Preserve historic doors including hardware, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures” [fig. 4.3.1]. <sup>xvii</sup>
4.3.3.	“Replace doors, hardware, fanlight, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures in-kind when possible and when deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, ensure features match the size, material, and profile of the historic element.” <sup>xviii</sup>
4.3.4.	“Ensure that new entrances, when necessary to comply with other regulations [such as the Americans with Disabilities Act], are compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances.” <sup>xix</sup>
4.3.5.	“Use clear glass when replacement glass is necessary. Do not use tinted glass, reflective glass, opaque glass, and other non-traditional glass types unless it was used historically. When established by the architectural style of the building, patterned, leaded, or colored glass can be used.” <sup>xx</sup>

## District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.3.6.	Preserve historic door framing and door surrounds, patching the smallest area possible if deteriorated beyond repair.	Guideline	Recommendation
4.3.7.	When a historic door previously has been replaced with an incompatible non-historic door, consider replacing it with a period-appropriate door (preferably salvaged) in keeping with the style of the house (as discussed in Section 2). <sup>xxi</sup> (See fig. 4.3.2.)	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.3.8.	Preserve historic screen doors and hardware unless deteriorated beyond repair (fig. 4.3.2).	Guideline	Recommendation
4.3.9.	Consider installing period-appropriate screen doors—even if not present historically—provided that they are installed in a way that does not damage adjacent historic materials (fig. 4.3.4).	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.3.10.	For non-historic doors or doors not visible from the public right-of-way, replacement may be appropriate provided that it generally matches the style of the house (as described in Section 2).	N/A	Recommendation
4.3.11.	Non-traditional door materials (such as metal and composite materials) are appropriate for doors that are not visible from the public right-of-way. Vinyl is not appropriate in most situations but may be approved on a case-by-case basis if an appropriate replacement door is not readily available in another material.	N/A	Recommendation
4.3.12.	New door openings are appropriate for areas not visible from the public right-of-way, provided that they do not damage historic features that are visible from the public right-of-way.	N/A	Recommendation



**Figure 4.3.1.** Example of a preserved historic door and door surround that are character-defining features of this house. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

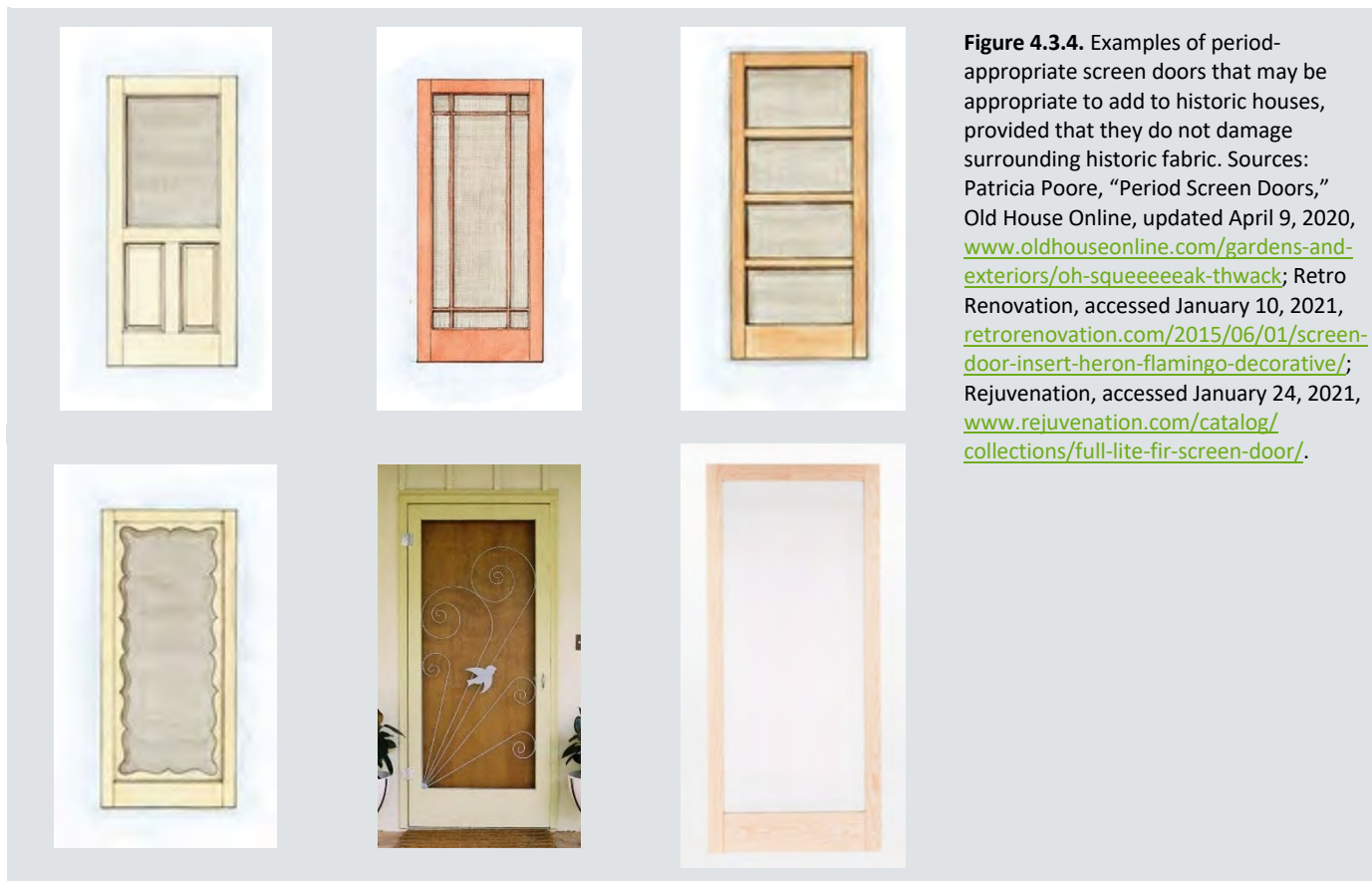




**Figure 4.3.2.** Example of a door that has been previously replaced with an inappropriate non-historic door that does not fit the style and period of the house. Replacement of this door with a more period-appropriate door is recommended. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 4.3.3.** Example of a historic screen door with decorative metal, as well as decorative wrought iron porch posts and railings. Historic metal elements should be preserved and treated gently. Source: Photo by HHM, 2018.



**Figure 4.3.4.** Examples of period-appropriate screen doors that may be appropriate to add to historic houses, provided that they do not damage surrounding historic fabric. Sources: Patricia Poore, "Period Screen Doors," Old House Online, updated April 9, 2020, [www.oldhouseonline.com/gardens-and-exterior/oh-squeeeeeeak-thwack](http://www.oldhouseonline.com/gardens-and-exterior/oh-squeeeeeeak-thwack); Retro Renovation, accessed January 10, 2021, [retrorenovation.com/2015/06/01/screen-door-insert-heron-flamingo-decorative/](http://retrorenovation.com/2015/06/01/screen-door-insert-heron-flamingo-decorative/); Rejuvenation, accessed January 24, 2021, [www.rejuvenation.com/catalog/collections/full-lite-fir-screen-door/](http://www.rejuvenation.com/catalog/collections/full-lite-fir-screen-door/).

## 4.4. Windows and Window Openings

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>xxii</sup>
4.4.1.	"Preserve existing window and door openings. Avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes or air conditioning units. Avoid filling in historic door or window openings. Avoid creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way" [fig. 4.4.1]. <sup>xxiii</sup>
4.4.2.	"Preserve historic windows. When glass is broken, the color and clarity of replacement glass should match the original historic glass." <sup>xxiv</sup>
4.4.3.	"Preserve historic window screens and shutters." <sup>xxv</sup>
4.4.4.	"Avoid installing interior floors or suspended ceilings that block the glazed area of historic windows." <sup>xxvi</sup>
4.4.5.	"Install new windows to match the historic or existing windows in terms of size, type, configuration, material, form, appearance, and detail when original windows are deteriorated beyond repair [or missing]." <sup>xxvii</sup>
4.4.6.	"Use the exterior muntin pattern, profile, and size appropriate for the historic building when replacement windows are necessary. Do not use internal muntins sandwiched between layers of glass." <sup>xxviii</sup>
4.4.7.	"Use clear glass when replacement glass is necessary. Do not use tinted glass, reflective glass, opaque glass, and other non-traditional glass types unless it was used historically. When established by the architectural style of the building, patterned, leaded, or colored glass can be used." <sup>xxix</sup>
4.4.8.	"Install security bars only on the interior of windows and doors." <sup>xxx</sup>
4.4.9.	"Utilize wood [window screens with] frames matching in profile, size, and design of those historically found when the existing screens are deteriorated beyond repair. Ensure that the tint of replacement screens closely matches the original screens or those used historically." <sup>xxxi</sup>
4.4.10.	"Incorporate shutters only where they existed historically and where appropriate to the architectural style of the house. Shutters should match the height and width of the opening and be mounted to be operational or appear to be operational. Do not mount shutters directly onto any historic wall material." <sup>xxxii</sup>



## District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.4.11.	If historic documentation (like photos or drawings) shows windows, screens, or shutters that are missing today, consider replicating and restoring them.	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.4.12.	Replace windows that are non-original and non-compatible with new or salvaged windows that are compatible with the architectural style of the building and period-appropriate in profile, dimension, and finish; aluminum replacement windows are acceptable provided that they are period-appropriate in profile, dimensions, and finish (fig. 4.4.2). <sup>xxxiii</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.4.13.	New window screens may be installed where they were not present historically, provided that they do not damage or visually obscure adjacent historic features. New window screens should be non-reflective and use a slim, minimal profile to avoid drawing attention from historic features (fig. 4.4.3).	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.4.14.	For windows on non-historic buildings, replacement windows using different materials (such as metal or composite materials) may be appropriate – provided that the profile and dimensions of the replacement windows are generally in keeping with windows historically found in the district. Vinyl windows are not appropriate in most situations, but they may be approved on a case-by-case basis if an appropriate replacement window is not readily available in another material, and other recommended specifications are met.	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.4.15.	For windows that are deteriorated beyond repair on façades that are not visible from the public right-of-way, replacement windows using different materials (such as metal or composite materials) may be appropriate – provided that the profile and dimensions of the replacement windows are generally in keeping with windows historically found in the district. Vinyl windows are not appropriate in most situations, but they may be approved on a case-by-case basis if an appropriate replacement window is not readily available in another material, and other recommended specifications are met.	N/A	Recommendation
4.4.16.	On façades not visible from the public right-of-way, new openings or enlarged openings are appropriate provided that they do not impact weight-bearing members and other historic features.	N/A	Recommendation
4.4.17.	For buildings not of historic age, new openings and enlarged openings are appropriate even if visible from the public right-of-way, provided that the pattern and size is generally in keeping with the fenestration patterns appropriate for the style of the house and/or found in the district.	Recommendation	Recommendation



**Figure 4.4.1.** Example of an inappropriate alteration that changed the size and shape of an original window opening. Source: Photo by HHM, 2019.



**Figure 4.4.2.** Example of windows on the primary façade of a historic building that are both non-original and non-compatible. Although these windows likely are more than 25 years old, they do not need to be preserved since they are non-compatible. If the owner chooses to replace these windows, the new windows that are visible from the public right-of-way must be similar to those found on other buildings from the same period in the district. Aluminum windows would be allowable provided all other guidelines for windows can be met (dimension, profile, operation, etc.) Proactive replacement of the windows is encouraged but not required. Source: Photo by HHM, 2019.





**Figure 4.4.3.** Example of compatible window screens that use a minimal profile and non-reflective screening so that they do not damage or obscure historic window features. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.

## 4.5. Roofs and Roof Features

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>xxxiv</sup>
4.5.1.	"Preserve the original shape, line, pitch, and overhang of historic roofs when replacement is necessary." <sup>xxxv</sup>
4.5.2.	"Preserve and repair distinctive roof features such as cornices, parapets, dormers, open eaves with exposed rafters and decorative or plain rafter tails, flared eaves or decorative purlins, and brackets with shaped ends." <sup>xxxvi</sup>
4.5.3.	"Replace roofing materials in-kind whenever possible when the roof must be replaced. Retain and re-use historic materials when large-scale replacement of roof materials other than asphalt shingles is recommended (e.g., slate or clay tiles)" [fig. 4.4.3 above]. <sup>xxxvii</sup>
4.5.4.	"Salvaged materials should be re-used on roof forms that are most visible from the public right-of-way. Match new roofing materials to the original materials in terms of their scale, color, texture, profile, and style, or select materials consistent with the building style, when in-kind replacement is not possible [especially for slate or clay tile]" [fig. 4.5.1]. <sup>xxxviii</sup>
4.5.5.	"Allow use of contemporary roofing materials on flat or gently sloping roofs not visible from the public right-of-way." <sup>xxxix</sup>
4.5.6.	"[Keep] existing historic roof vents. When deteriorated beyond repair, replace roof vents in-kind or with one similar in design and material to those historically used when in-kind replacement is not possible."

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.5.7.	If existing roof materials are non-original and do not retain any historic character-defining features, consider substitute materials appropriate when replacing the roof provided that they are compatible with the architectural style of the house (fig. 4.5.2).	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.5.8.	If replacing an original metal roof or installing a metal roof on a house built before ca. 1945, follow the "Checklist for Metal Roofs" in the citywide guidelines; consider ridge caps with vents and/or end caps as appropriate if replacing a non-original roof on a house built in ca. 1945 or after (fig. 4.5.2).	Guideline	Guideline



#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.5.9.	Alterations to roof forms may be considered appropriate provided that they only impact roof slopes entirely hidden from the public right-of-way. For example, a dormer window may be added on a rear-facing roof slope. This guideline excludes side-facing roof slopes that are partially visible from the public right-of-way. <sup>xi</sup>	Guideline	Guideline
4.5.10.	Non-historic , roof forms may be altered, but the new roof form should reflect the style of the building (as described in Section 2) and/or roof forms found in the district historically. For example, a non-historic flat roof that is routinely leaks may be replaced with a gabled roof. Using a single-sloped roof forms or a complex roof form is not appropriate if visible from the public right-of-way.	Guideline	Recommendation



**Figure 4.5.1.** Example of a new roofing material that makes an effort to be consistent with the building's style. This roof replaced a conventional rectangular-composite shingle roof (visible in Google Street View photos from 2007), so no historic materials were removed or damaged for the installation of this roof. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 4.5.2.** Example of a metal roof on a historic bungalow. Metal roofing is only appropriate throughout the district, provided that its installation does not remove or damage character-defining historic features. For buildings dating before 1945—like this one—the ridge cap and seams for the metal roof are recommended to comply with the “Checklist for Metal Roofs” in the citywide guidelines. Source: Photo by OHP, 2022.

## 4.6. Porches

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>xli</sup>
4.6.1.	“Preserve porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres.” <sup>xlii</sup>
4.6.2.	“Preserve existing balusters. When replacement is necessary, replace in-kind when possible or with balusters that match the originals in terms of materials, spacing, profile, dimension, finish, and height of the railing” [fig. 4.3.2 above]. <sup>xliii</sup>
4.6.3.	“Preserve original wood or concrete porch floors [unless they are deteriorated beyond repair]. Do not cover original porch floors of wood or concrete with carpet, tile, or other materials unless they were used historically.” <sup>xliv</sup>
4.6.4.	“Refrain from enclosing front porches. Approved screen panels should be simple in design as to not change the character of the structure or the historic fabric” [fig. 4.6.1]. <sup>xlv</sup>
4.6.5.	“Replace in-kind porches, balconies, porte-cocheres, and related elements, such as ceilings, floors, and columns, when such features are deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, the design should be compatible in scale, massing, and detail while materials should match in color, texture, dimensions, and finish.” <sup>xlvi</sup>
4.6.6.	“Design replacement elements, such as stairs, to be simple so as to not distract from the historic character of the building. Do not add new elements and details that create a false historic appearance” [fig. 4.6.2]. <sup>xlvii</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.6.7.	Screening of historic porches are appropriate, provided that attachments do not damage or remove adjacent historic building fabric. Glass or solid materials are not appropriate. Screening should be is non-reflective and not obscure any character-defining features (fig. 4.6.1). <sup>xlviii</sup>	Guideline	Recommendation
4.6.8.	Since porches are important features that help define the overall character of the River Road Historic District, if a house lacks a porch, adding a new porch or portico may be allowed when appropriate, provided that the new porch is compatibly designed, historic building fabric is not damaged or visually obscured, and the alteration is reversible.	Recommendation	Recommendation

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.6.9.	Consider removing any non-original porch features that do not match the period or style of the house (fig. 4.6.2).	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.6.10.	Alterations of porches that are not visible from the public right-of-way may be appropriate provided that they do not remove or damage historic fabric.	N/A	Recommendation
4.6.11.	Alterations of porches on non-historic buildings may be appropriate even if visible from the public right-of-way, provided that they are generally in keeping with the character of porches present in the neighborhood historically. However, new porches on non-historic houses should appear new and avoid creating a false historic appearance.	N/A	N/A
4.6.12.	If porch flooring or decking is deteriorated beyond repair, replace the smallest area possible matching the original in profile and dimension. If wholesale replacement is required, use of a composite material is acceptable, provided that it matches the dimension of the original, does not use integrated coloring or a faux wood grain, and boards are installed perpendicular to the façade with a slope away from the building to prevent water infiltration at the façade. <sup>xlix</sup>	Guideline	Recommendation



**Figure 4.6.1.** An example of a simple, transparent screened enclosure on a historic front porch that allows visibility of the character-defining features of the historic Craftsman house. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.





**Figure 4.6.2.** Example of a porch with a non-original Victorian-inspired “gingerbread” frieze and turned posts and balusters that do not match the period or original style of the house. These elements create a false historic appearance. Removal of the brackets is recommended but not required. Source: Photo by HHM, 2020.

## 4.7. Landscape and Site Features – Natural and Manmade

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>1</sup>
	<b>Topographic Features</b>
4.7.1.	“Avoid significantly altering the topography of a property (i.e., extensive grading). Do not alter character-defining features such as berms or sloped front lawns that help define the character of the public right-of-way. ... If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.” <sup>li</sup>
	<b>Historic Fences and Walls</b>
4.7.2.	“Retain historic fences and walls.” <sup>lii</sup>
4.7.3.	“Replace only deteriorated sections [of historic walls and fences] that are beyond repair. Match replacement materials (including mortar) to the color, texture, size, profile, and finish of the original.” <sup>liii</sup>
4.7.4.	“Do not paint historic masonry walls or cover them with stone facing or stucco or other cementitious coatings.” <sup>liv</sup>
	<b>Trees</b>
4.7.5.	“Preserve and protect from damage existing mature trees and heritage trees. See UDC Section 35-523 (Tree Preservation) for specific requirements.” <sup>lv</sup>
	<b>Parkways and Planted Medians</b>
4.7.6.	“Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.” <sup>lvi</sup>
	<b>Street Elements</b>
4.7.7.	“Preserve historic street lights, street markers, roundabouts, and other unique site elements found within the public right-of-way as street improvements and other public works projects are completed over time.” <sup>lvii</sup>
4.7.8.	“Retain historic paving materials, such as brick pavers or colored paving, within the public right-of-way and repair in place with like materials.” <sup>lviii</sup>
	<b>Impervious Cover</b>
4.7.9.	“Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.” <sup>lix</sup>
4.7.10.	“Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material [when replacing deteriorated sidewalks and walkways].” <sup>lx</sup>
4.7.11.	“Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.” <sup>lxi</sup>
4.7.12.	“Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives [fig. 4.7.1]. Incorporate a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.” <sup>lxii</sup>
	<b>Curbing</b>
4.7.13.	“Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.” <sup>lxiii</sup>
4.7.14.	“Replace curbing in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair. Where in-kind replacement is not be feasible, use a comparable substitute that duplicates the color, texture, durability, and profile of the original.” <sup>lxiv</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.7.15.	Preserve all structures and landscape features associated with the historic acequia system, including—but not limited to—ditches, swales, retaining walls, desagues, culverts, and topography.	Guideline	Guideline
4.7.16.	Consider preserving the historic open continuity of front yards by keeping them unfenced. If new fences are added, they should use historically appropriate materials as found in the district and comply with the UDC regarding height.	Guideline	N/A
4.7.17.	Chain-link fences may be kept if present historically, but chain-link should not be considered an appropriate material for new fences. (See fig. 2.2.11 above.)	Guideline	Recommendation
4.7.18.	If a non-historic front-yard fence is present, consider removing it to restore the historic open continuity of front yards.	Recommendation	N/A
4.7.19.	Do not cut or trim existing trees in a way that reduces shade coverage to less than 25 percent per lot.	Recommendation	Recommendation

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.7.20.	Consider planting trees over time to increase the shade coverage on each lot to at least 25 percent, selecting from the character-defining tree types listed in Section 2.	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.7.21.	Impervious cover should not comprise more than 50 percent of a front yard. <sup>lxv</sup>	Guideline	N/A
4.7.22.	For lawns, low-growing native plantings should be considered an appropriate substitute for grass (fig. 4.7.2). Consider selecting plantings similar to those found within the neighborhood historically, as listed in Section 2. <sup>lxvi</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.7.23.	If the historic lawn area was replaced with hardscaping previously, it is not required to restore the lawn, but consider replacing any hardscaping with pervious materials (fig. 4.7.3).	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.7.24.	Retain vegetative material and/or pervious hardscaping in planting strips between the sidewalk and curb (fig. 4.7.4).	Guideline	N/A
4.7.25.	Alterations to landscape features not visible from the public right-of-way are appropriate, provided that they do not have the potential to adversely impact historic-age buildings or historic-age landscape features.	N/A	Recommendation
4.7.26.	When replacing existing plant materials, consider selecting from the native plantings listed as character-defining landscape features in Section 2.	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.7.27.	Addition of rain catchment systems is appropriate even if visible from the public right-of-way – provided that they do not visually obstruct character-defining features on the building's front façade. <sup>lxvii</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.7.28.	For non-historic properties and areas not visible from the public right-of-way, additions of new hardscapes are appropriate provided that UDC requirements regarding impervious cover are met. Consider use of pervious hardscapes to minimize impervious cover (fig. 4.7.5).	N/A	Appropriate
4.7.29.	New decks and patios are appropriate provided that they are not visible from the public right-of-way.	N/A	Recommendation
4.7.30.	Maintain or replace in-kind the historic-age bollards, such as the wood bollards along the west side of River Road.	Guideline	Recommendation
4.7.31.	Do not add curbs in areas where they were not present historically. (See fig. 2.2.18 above.)	Guideline	Recommendation
4.7.32.	Addition of non-historic bollards is appropriate for safety in areas without curbs, provided that the design of the bollards is minimal and in keeping with the historic character of the district.	Recommendation	Recommendation



**Figure 4.7.1.** Example of an original ribbon driveway in the River Road Historic District. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 4.7.2.** Note how the new plant materials in this yard maintain a low profile and do not visually obstruct the historic house. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.





**Figure 4.7.3.** Example of a yard with 50 percent of the historic lawn area replaced with hardscaping, using a combination of impermeable materials (flagstone) and permeable materials (gravel). Replacement of the flagstone with either landscaping or a permeable material like gravel or mulch is recommended but not required. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 4.7.4.** This example of a planting strip between the sidewalk and the street uses an appropriate combination of plant materials and pervious hardscape (gravel). Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



**Figure 4.7.5.** Example of a lawn previously replaced with pervious hardscape (gravel and river rocks). Source: Photo by HHM, 2011.



## 4.8. Energy Efficiency Features

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>lxviii</sup>
4.8.1.	"Preserve elements of historic buildings that are energy efficient including awnings, porches, recessed entryways, overhangs, operable windows, and shutters." <sup>lxix</sup>
4.8.2.	"Restore original windows to working order. Install compatible and energy-efficient replacement windows when existing windows are deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement windows must match the appearance, materials, size, design, proportion, and profile of the original historic windows." <sup>lxx</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
4.8.3.	Installation of solar panels is encouraged in all locations. When feasible, consider installing solar panels so that they do not physically damage any historic materials (fig. 4.8.1). <sup>lxxi</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation
4.8.4.	White roofs are appropriate provided that they do not entail removal of historic character-defining roof features (like clay tiles or slate shingles). <sup>lxxii</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation



**Figure 4.8.1.** Example of a solar panel on a roof of a detached garage. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.



## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 1, p. 14.

<sup>ii</sup> *San Antonio, Texas – Unified Development Code*, Sec. 35-451, from Municode, accessed February 15, 2022, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR\\_DIV5HIDERE\\_S35-451CEAP](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR_DIV5HIDERE_S35-451CEAP). This code section states that, “Applications proposing work or changes to the exterior...shall require review for appropriateness with the provisions of this article, and any adopted design guidelines.”

<sup>iii</sup> “Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks,” Texas Historical Commission, accessed February 18, 2022, [www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks](http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks).

<sup>iv</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections. Note that the section headings for the citywide guidelines do not precisely match this design manual, so in some instances, citywide guidelines have been reorganized. The numbering for guidelines also reflects the organization of this design manual; citywide guidelines are not numbered. However, the language from the citywide guidelines is quoted *verbatim*, with necessary revisions/additions noted using “[bracketed text].”

<sup>v</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 4, Guideline 1.B.i.

<sup>vi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 4, Guideline 1.B.ii. Note that this recommendation is consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s proposed new section for the Citywide Design Guidelines, entitled “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020], from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide%20Replacement%20Materials.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide%20Replacement%20Materials.pdf).

<sup>vii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 6, Guideline 2.B.i.

<sup>viii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 6, Guideline 2.B.ii.

<sup>ix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 6, Guideline 2.B.ii.

<sup>x</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 6, Guideline 2.B.iii.

<sup>xi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 24, Guideline 9.A.ii.

<sup>xii</sup> Consistent with the proposed Office of Historic Preservation “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>xiii</sup> Consistent with the proposed Office of Historic Preservation “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>xiv</sup> This provision is consistent with the Principle #3 of the *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, which states that, “Building features not visible from the public right-of-way are less likely to detract from the character of the structure or district. More flexibility in the treatment and/or replacement of features in these locations may be considered if the historic integrity of the structure has already been lost or compromised and/or other unique circumstances exist that warrant consideration of a more flexible approach” (Section 1, p. 14).

<sup>xv</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>xvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.A.i.

<sup>xvii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.A.ii.

<sup>xviii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.B.i.

<sup>xix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.B.ii.

<sup>xx</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 1, Guideline 6.B.vi.

<sup>xxi</sup> Consistent with the proposed Office of Historic Preservation “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>xxii</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.A.i.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.A.iii. Note that this recommendation is consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s proposed new section for the Citywide Design Guidelines, entitled “Windows: Repair, Replacement, & New Construction” [Draft March 2020], from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide%20Update.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide%20Update.pdf).

<sup>xxv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.A.iv.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.B.iii.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.B.iv. Additional detail

regarding selecting appropriate replacement windows is provided within the Office of Historic Preservation’s “Windows: Repair, Replacement, & New Construction” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>xxviii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 16, Guideline 6.B.v.

<sup>xxix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 17, Guideline 6.B.vi.

<sup>xxx</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 17, Guideline 6.B.viii.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 17, Guideline 6.B.ix.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 17, Guideline 6.B.x.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Note that this provision does not refer to the 25-year cutoff for historic age; windows that are more than 25 years old may be replaced under this provision if they are non-original and non-compatible.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.ii.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.iii.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.iv.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.iv.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.v.

<sup>xl</sup> This provision is consistent with Chapter 3 Subsection 1.b.3, as well as the Principle #3, of the *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, which states that, “Building features not visible from the public right-of-way are less likely to detract from the character of the structure or district. More flexibility in the treatment and/or replacement of features in these locations may be considered if the historic integrity of the structure has already been lost or compromised and/or other unique circumstances exist that warrant consideration of a more flexible approach” (Section 1, p. 14).

<sup>xli</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*.

<sup>xlii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.A.i.

<sup>xliii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.A.ii.

<sup>xliv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.A.iii.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.B.i.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.B.iii.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.B.iv.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Note that this is consistent with the *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 20, Guideline 7.B.i (reproduced above as guideline 3.7.4), which allows approval of screened panels provided that they are “simple in design as to not change the character of the structure or the historic fabric.”

<sup>xlvi</sup> Consistent with the proposed Office of Historic Preservation “Replacement & Substitute Materials for Historic Structures” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>i</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*.

<sup>ii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 2, Guideline 1.A.i.

<sup>iii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 4, Guideline 2.A.i.

<sup>iii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 4, Guideline 2.A.ii.

<sup>iv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 4, Guideline 2.A.iii.

<sup>iv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 9, Guideline 3.D.i.

<sup>vi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 12, Guideline 4.B.ii.

<sup>vii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 12, Guideline 4.C.i.

<sup>viii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 12, Guideline 4.C.ii.

<sup>lix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.A.i.

<sup>ix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.A.ii.

<sup>xi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.A.iii.

<sup>xii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.B.i.

<sup>xiii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.C.i.

<sup>xiv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 5, p. 14, Guideline 5.C.ii.

<sup>xv</sup> Consistent with UDC Section 3-515(d)(1), from MuniCode, accessed February 18, 2022, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVDEST\\_DIV4LOLAHEDEINST\\_S35-515LOLARE](http://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVDEST_DIV4LOLAHEDEINST_S35-515LOLARE). Also consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s proposed new section for the Citywide Design Guidelines, entitled “Xeriscaping & Responsible Landscaping,” [Draft March 2020], from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide\\_Xeriscaping.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide_Xeriscaping.pdf).

<sup>xvi</sup> Consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s “Xeriscaping & Responsible Landscaping,” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>lxvii</sup> Consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s “Xeriscaping & Responsible Landscaping,” [Draft March 2020].

<sup>lxviii</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*.

<sup>lxix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 30, Guideline 12.A.i.

<sup>lxx</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 2, p. 30, Guideline 12.A.iii.

<sup>lxxi</sup> Consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s proposed new section for the Citywide Design Guidelines, entitled “Sustainability Guide for Older Structures” [Draft January 2020], from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide Sustainability.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/CurrentProjects/UDC%20Docs/Draft%20Policy%20Guide%20Sustainability.pdf).

<sup>lxxii</sup> Consistent with the Office of Historic Preservation’s “Sustainability Guide for Older Structures” [Draft January 2020].



# Section 5: Additions

## Contents: Additions

5.1.	5.2.	5.3.	5.4.	5.5.	5.6.	5.7.
Applying this Design Manual	Setbacks	Massing and Proportion	Height	Materials and Construction Methods	Style	Landscape Impacts

## Understanding Key Vocabulary

The guidelines and recommendations below use architectural terms that may not be familiar to many property owners. For definitions of key terms used throughout this design manual, refer to the Glossary in *Appendix B*.

## 5.1. Applying this Design Manual

### Guiding Principles

The citywide San Antonio *Historic Design Guidelines* set forth the following General Principles for Additions, which inform this Design Manual as well:

- Principle #1: Ensure that Historic Buildings Remain the Central Focus of the District
- Principle #2: False Historicism/Conjectural History is Discouraged
- Principle #3: Contemporary Interpretations of Traditional Designs and Details May be Considered
- Principle #4: More Flexibility in Interpretations of Traditional Designs and Details May be Considered in Locations Not Visible from the Public Right-of-Way<sup>i</sup>

In the River Road Historic District, Principle #4 is especially relevant in many locations since houses are sited close to one another, limiting visibility of the side and rear façades of many buildings.

### Guiding Principles from the Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation

Each of the principles above is founded upon the *Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation*. To learn more, refer to the Preservation Resource Toolkit in *Appendix E*, which includes the *Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation*. The *Secretary's Standards* establish nationwide best practices for historic preservation.

## Applicability

### Guidelines versus Recommendations

#### Key Vocabulary: Guidelines versus Recommendations

**Guideline** – Within this design manual, guidelines are considered to be legally enforceable provisions per Section 35-451(a) of the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code.<sup>ii</sup>

**Recommendation** - Within this design manual, recommendations are considered to be additional helpful hints to promote compatibility with the unique historic and natural character of the River Road Historic District.

### Citywide versus District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

When considering designing an addition in the River Road Historic District, begin by reading the San Antonio *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, which provide the foundation for evaluating additions in all San Antonio Historic Districts. Citywide guidelines regarding additions are provided in Section 3, available online at [www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/3\\_Additions.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/3_Additions.pdf).

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

The selected citywide guidelines that are considered the highest priorities in the River Road Historic District are reproduced below. These guidelines should be interpreted as legally enforceable within the River Road Historic District. New additions will

be held accountable for meeting these specific guidelines as part of the City’s permitting process.

**Note that the citywide guidelines may be revised over time. For the most current version, refer to the Office of Historic Preservation’s website, [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic).**

### Additional District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

This design manual also presents some guidelines and recommendations specific to the River Road Historic District, which provide greater detail than the citywide guidelines. The district-specific guidelines and recommendations are presented in Section 4.2.2. Provisions flagged as “Guidelines” are intended to be mandatory per UDC reference in the River Road Historic District. Provisions flagged as “Recommendations” are advisory.

### Visibility from the Public Right-of-Way

This manual breaks down each district-specific guideline or recommendation into the following categories:

- Visible from the public right-of-way
- Not visible from the public right-of-way

The intent of this breakdown is to allow more flexibility for applications that are not visible from the public right-of-way, do not disrupt the overall visual character of the district, and do not conflict with citywide guidelines or principles. However, note that **some historic assets may have designations with overlapping regulations that do not accommodate flexibility for areas not visible from the public right-of-way** – like the Zambrano House, which is designated as a Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) and must comply with RTHL regulations in addition to the guidelines in this design manual.<sup>iii</sup>

#### Key Vocabulary: “Visibility”

Within this design manual, the term “visible from the public-right-of-way” includes façades currently hidden by vegetation and other temporary structures. In most situations, a building feature should be considered visible if (a) it is on the front façade, (b) it is on a street-facing side façade on a corner lot, or (c) it is within the front 15’ of a side façade on an interior lot. The Office of Historic Preservation may provide assistance in interpreting whether a façade is visible in unique situations.

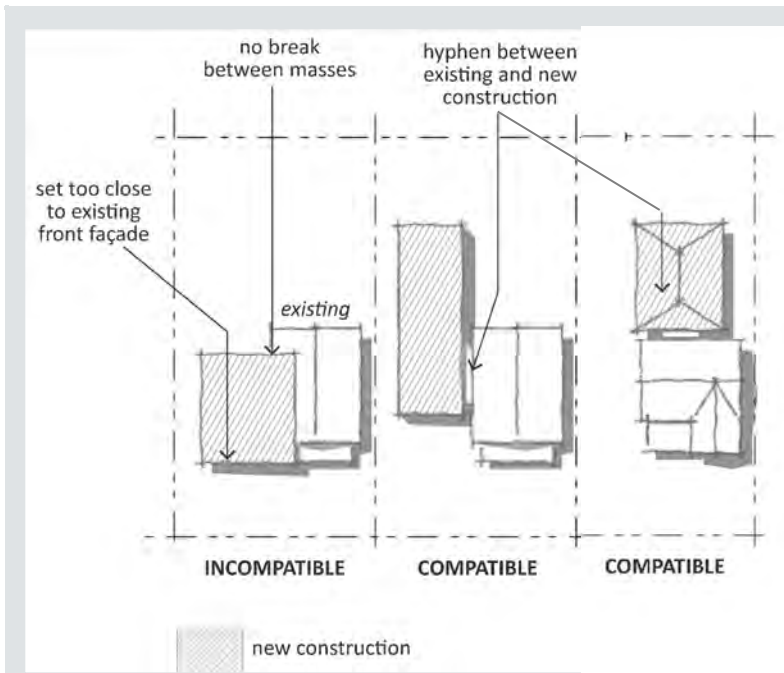
### Historic Age

This design manual **applies to all properties within the River Road Historic District**, regardless of age or contributing status. All requests shall be reviewed for impacts to historic resources or historic-age features. Generally, features that are of historic age are either original to the time of construction, were introduced within a timeframe that contributes to the historic significance of the property or district, and/or are character-defining features of the property or district.

## 5.2. Setbacks

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>iv</sup>
5.2.1.	“Site residential additions at the side or rear of the building whenever possible to minimize views of the addition from the public right-of-way. An addition to the front of a building would be inappropriate.” <sup>v</sup>
5.2.2.	“Transitions between old and new—Utilize a setback or recessed area and a small change in detailing at the seam of the historic structure and new addition to provide a clear visual distinction between old and new building forms” (fig. 5.2.1). <sup>vi</sup>
5.2.3.	Follow all standards within the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code – especially lot layout and setback standards. <sup>vii</sup>



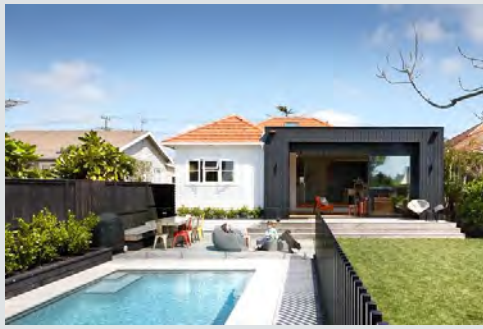
**Figure 5.2.1.** Sketch of a site plan showing an incompatible addition (left) versus a compatible addition (right). Note that the compatible addition is set back from the front façade and uses a hyphen between the new and original building masses. Source: Drawing by HHM.

## 5.3. Massing and Proportion

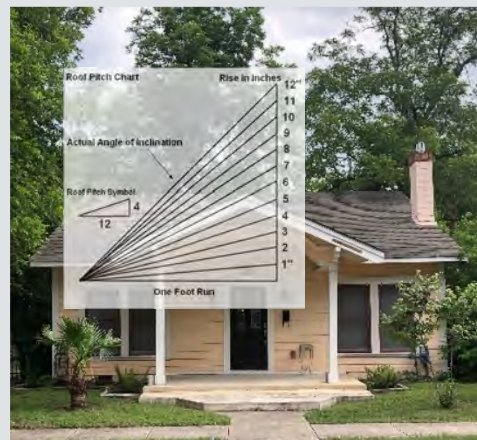
### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
5.3.1.	Design additions to be visually subordinate to principal historic structure in terms of height, massing, form, and distance from the front façade (excluding the porch).	Guideline	Guideline
5.3.2.	Avoid visually overwhelming the original building.	Guideline	Guideline
5.3.3.	If visible from the public right-of-way, the roof form for a new addition should match one of the roof forms found among the historic-age buildings in the district (as shown in the discussion of Architectural Styles in Section 2.1.). (See fig. 5.3.1.)	Guideline	Recommendation
5.3.4.	If visible from the public right-of-way, the roof slope for an addition should reflect slopes found among historic-age buildings in the district, ranging from flat (0" rise over 12" run) to steep (maximum 16" rise over 12" run). (See figs. 5.3.1. and 5.3.2.)	Guideline	Recommendation
5.3.5.	Consider using windows that reflect the proportion and pattern of the original building. However, if the addition's roof form and materials reflect the original building, windows may be differentiated to avoid creating a false sense of history. <sup>viii</sup>	Recommendation	Recommendation

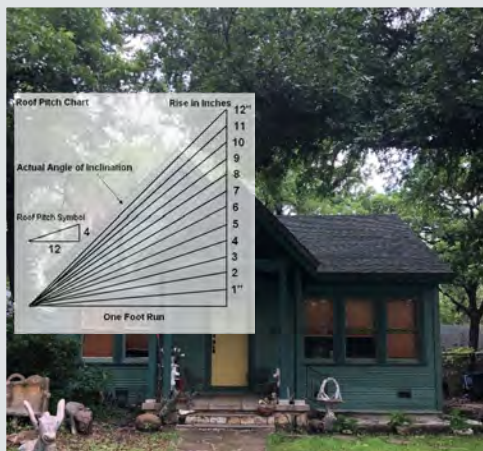


**DO THIS (REAR)****NOT THIS (VISIBLE)****DO THIS (REAR)****NOT THIS (VISIBLE)**

**Figure 5.3.1.** If an addition is not visible from the public right-of-way, the roof slope may differ from the roofs historically found in the district. For example, a low-scale flat-roofed addition might be appropriate at the rear of a building where it is hidden from view, but it would not be appropriate if visible from the public right-of-way. The same may be true of an addition with a contemporary single-sloped roof form. Sources: HHM archives; AirBnb, [fr.airbnb.com/rooms/14156623](https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/14156623); Pinterest, [www.pinterest.com/pin/156851999491786368/](https://www.pinterest.com/pin/156851999491786368/); Your Home, [www.yourhomeandgarden.co.nz/real-homes/home-tours/an-ex-state-house-gets-a-second-chance](https://www.yourhomeandgarden.co.nz/real-homes/home-tours/an-ex-state-house-gets-a-second-chance) – all accessed August 24, 2022.

**DO THIS****DO THIS**

**Figure 5.3.2.** Chart showing roof pitches and slopes commonly found in the River Road Historic District, ranging from flat (0-inch rise over 12-inch run) to steep (maximum 16-inch rise over 12-inch run). Similar slopes should be used for additions that are visible from the public right-of-way. Source: “Determining Roof Pitch,” Carpentry-Pro-Framer, accessed November 9, 2021, [www.carpentry-pro-framer.com/roof-pitch.html](https://www.carpentry-pro-framer.com/roof-pitch.html); photos by HHM, 2021.

**DO THIS****DO THIS**

## 5.4. Height

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
5.4.1.	A side addition's roof ridge may not rise higher than the roof ridge of the original house (fig. 5.4.1).	Guideline	Guideline
5.4.2.	Additions may gain additional height if set back behind the original rear façade, with a maximum height no more than 10 feet taller than the original portion of the building, measured from the original roof peak to the addition's roof peak (fig. 5.4.2). Heights are measured from the grade plane to the highest point on the roof. The height limit allowed by this design manual may be lower than the maximum allowable height within the Unified Development Code.	Guideline	Guideline
5.4.3.	The maximum height of an addition may not be more than 30 feet tall. Heights are measured from the grade plane to the highest point on the roof. The 30-foot height limit may be fewer than 10 feet taller than the original house. The height limit allowed by this design manual may be lower than the maximum allowable height within the Unified Development Code.	Guideline	Guideline



**APPROPRIATE**

**Figure 5.4.1.** Example of an appropriate side/rear addition that is set back from the first façade and rises no higher than the original house. Source: Photo by HHM, 2021.





DO THIS



DO THIS

**Figure 5.4.2.** Examples of two rear additions – both using appropriate height and massing. Both are set back from the front façade, both do not gain height until they reach the original rear façade, and both use a maximum height that is within 10 feet of the original house and lower than 30 feet. Source: Photos by HHM, 2021.

## 5.5. Materials and Construction Methods

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>x</sup>
5.5.1.	“Do not use [noncompatible] imitation or synthetic materials, such as vinyl siding, brick or simulated stone veneer, plastic, or other materials not compatible with the architectural style and materials of the original structure.” <sup>x</sup> (See District-Specific Guideline 5.5.2 below regarding appropriate substitute materials.)

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
5.5. 2.	Avoid constructing additions in a manner that removes or obstructs any historic exterior features on the front of the building or the sides within 15 feet of the front façade.	Guideline	Guideline
5.5. 3.	Substitute materials are appropriate for additions if they mimic the original material and the overall design is compatible with the historic building. For example, fiber-cement siding is appropriate for an addition to a building that originally used wood siding, provided all other specifications are met.	Guideline	Guideline
5.5. 4.	Limit the materials palette for additions to only one or two materials to avoid visually overwhelming the original building.	Guideline	Recommendation
5.5. 5.	Do not use faux-historic ornamentation or detailing on a new addition.	Guideline	Recommendation
5.5. 6.	Windows and doors on additions must be recessed behind the wall plan at least 2 inches in depth.	Guideline	Recommendation

## 5.6. Style

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
5.6.1.	If designing an addition in a contemporary style, reflect the scale, massing, roof form, and/or materials of the historic building; if designing an addition in a style that reflects the style of the historic building, minimize ornamentation and differentiate roof form, and/or materials – at least slightly (figs. 5.6.1 and 5.6.2).	Guideline	Recommendation



**DO THIS****NOT THIS**

**Figure 5.6.1.** Two examples of additions that use contemporary architectural styles – one appropriately (left), the other inappropriately (right). The appropriate example (left) echoes the stucco and ceramic tile materials of the original house, but it is set back and uses a flat roof form to differentiate it from the original house. The inappropriate example (right) is set back, but its large scale overwhelms the original house, and it uses a complex roof form and an irregular pattern of windows that visually distract from the historic main house. Sources: Photos from HHM, 2022 (left) and 2019 (right).

**DO THIS****NOT THIS**

**Figure 5.6.2.** Two examples of additions that use historically inspired architectural styles – one appropriately (left), the other inappropriately (right). The appropriate example (left) echoes the wood siding and one-over-one windows of the original house, but it is set back and has minimal architectural detailing to differentiate it from the original house. The inappropriate example (right) copies the Minimal Traditional scalloped eave detail of the original house in a way that creates a false sense of history and detracts from the original; it also is set too far forward and partially destroys the original roof form. Sources: Photos by HHM, 2016 (left) and 2019 (right).

## 5.7. Landscape Impacts

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
5.7.1.	Minimize the addition's impact on the district's tree canopy. Preserve existing trees sufficiently to retain 25 percent shade coverage on the lot in spring/summer. If less than 25 percent of the lot was covered in shade prior to constructing the addition, bringing shade coverage up to 25 percent is encouraged.	Recommendation	Recommendation

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 1, p. 15.

<sup>ii</sup> *San Antonio, Texas – Unified Development Code*, Sec. 35-451, from Municode, accessed February 15, 2022, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR\\_DIV5HIDERE\\_S35-451CEAP](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR_DIV5HIDERE_S35-451CEAP). This code section states that “Applications proposing work or changes to the exterior...shall require review for appropriateness with the provisions of this article, and any adopted design guidelines.”

<sup>iii</sup> “Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks,” Texas Historical Commission, accessed February 18, 2022, [www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks](http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks).

<sup>iv</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections. Note that the section headings for the citywide guidelines do not precisely match this design manual, so in some instances, citywide guidelines have been reorganized. The numbering for guidelines also reflects the organization of this design manual; citywide guidelines are not numbered. However, the language from the citywide guidelines is quoted *verbatim*, with necessary revisions/additions noted using “[bracketed text].”

<sup>v</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 3, p. 2, Guideline 1.A.i.

<sup>vi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 3, p. 2, Guideline 1.A.iv.

<sup>vii</sup> “Division 4 – Lot Layout, Height, and Density/Intensity Standards,” Municode: San Antonio, TX, accessed November 8, 2021, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVDEST\\_DIV4LOLAHEDEINST](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVDEST_DIV4LOLAHEDEINST).

<sup>viii</sup> Note that this guideline maintains the spirit of the Office of Historic Preservation’s “Windows: Repair, Replacement, & New Construction” [Draft March 2020] – with some differences in detail. That document allows less flexibility in differentiation of window dimensions and configuration. However, more flexibility is appropriate in the River Road Historic District given its unique and eclectic architectural character.

<sup>ix</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>x</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 3, p. 8, Guideline 3.B.i.

# Section 6: New Construction

## Contents: New Construction

6.1.	6.2.	6.3.	6.4.	6.5.	6.6.	6.7.	6.8.	6.9.	6.10.
Applying this Design Manual	Setbacks	Orientation	Footprint	Massing and Proportion	Height	Materials and Construction	Style	Landscape Impacts	Auxiliary Buildings

## Understanding Key Vocabulary

The guidelines and recommendations below use architectural terms that may not be familiar to many property owners. For definitions of key terms used throughout this design manual, refer to the Glossary in *Appendix B*.

## 6.1. Applying this Design Manual

### Guiding Principles

The citywide *San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines* set forth the following General Principles for New Construction, which inform this Design Manual as well:

- Principle #1: Ensure that Historic Buildings Remain the Central Focus of the District
- Principle #2: False Historicism/Conjectural History is Discouraged
- Principle #3: Contemporary Interpretations of Traditional Designs and Details May be Considered<sup>i</sup>

### Guiding Principles from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*

Each of the principles above is founded upon the *Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation*. To learn more, refer to the Preservation Resource Toolkit in *Appendix E*, which includes the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation*. The *Secretary's Standards* establish nationwide best practices for historic preservation.

### Applicability

#### Guidelines versus Recommendations

##### Key Vocabulary: Guidelines versus Recommendations

**Guideline** – Within this design manual, guidelines are considered to be legally enforceable provisions per Section 35-451(a) of the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code.<sup>ii</sup>

**Recommendation** – Within this design manual, recommendations are considered to be additional helpful hints to promote compatibility with the unique historic and natural character of the River Road Historic District.

#### Citywide versus District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

When considering designing a new building in the River Road Historic District, begin by reading the San Antonio *Citywide Historic Design Guidelines*, which provide the foundation for evaluating new constructions in all San Antonio Historic Districts. Citywide guidelines regarding new construction are provided in Section 4, available online at [www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/4\\_%20NewConstruction.pdf](http://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/4_%20NewConstruction.pdf).

#### Selected Citywide Guidelines

The selected citywide guidelines that are considered the highest priorities in the River Road Historic District are reproduced below. These guidelines should be interpreted as legally enforceable within the River Road Historic District. New construction will be held accountable for meeting these specific guidelines as part of the City's permitting process.

**Note that the Citywide Historic District Design Guidelines may be revised over time. For the most current version, refer to the Office of Historic Preservation's website, [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic).**



## Additional District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

This design manual also presents some district-specific guidelines and recommendations that provide greater detail than the citywide guidelines. The district-specific guidelines and recommendations are presented in Section 4.2.2. Provisions flagged as “Guidelines” are intended to be mandatory per UDC reference in the River Road Historic District. Provisions flagged as “Recommendations” are advisory.

## Visibility from the Public Right-of-Way

This manual breaks down each district-specific guideline or recommendation into the following categories:

- Visible from the public right-of-way
- Not visible from the public right-of-way

The intent of this breakdown is to allow more flexibility for applications that are not visible from the public right-of-way and do not disrupt the overall visual character of the district.

### Key Vocabulary: “Visibility”

Within this design manual, the term “visible from the public-right-of-way” includes façades currently hidden by vegetation and other temporary structures. In most situations, a building feature should be considered visible if (a) it is on the front façade, (b) it is on a street-facing side façade on a corner lot, or (c) it is within the front 15’ of a side façade on an interior lot. The Office of Historic Preservation may provide assistance in interpreting whether a façade is visible in unique situations.

## 6.2. Setbacks

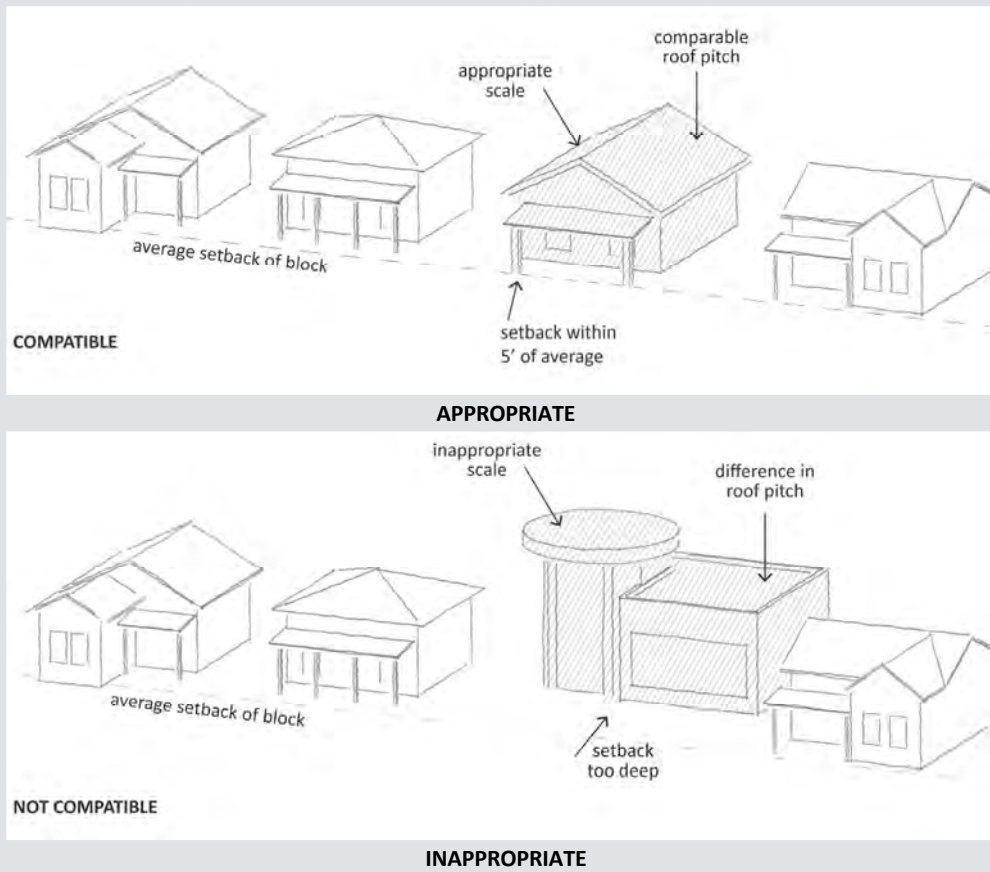
### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>iii</sup>
6.2.1.	“Setbacks—Align front facades of new [primary] buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements” (fig. 6.2.1). <sup>iv</sup>

## 6.3. Orientation

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>v</sup>
6.3.1.	“Orientation—Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.” <sup>vi</sup>
6.3.2.	“Orientation—Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage. Typically, historic building entrances are oriented towards the primary street” (fig. 6.3.1). <sup>vii</sup>



**Figure 6.2.1.** Examples of appropriate versus inappropriate new residential infill. Note how the compatible example takes cues from the adjoining streetscape in terms of height, setbacks, roof form, roof pitch, footprint, and porch placement. Source: HHM archives.



**DO THIS**



**NOT THIS**

**Figure 6.3.1.** Examples of two new infill houses in a historic neighborhood – one using an appropriately oriented front door facing the street (left), while the other uses an inappropriate front door hidden from the front façade (right). Source: Photos by the COSA OHP and HHM, 2021.

## 6.4. Footprint

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>viii</sup>
	<b>Footprint</b>
6.4.1.	"Building to lot ratio— New construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. Limit the building footprint for new construction to no more than 50 percent of the total lot area, unless adjacent historic buildings establish a precedent with a greater building to lot ratio." <sup>ix</sup> [Adjacent properties are those lots that share a boundary, either to the sides or to the rear. Lot coverage for adjacent properties should be calculated only using buildings/portions of buildings that are of historic age; additions and new buildings less than 25 years old should not be counted as compatible comparisons.]

## 6.5. Massing and Proportion

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>x</sup>
	<b>Massing and Proportions</b>
6.5.1.	"Incorporate [multifamily] dwelling units into historically-common building sizes and forms within the established context area... In context areas with smaller buildings [like the River Road Historic District], a more appropriate response would be to separate the units into smaller, individual building forms." <sup>xi</sup>
6.5.2.	"[If] multiple buildings are proposed for a site, they should be separated and scaled in a manner that preserves open space consistent with the established context area. For example, if the context area predominately consists of a primary structure separated from a rear accessory structure by a common distance, then the proposed development should follow a similar pattern. Preserved open space may be used for common areas, amenity space, or uncovered parking." <sup>xii</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.5.3.	The historic forms and patterns found among buildings in the district that are historic-age should inform the design for new construction. Refer to Section 2 for a selection of architecture historically found within the district. Historic architecture not found in River Road should not be replicated in River Road.	Guideline	Recommendation
6.5.4.	If visible from the public right-of-way, the roof form used for a new building should match one of the roof forms found among the historic-aged buildings in the district (as shown in the discussion of Architectural Styles in Section 2.1). Contemporary roof forms may be appropriate if not visible from the public right-of-way. (See fig. 6.5.1.)	Guideline	Recommendation
6.5.5.	If visible from the public right-of-way, the roof slope for a new building should reflect slopes found among historic-age buildings in the district, ranging from flat (0-inch rise over 12-inch run) to steep (maximum 16-inch rise over 12-inch run). (See fig. 5.2.1 above in Section 5.) Contemporary roof forms may be appropriate if not visible from the public right-of-way.	Guideline	Recommendation
6.5.6.	Include a front porch on a new primary residential building if the majority of buildings on the block also have front porches. Recommended front porch dimensions are at least 6 feet deep, with an area of at least 60 square feet.	Guideline	N/A
6.5.7.	The pattern of windows and doors on a new building must be consistent; avoid having multiple different sizes of windows and doors or scattered/irregular placement of windows and doors.	Guideline	Recommendation





DO THIS



DO THIS



NOT THIS



NOT THIS

**Figure 6.5.1.** New auxiliary buildings that are visible from the street should use roof forms that echo historic buildings in the district. It is especially important that a new building uses a historically inspired roof form if its design incorporates other modern elements, like modern building materials and window openings larger than those found on historic buildings. Source: Pinterest.

## 6.6. Height

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.6.1.	The maximum height for new construction may not be more than 30 feet tall. This height limit applies to all property types – single-family, multifamily, or auxiliary. Heights are measured from the grade plane to the highest ridge of the roof. Decorative features like turrets and pinnacles should not be used to measure heights of adjacent roofs. The height limit allowed by this design manual may be lower than the maximum allowable height within the UDC or Citywide Guidelines.	Guideline	Guideline
6.6.2.	In addition to the 30-foot height limit, a new building should not stand more than 10 feet higher than the tallest adjacent primary historic-age buildings located to either side and/or to the rear. Heights are measured from the grade plane to the highest point on the roof. This may yield a height limit of less than 30 feet. Heights more than 30 feet are never permissible, regardless of the heights of adjacent historic-age buildings.	Guideline	Guideline

## 6.7. Materials and Construction Methods

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.7.1.	Modern substitute materials (such as fiber-cement siding) are appropriate for new construction, provided that the overall design is compatible with the historic district and all other specifications are met.	Recommendation	Recommendation
6.7.2.	Limit the materials palette for new buildings to only two or three materials to avoid visually detracting from older buildings in the district.	Guideline	Recommendation
6.7.3.	Do not use faux-historic applied ornamentation on a new building. The design for new construction may echo historic materials, patterns, and forms but not applied ornamentation. New construction should be less decorative than historic buildings to allow the historic buildings to remain the visual focus of the district. (See fig. 6.7.1.)	Guideline	Recommendation
6.7.4.	The historic materials found among buildings in the district that are historic-age may inform the design for new construction. Refer to Section 2 for a selection of architecture historically found within the district. Historic materials not found in River Road historically should not be replicated in River Road. Metal siding is not appropriate for exterior façades.	Guideline	Recommendation
6.7.5.	Windows and doors on new construction must be recessed behind the wall plan at least two inches in depth.	Guideline	Recommendation

**DO THIS****NOT THIS**

**Figure 6.7.1.** Examples of two new houses that both reflect historic Craftsman stylistic influences – one appropriately (top), the other inappropriately (bottom). The appropriate house at the top uses appropriate horizontal siding with mitered corners and subtly exposed rafter ends, combined with an appropriate scale and contemporary massing. The inappropriate house at the bottom adds faux-Craftsman columns and vertical siding (not historically present in the district) to an oversized house form with an attached garage that is not set back. Photo by HHM, 2021 (top), David Weekley Homes, accessed November 9, 2021, <https://www.davidweekleyhomes.com/news/article/david-weekley-homes-to-add-new-homes-to-skybrook-in-mecklenburg-cabarrus-counties> (bottom).

## 6.8. Style

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.8.1.	If designing a new building in a contemporary style, reflect the scale, massing, window pattern, roof form, and/or materials of the historic buildings in the district; if designing a new building in a style that reflects the style of the historic buildings in the district, minimize ornamentation and differentiate the window pattern, roof form, and/or materials – at least slightly (figs. 6.8.1 and 6.8.2).	Guideline	Recommendation



**DO THIS****NOT THIS**

**Figure 6.8.1.** Examples of two new infill houses – one appropriately sets back the attached carport behind the front façade (left), while the other uses an inappropriate projecting “snout” garage (right). Source: Photos by HHM, 2021.

**DO THIS****NOT THIS**

**Figure 6.8.2.** Examples of two new houses using contemporary architectural styles – one appropriately (left), the other inappropriately (right). The appropriate example on the left reflects the gabled roof form and wood and stone materials found among its historic neighbors. The inappropriate example on the right uses a larger scale than its neighbors, a complex roof form, and also introduces cast concrete as a material, which isn't found on **original houses** in the neighborhood. Source: Photos by HHM, 2021.

## 6.9. Landscape Impacts

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.9.1.	Minimize the new building's impact on the district's tree canopy. Preserve existing trees sufficiently to retain 25 percent shade coverage on the lot in spring/summer. If less than 25 percent of the lot was covered in shade prior to new construction, bringing shade coverage up to 25 percent is encouraged.	Recommendation	Recommendation
6.9.2.	New construction may not change the topography of a site in an attempt to gain additional height while meeting the height limitations above.	Guideline	Guideline
6.9.3.	New construction must have screened off-street storage space for garbage and recycling receptacles.	Guideline	Recommendation

## 6.10. Auxiliary Buildings

### Selected Citywide Guidelines

#	Citywide Guideline/Recommendation <sup>xiv</sup>
6.10.1.	"Setbacks-Follow historic setback pattern of similar structures along the streetscape or district for new garages and outbuildings. Historic garages and outbuildings are most typically located at the rear of the lot, behind the principal building. In some instances, historic setbacks are not consistent with UDC requirements and a variance may be required." <sup>xv</sup>
6.10.2.	"Orientation-Match the predominant garage [or other auxiliary building] orientation found along the block. Do not introduce front-loaded garages or garages attached to the primary structure on blocks where rear or alley-loaded garages were historically used" (fig. 6.2.3). <sup>xvi</sup>

### District-Specific Guidelines and Recommendations

#	District-Specific Guideline/Recommendation	Applicability in the River Road Historic District	
		Visible from public right-of-way	Not visible from public right-of-way
6.10.3.	Design garage, outbuildings, and carports to be visually subordinate to principal historic structures in terms of height, massing, form, and distance from the front façade (excluding the porch). (See fig. 6.2.3.) Garages accessed from a side street may be flush with the side façade, but they may not project closer to the street than the side façade.	Guideline	Guideline
6.10.4.	All new auxiliary buildings must follow all guidelines for new construction set forth above.	Guideline	Guideline

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 1, p. 15.

<sup>ii</sup> *San Antonio, Texas – Unified Development Code*, Sec. 35-451, from Municode, accessed February 15, 2022, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR\\_DIV5HIDERE\\_S35-451CEAP](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTIVPR_DIV5HIDERE_S35-451CEAP). This code section states that, “Applications proposing work or changes to the exterior...shall require review for appropriateness with the provisions of this article, and any adopted design guidelines.”

<sup>iii</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections. Note that the section headings for the citywide guidelines do not precisely match this design manual, so in some instances, citywide guidelines have been reorganized. The numbering for guidelines also reflects the organization of this design manual; citywide guidelines are not numbered. However, the language from the citywide guidelines is quoted *verbatim*, with necessary revisions/additions noted using “[bracketed text].”

<sup>iv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.1.A.i.

<sup>v</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>vi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.1.A.ii.

<sup>vii</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.1.B.i.

<sup>viii</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>ix</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.1.D.i.

<sup>x</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>xi</sup> Office of Historic Preservation 2020 update to Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, pp. 18-19, Guideline 8.A.ii, from the City of San Antonio, [www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/Historic\\_Preservation/Current\\_Projects/UDC%20Docs/Update%20to%20Guidelines%20for%20New%20Construction%202020\\_Draft.pdf?ver=2020-02-28-094432-930](https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/Historic_Preservation/Current_Projects/UDC%20Docs/Update%20to%20Guidelines%20for%20New%20Construction%202020_Draft.pdf?ver=2020-02-28-094432-930).

<sup>xii</sup> Office of Historic Preservation 2020 update to Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, p. 19, Guideline 8.A.iii.

<sup>xiii</sup> Note that exceptions may be granted if necessary to comply with floodplain regulations, consistent with UDC Sec.35-608(a), from Municode, accessed February 18, 2022, [library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE\\_DIV2HIPR\\_S35-608CEAPCOAPEN](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE_DIV2HIPR_S35-608CEAPCOAPEN). This code section states that “the historic and design review commission shall consider the current needs of the property owner and whether the plans will be reasonable for the property owner to carry out.”

<sup>xiv</sup> Cited directly from the Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, various sections.

<sup>xv</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.5.B.ii.

<sup>xvi</sup> Clarion and HHM, *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*, Section 4, Guideline 4.5.B.i.



# Appendices

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# Appendix A: A Brief History of San Antonio's River Road Neighborhood from its Prehistoric Origins to the Present

## Contributed by Maria Watson Pfeiffer

### Maria Watson Pfeiffer

Maria Watson Pfeiffer is a self-employed professional historian. She received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin and her M.A. in Urban Studies from Trinity University. During her fifty years as a historian and preservation consultant, she has specialized in documenting the 19th and 20th-century history of San Antonio and Southwest Texas. Her work includes numerous nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and Recorded Texas Historic Landmark designations, as well as museum exhibits and interpretive signage. She completed the National Register nomination and State Antiquities Landmark designation for Brackenridge Park. Maria is the author of *School by the River: Ursuline Academy to Southwest School of Art and Craft, 1851-2001*, and she has contributed to many historical studies and publications.

Bordered by public parkland on the north and south and the San Antonio River on the east, the River Road neighborhood is a peaceful sanctuary near the center of one of the country's largest and fastest-growing cities. Only U.S. Highway 281, which slashed through the western portion of the neighborhood in the early 1970s, intrudes on this tranquility.

## The Upper Labores

The land known today as the River Road neighborhood was part of a gathering place for indigenous people who hunted, fished, and camped here for over 11,000 years before establishing a permanent Spanish settlement in 1718. For over 50 years, the population was concentrated around and near the missions, presidio, and San Fernando Church. Those living in the missionary-led communities, as well as civilian and military residents, received water from hand-dug acequias that channeled water from both the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek. With the arrival of the Canary Islanders in 1731 and, later, soldiers and settlers from far-away abandoned presidios, competition for land and water increased. Spanish officials responded, dividing and granting a large expanse of fertile land north of San Fernando de Bexar and west of the river. The newly opened area was known as the Upper Labores, or Nuestra Señora de los Dolores (Our Lady of Sorrows). Upper Labor Acequia was begun in 1776 and was in operation by April 1777 in time for the spring planting season. A small dam just below today's Hildebrand Avenue diverted water from the river's west bank into a channel that ran through what is now the San Antonio Zoo, flowed generally south and west along today's St. Mary's Street, and emptied back into the river at a point near today's Ninth Street. By March 1778 a branch of the acequia was extended west to empty into San Pedro Creek. Shareholders who had contributed financing and labor toward construction of the acequia participated in a drawing to distribute twenty-six suertes of land with water rights. The long, narrow grants ran from the acequia on the west to the river on the east. Desagues (small side channels) carried water into adjacent fields. As the original grantees transferred land to family members or sold their holdings, control of the Upper Labores eventually became concentrated among fewer owners. It has been estimated that by 1800, seven families controlled half of the land in the Upper Labores.<sup>1</sup>

Among the first grantees in the Upper Labores was Marcario Zambrano who received his initial land in early 1776 and enlarged his holdings in 1780, 1782, and 1789. A rammed earth house stood on one of those parcels and remains standing in 2022 at 104 Anastacia. It is the only remnant of the neighborhood's colonial-era past. Former Bexar County archivist, Richard Santos, who authored the Texas Historical Landmark application for the Zambrano House, concluded that, while placing the house accurately on the Zambrano's various parcels "was impossible," the house was standing at least by 1789 and likely earlier.<sup>2</sup>

Marcario and Juana de Ocon y Trillo had eight children, including a daughter, Anastacia, who died in 1837. A protracted dispute over the family's property ensued, and it was not until 1858 that ownership of the Zambrano house and surrounding 4.68 acres was firmly established. Though a full title search tracing the remaining acreage within the neighborhood boundaries has not

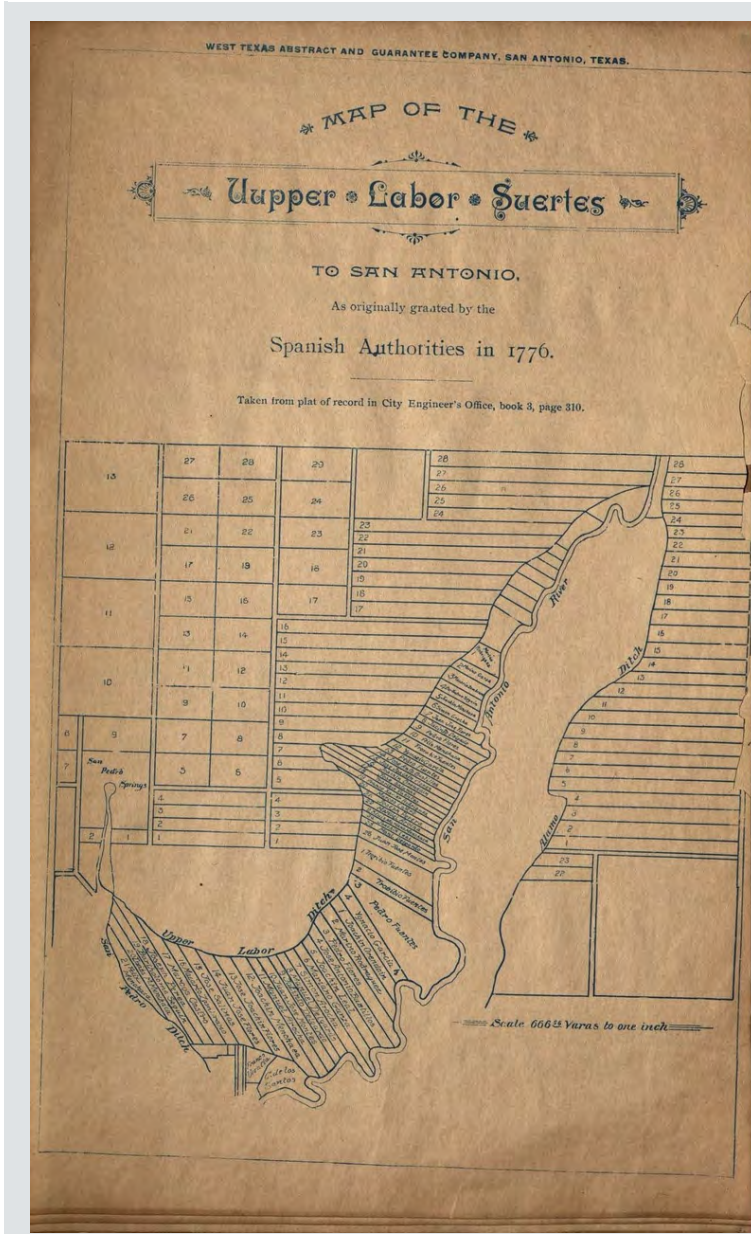
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<sup>1</sup> Jesus de la Teja, *San Antonio de Bexar: A Community on New Spain's Northern Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995) 80-84; Wayne Cox, *Aqua Vitae: San Antonio's Aquatic History*, Book 1, 1718-1836. Unpublished manuscript, n.d. Cox discusses owners shirking their responsibilities for maintaining the acequia and the challenges to raising crops posed by weather and rainfall, or lack of it. These problems were common to all the area's acequias.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Santos, "Zambrano House," Registered Texas Historic Landmark designation, Texas Historical Commission.



been conducted, it is known that the area was largely used for farming and remained sparsely occupied and remarkably rural until the early 1900s.

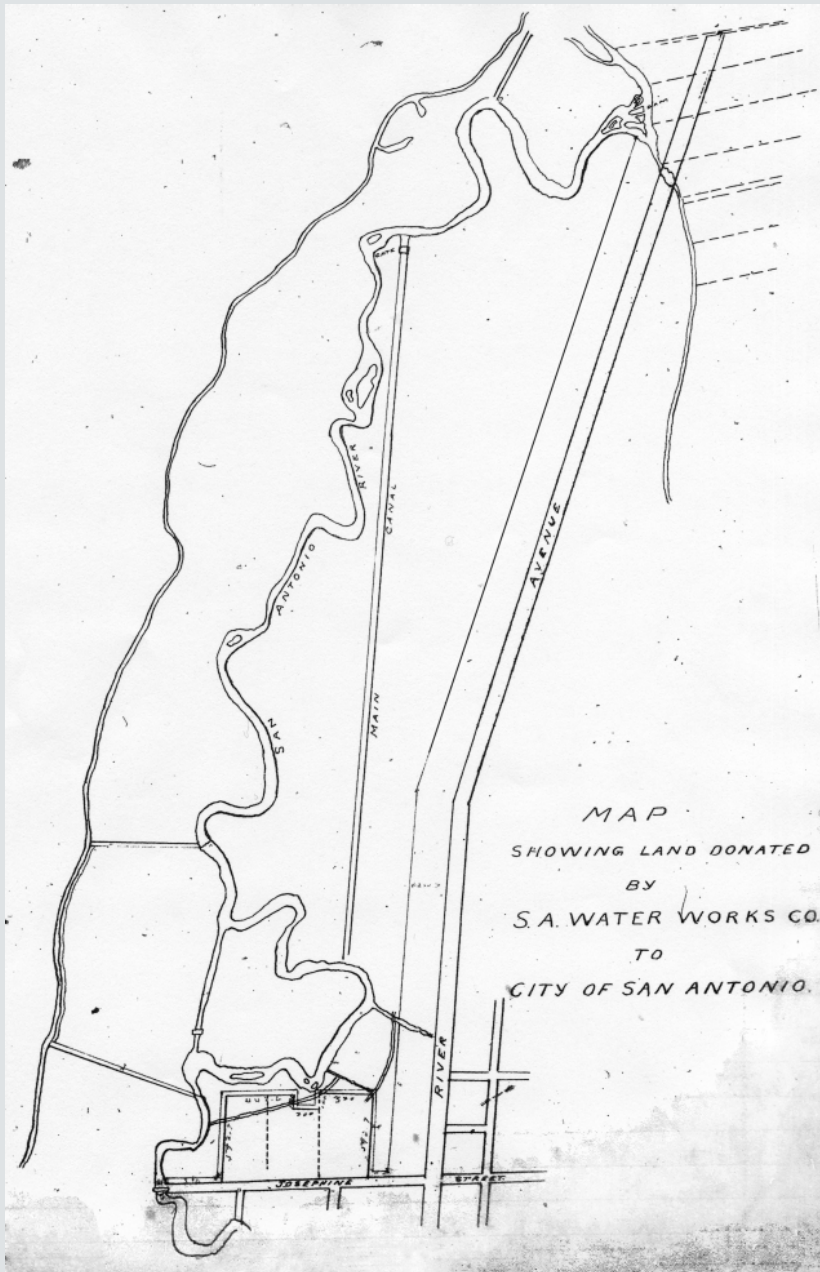


**Figure A.1.** “Map of the Upper Labor Suertes to San Antonio as originally granted by the Spanish Authorities in 1776.” Courtesy: Stewart Title Collection, The University of Texas at San Antonio Special Collections.

## The Modern City

Until the middle 1880s, the river and San Pedro Creek provided an adequate supply of clean water, but in the late 1880s and early 1890s, the city experienced periods of little rainfall. Spring flow declined, compromising the quality and quantity of water in the river and acequias. The population was also growing and with it, the demand for water for household use, fire protection, and a modern sewage system. To address the need for more water, deep artesian wells were sunk into the aquifer beneath the city. Several of the wells were drilled by George W. Brackenridge who owned the waterworks company that supplied the city. The combination of drought and wells that lowered the underground water table, lessening spring flow, negatively affected the river. Brackenridge also owned the expanse of land along the river’s east bank from his home at the headwaters south to today’s Josephine Street. As the springs declined, Brackenridge reportedly remarked to a friend, “I have seen this bold, bubbling, laughing river dwindle and fade away . . . this river is my child and it is dying and I cannot stay here to

see its last gasps. . . must go.”<sup>3</sup> He sold his homestead property to the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in 1897 and, in 1899, donated his land along the river’s east bank to the City of San Antonio for a park that was named in his honor.



**Figure A.2.** “Map Showing Land Donated by S.A. Water Works Co. to City of San Antonio.” Source: Bexar County Land Records, Bexar County Clerk.

The Water Works Company also owned the property west of the river below the future River Road neighborhood that had been granted to Simon de Arocha, Juan Jose Flores, Jacinto Delgado, and Pedro Flores. By the mid-1850s, local merchant Joseph Ulrich had acquired 45 acres of these grants which he leased in 1859 to A. Barbot, a French-born farmer. Barbot presumably irrigated his fields with water from the river and Upper Labor Acequia. The property was acquired in a foreclosure sale by the Bennett and Thornton Bank in 1877 and was sold to George Brackenridge’s Water Works Company in 1885. When the company donated its riverfront land to the city in 1899, the property west of the river was included, accounting for the extension of Brackenridge Park which forms the southern boundary of today’s River Road neighborhood.

The conditions that caused George Brackenridge to sell and donate his riverfront property also impacted the town’s acequias.

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<sup>3</sup> Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 141.

By the late 1800s, the acequias that had watered farm plots fell victim to both lack of predictable river flow and rapid urban development. Citizens complained to the City Council which, over time, voted to close and fill these once essential irrigation ditches, now vestiges of a bygone colonial past. The Upper Labor Acequia was no exception. The portion of the ditch extending from McCullough Avenue to San Pedro Creek was closed in 1896. In March of the following year, the ditch was declared to be a menace to health and was ordered closed and filled between its Rock Quarry Road crossing and Main Avenue.<sup>4</sup>

Though the state of the river in the 1890s marked the end of agriculture in the Upper Labores, city growth had already begun to impact the area. As early as the middle 1800s, the city leased portions of its public land west of the Upper Labor Acequia to contractors who quarried limestone to build substantial new structures. Wagons transported stone along a meandering unpaved path that became known as Rock Quarry Road. Later it was named Jones Avenue (1920), and, finally, North St. Mary's Street (1930). The road provided access to undeveloped land south of the quarries where small stores catered to stone workers who lived nearby. The area's relative isolation made it a suitable location for the county's poor farm, hospital, and cemetery. Located west of Rock Quarry Road and north of today's Mulberry Avenue, the poor farm operated there from the 1880s until the early 1900s when a more modern facility was built south of town.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure A.3.** "Bird's Eye View of San Antonio Bexar Co. Texas 1886 Looking North East," Detail showing County Poor Farm.

## Belmont Place: 1913

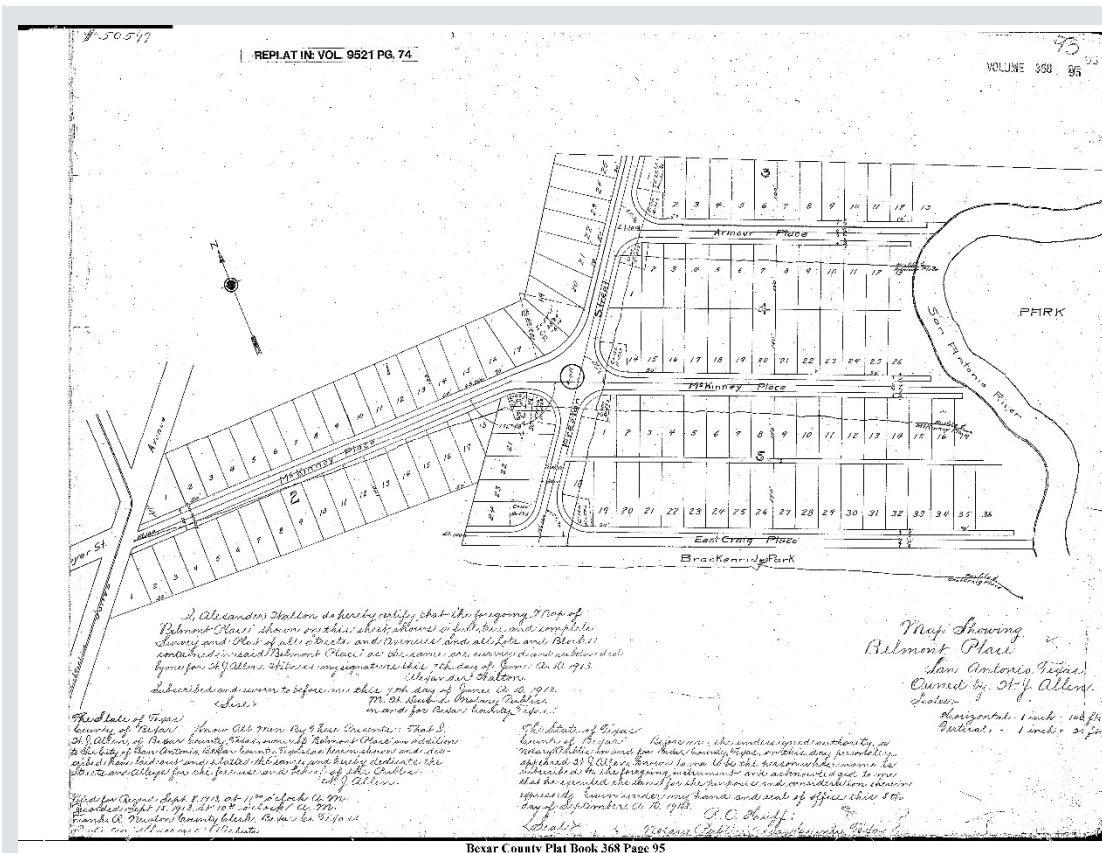
San Antonio had a population of about 53,300 in 1900. By 1910 it had grown to 96,600. To meet the increased demand for housing, construction progressed at a fast pace, and streetcar lines were extended in all directions from the center of town, opening new areas for development. The Tobin Hill streetcar line, named for the neighborhood west of Rock Quarry Road, was opened in June 1907, and a loop was constructed later that year to give streetcar access "to all the rapidly building up section of territory lying between the Rock Quarry Road and Laurel Heights Terrace."<sup>6</sup> At the end of the line lay an undeveloped piece of land circumscribed by Rock Quarry Road, park land, and the river that soon attracted real estate speculators seeking new opportunities. The streetcar, as well as automobiles, now increasingly available to working San Antonians, made the area easily accessible. The families who had owned large tracts in the Upper Labores for many years sold to developers who subdivided and platted the vacant land where new houses were soon under construction.

<sup>4</sup> Cox, Book 9, 1893-1897; "The Council Session," *San Antonio Daily Light*, March 23, 1897, 4.

<sup>5</sup> San Antonio Street Name Index, JK-121, September 25, 1893; OF-196, August 30, 1920; MJ-757.1, June 23, 1930.

<sup>6</sup> "Observant Citizen," *San Antonio Gazette*, June 14, 1907, 4; "Make a Loop of Tobin Hill Line," *San Antonio Light*, October 5, 1907, 2.





**Figure A.4.** “Map Showing Belmont Place, San Antonio, Texas.” Source: Bexar County Plat Records, Bexar County Clerk.

The first of those developers was W.J. (Will) Allen who, in late 1912, purchased about 28 acres bounded by the Upper Labor Acequia and the San Antonio River on the west and east, and Brackenridge Park on the south. The property purchased by Allen had been granted to Simon de Arocha, Juan Jose Flores, Jacinto Delgado and Pedro Flores. Either by inheritance or sale, the land passed to members of the Zambrano family and, by 1912, to the families of William Layer, A. Schloemann and Ignacio Chavez who used it for irrigated gardens before selling to Will Allen.<sup>7</sup> Announcing Allen’s purchase, the *San Antonio Light* reported “The failure of the San Antonio River has rendered this [irrigated gardening] no longer possible.”<sup>8</sup>

In June 1913, Allen subdivided and platted the tract he named Belmont Place and began selling lots. Belmont Place was modest in comparison to larger nearby subdivisions such as Laurel Heights Terrace immediately west of Rock Quarry Road. Allen’s development contained only three east/west streets and one north/south thoroughfare. East Craig Place bordered Brackenridge Park on the south. Continuing north, the middle street was McKinney Place (later named Woodlawn) and finally, Armour Place, which bounded the subdivision on the north. Preston Street, now known as Lindell, was the development’s north/south street. McKinney Place angled southwest from its intersection with Preston, culminating at Rock Quarry Road.<sup>9</sup> Newspaper advertisements offered those who purchased lots in Belmont Place “the joy of the country with the conveniences of living in town.”<sup>10</sup>

## Rapid Changes: 1915–1916

W.J. Allen embarked on the development of Belmont Place just as major changes were taking place in the surrounding area. After George Brackenridge donated 199-acres east of the river to the city for a park in 1899, his close friend and former city

<sup>7</sup> John D. Rullmann, “Historical Map of Old San Antonio de Bexar as it was in 1837 or 75 years later,” 1912.

<sup>8</sup> “Plans New Addition,” *San Antonio Light*, November 12, 1912, 33.

<sup>9</sup> Bexar County Plat Records, 368:95, June 7, 1913. The origin of the names McKinney and Preston has not been established. Laurel Heights Terrace was platted in 1907 by developers Adams and Kirkpatrick who later owned property in the River Road neighborhood.

<sup>10</sup> “The Joy of the Country,” *San Antonio Express*, May 27, 1923, 39.

parks commissioner, Ludwig Mahncke, was given the job of converting the land into a public park. Though Mahncke's work was confined to the property east of the river, he hoped to extend his vision to the privately owned land west of the river. Mahncke died unexpectedly in 1906 and did not live to fulfill his dream. The job of expanding and developing the park west of the river fell to another parks commissioner and visionary, Ray Lambert.<sup>11</sup>

Ray Lambert served as the city's parks commissioner from 1915 until his death in 1926. This was a pivotal time in the park's history. Alamo Portland and Roman Cement Company, which operated in the city's quarry west of Rock Quarry Road from the 1880s until 1908, had moved to a site farther to the north- today's Quarry Marketplace and Lincoln Heights developments. Lambert saw the abandoned quarry pit as the ideal setting for a star garden and sunken lily pond (1917), zoological garden (1916), and open-air theater (1926, 1930, 1937) and used meager public monies and prison labor to construct these attractions. On the east side of the river, working with renowned designer, A.W. Tillinghast, Lambert built the state's first public golf course (1916).<sup>12</sup>



**Figure A.5.** "Texas Star Floral Bed, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Texas." Courtesy: Maria Watson Pfeiffer.

Ray Lambert's blank slate was enlarged during the first year of his tenure when two important bequests expanded the park's reach west of the river and south to what later become known as the River Road neighborhood. In December 1915 Emma Koehler, widow of Otto Koehler and owner of the San Antonio Brewing Company, donated 10.93 acres to the city that lay immediately across the river from the north end of Brackenridge Park. The Koehler family had owned the land since 1901 and operated it as a private park where visitors could consume alcohol as opposed to Brackenridge Park where alcohol was prohibited. Emma Koehler, in giving the land in her husband's honor, stipulated that alcohol would be allowed.<sup>13</sup>

Also in December 1915, the abandoned 18-acre poor farm was leased to William Layer who used it for farming and agreed to move when the county divested itself of the land. One year later, in December 1916, Bexar County Commissioners voted to donate ten acres between the river and Rock Quarry Road to the city for a park named in honor of County Judge James R. Davis.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Sibley, 161-162; Ludwig Mahncke, Texas Historical Commission marker; San Antonio *Daily Express*, September 28, 1902, 23; San Antonio *Daily Express*, March 27, 1906; March 28, 1906, 6.

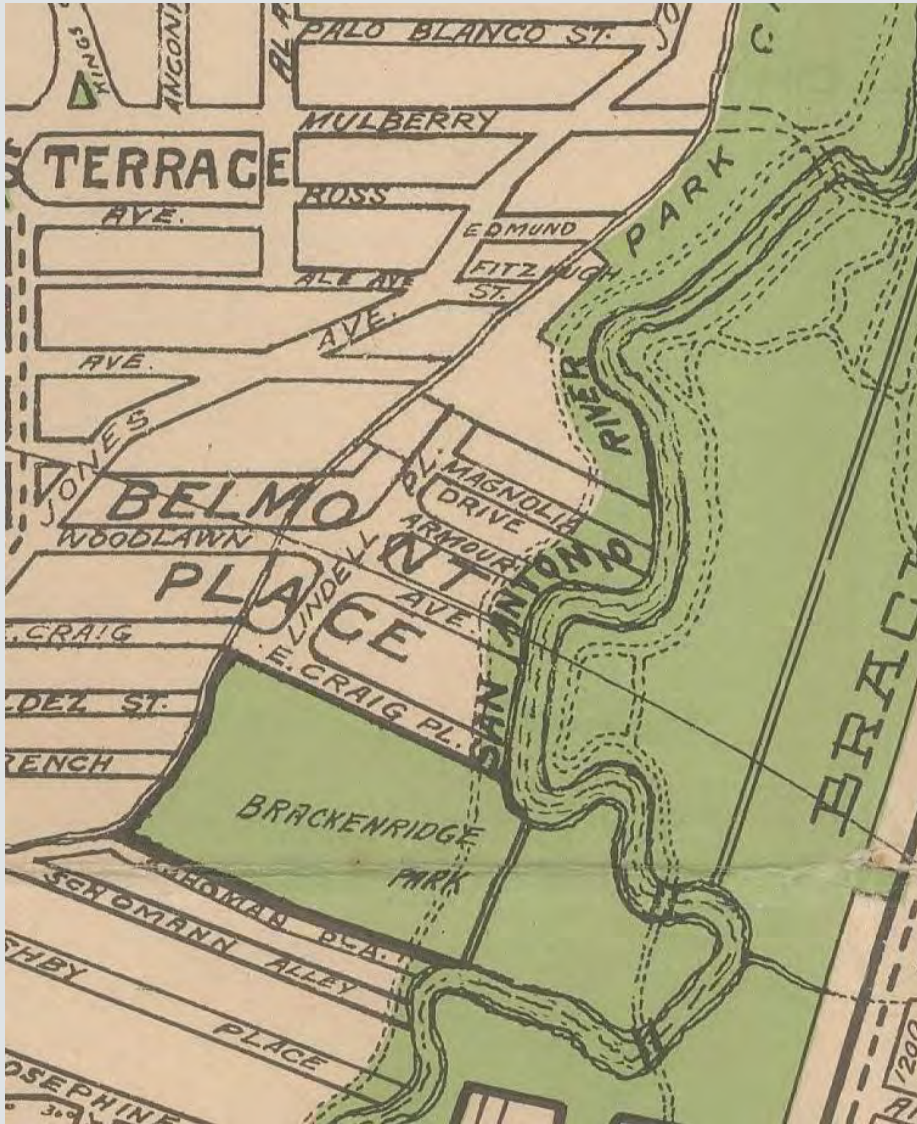
<sup>12</sup> Maria Watson Pfeiffer and Steve A. Tomka, *Brackenridge Park, National Register of Historic Places Nomination*. Listed August 2011, # 491449; W.D. Delery, "Prison Labor Used to Construct a Municipal Lily Pond and Japanese Garden," *The American City* magazine, Volume XX. No. 5, January-June (?) 1919.

<sup>13</sup> BCDR 184:655, January 28, 1901; 199:104, February 26, 1901 CHECK CITATIONS; BCDR 471:416-17, December 24, 1915.

<sup>14</sup> Commissioners Court Minutes V:540, December 23, 1916; BCDR 499:34, January 4, 1917; City Council Minutes B:246,



Both of these donations occurred while George Brackenridge was buying land immediately south of Emma Koehler's property. By late 1915 Brackenridge completed the acquisition of a 35-acre tract that extended from the river on the east to Rock Quarry Road (subsequently named Jones Avenue) on the east. This second major bequest by Brackenridge was made "in recognition of the work done by the City of San Antonio under the supervision of the Honorable Ray Lambert. . . in developing the scenic beauty and usefulness to the public of the tract of land...known as Brackenridge Park."<sup>15</sup> Brackenridge's gift created an uninterrupted swath of public park land that extended north from today's River Road neighborhood.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure A.6.** "Map of the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, published by Nic Teng, 1924." Detail showing Belmont Place and the surrounding area.

The city had already taken steps to increase access to Brackenridge Park. The land donated to the city in 1899 by George Brackenridge's Water Works Company was fenced without adequate means of ingress and egress for visitors who were flocking to the park. When Brackenridge sold his company in 1906, the new owners also blocked access. The city subsequently

January 8, 1917.

<sup>15</sup> BCDR 498:345, December 8, 1916; BCDR 501:163, January 14, 1917. CHECK THESE REFERENCES

<sup>16</sup> "Leases Old Poor Farm," San Antonio Light, December 17, 1915, 3; County Commissioners Minutes, MB-343, January 8, 1917. The county still owned the remaining eight acres of the Poor House tract west of the old acequia in 1920 when it was offered at public auction and acquired by San Antonio's mayor, Sam C. Bell for \$10,500. Bell's intention was to develop the property (BCDR 504:537-539, Bexar County to Bell, June 23, 1920).



sued for access and in 1908, agreed to pay for approximately seven acres to accommodate six new gates.<sup>17</sup>

Ray Lambert's challenge was to link Brackenridge Park with the newly-expanded park land west of the river and provide north/south circulation within the park. There was also pressure to provide access for neighborhoods west of Rock Quarry Road. It was the heyday of the City Beautiful Movement and Lambert was concerned that development of the vacant land below Brackenridge and Davis Park—today's River Road neighborhood- would detract from the publicly owned park. His solution was to acquire a 250-foot-wide strip along the river's west bank from Koehler Park on the north to Josephine Street on the south and eventually to downtown San Antonio. Picturesque low water crossings would cross the river at key locations. Lambert stated, "[T]his project means more for the beautification of Brackenridge Park than anything I now know of. With full control of the river we will be able to beautify both banks, cover them with sod, flowers and trees, and the river drive can be made to wind back and forth across the stream in such a way as to make this a feature to tourists for all time to come."<sup>18</sup>

W.J. Allen was actively marketing Belmont Place when he and others petitioned the city to build a bridge across the river from the east end of McKinney Place (Woodlawn Avenue), providing better access to the park from neighborhoods to the west. In February 1916 the City Council approved an ordinance to build a low water bridge within three months to "afford direct connection between Laurel Heights and the driveways of Brackenridge Park . . . open to pedestrians and pleasure vehicles only."<sup>19</sup> Though property owners initially proposed paying for the bridge, it is not clear whether the city or Allen and his associates financed the crossing and when it was opened to traffic. Bids were received, rejected, and readvertised in late 1920, though the date of final acceptance and terms have not been determined. However, on December 12, 1921, the name of McKinney Place was changed to Woodlawn.<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the case, construction of Ray Lambert's parkway was delayed until the early 1920s. Houses were still being constructed in Belmont Park when the city engineer delineated a "proposed drive" through the easternmost lots of the development. In July 1924 it was finally announced that the last piece of land needed to extend the drive to Josephine Street had been acquired. By then, the road had been named Memorial Drive in memory of local residents who died in World War I.<sup>21</sup> In July, Belmont Place was advertised as "bordered on the East by the Beautiful River Drive (now being constructed), and by San Antonio River and Brackenridge Park River Drive."<sup>22</sup>

## Brackenridge Parkway: 1922

Developer H.J. Shearer, likely encouraged by Allen's success and the proposed River Drive, platted his Brackenridge Parkway addition in June 1922. Four months later the *San Antonio Express* reported that Shearer was building 34 new homes. The development was described as "closing in on Brackenridge Park."<sup>23</sup> In conjunction with the project, the name of Preston Place was changed to Lindell Place in November 1922.<sup>24</sup>

Shearer's new development was modest, consisting only of houses along the north and south sides of the street he named Magnolia Drive that ran from the River Drive on the east and extended west across Lindell to the old Upper Labor Acequia. Because "River Drive" appears on the 1922 Brackenridge Parkway plat, it is known that the road construction started at its northern end, continued south through Brackenridge and Davis parks, and then across private land as it meandered to intersect Josephine Street. The final piece of land required to complete the road to Josephine Street was acquired in 1924.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Maria Watson Pfeiffer and Steve A. Tomka, *Brackenridge Park, National Register of Historic Places Nomination*. Listed August 2011, # 491449.

<sup>18</sup> *San Antonio Light*, May 14, 1916.

<sup>19</sup> *San Antonio Light*, February 18, 1916, 7.

<sup>20</sup> City Commission Minutes, October 25, 1920:353; December 2, 1920:377; December 12, 1921: 45.

<sup>21</sup> "City Completes its Plan for Establishing Memorial Drive on San Antonio River Banks," *San Antonio Express*, March 4, 1923, 10.

<sup>22</sup> *San Antonio Light*, July 10, 1921, 35.

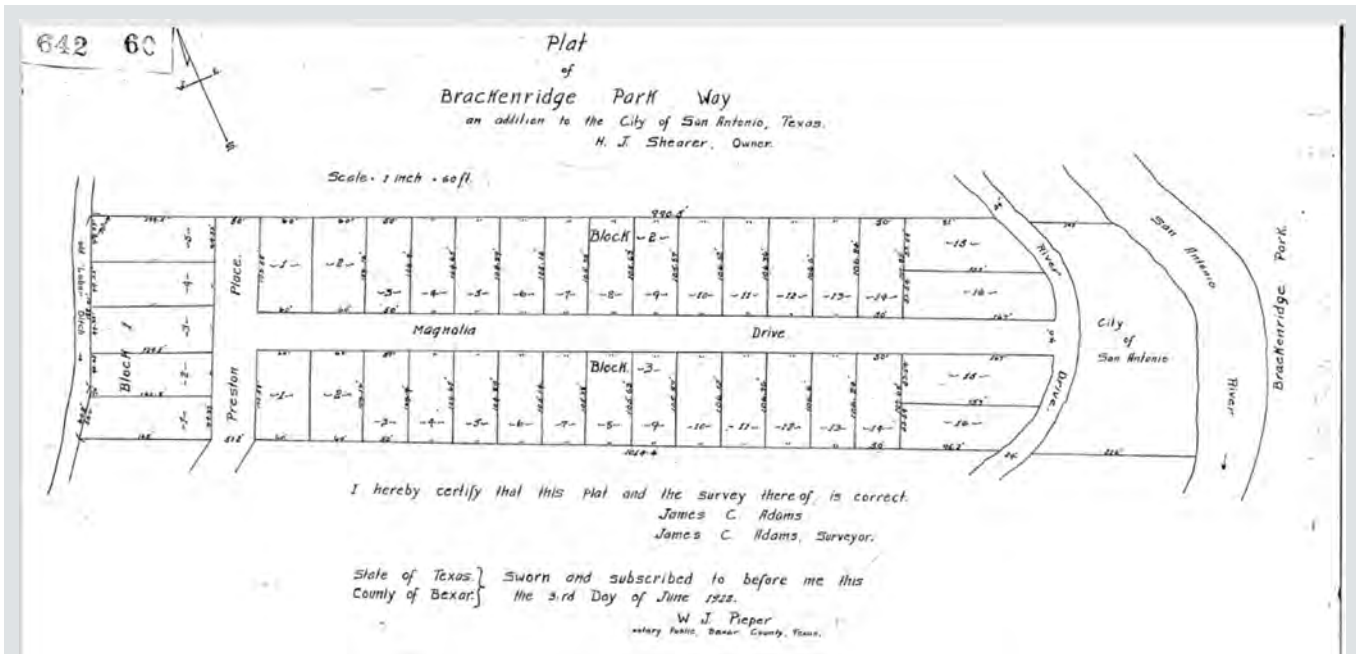
<sup>23</sup> "New North Side Tract is Open," *San Antonio Express*, October 29, 1922, 33. Though the plat carries the name "Brackenridge Park Way," the common spelling was "Brackenridge Parkway."

<sup>24</sup> San Antonio Street Name Index, ME-961, 291, November 13, 1922.

<sup>25</sup> "City Completes its plan for Establishing Memorial Drive on San Antonio River Banks," *San Antonio Express*, March 4, 1924, 10. As will be discussed, the 1922 deed from May Hough to the City of San Antonio confirms that the city acquired land for River Road incrementally (BCDR 786:2-3, Hough to City of San Antonio, August 12, 1924).



**Figure A.7.** “Park Drive through Belmont Place.” Source: Surveyor Records, San Antonio City Clerk, Municipal Archives.



**Figure A.8.** "Plat of Brackenridge Park Way, an addition to the City of San Antonio, Texas." Source: Bexar County Plat Records, Bexar County Clerk.



**Figure A.8a.**  
Source: San Antonio Express, March 25, 1923.

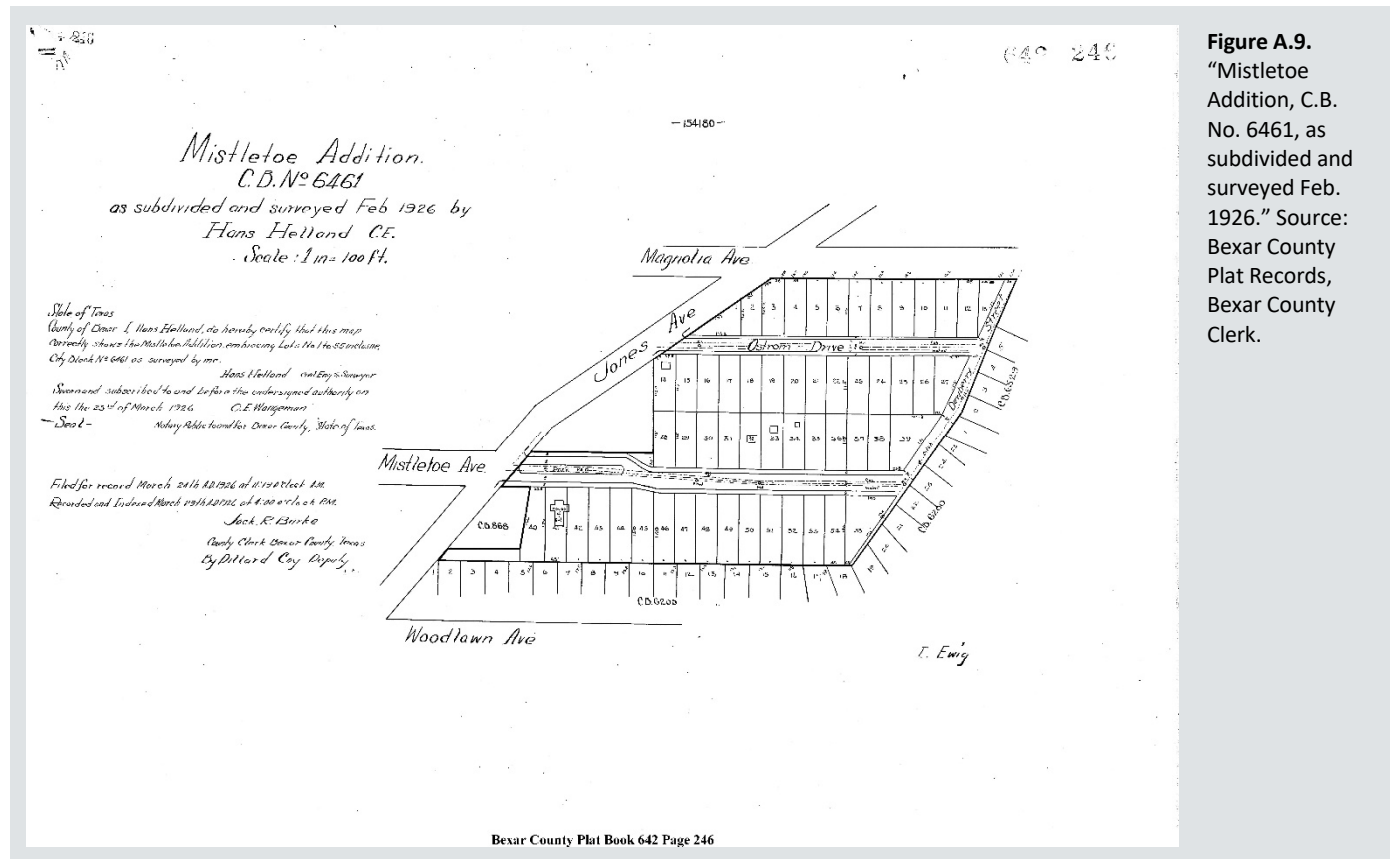
H.J. Shearer maintained his office at 157 Magnolia Drive, thought to have been the model home. By December 1922, seven houses were "almost complete" and one sold. Houses at 109, 114, 121, 129, 130, and 138 Magnolia Drive were scheduled to be sold the week of December 10, with prices ranging from \$5,750 to \$8,750. Shearer continued to build and advertise houses in 1923, listing 213, 214, and 226 Magnolia Drive in August 1923. By 1931, there were 24 houses standing, and by 1938 Magnolia Parkway was fully developed with the exception of lots facing east onto Lindell. Houses were finally constructed on the Lindell lots in the years between 1938 to 1951.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> "Here is your chance to own a home in Brackenridge Parkway Addition," *San Antonio Express*, December 10, 1922, 16; "This-Week-Only," *San Antonio Express*, August 23, 1923, 15.



## Mistletoe Addition: 1926

Velie Conklin Ostrom, a minister, and his wife, Sarah Frances Hummer, married in San Antonio in 1866 and purchased about 25 acres on Rock Quarry Road in 1869. The couple built a stone house where they were living with their children when enumerated on the 1870 census. V.C. Ostrom died in 1885, leaving his widow and daughter, Frances, to carry on his ministry. Over the years, a portion of the property was sold. After V.C. Ostrom's death, his widow and daughter continued to live in their family's home, and in about 1909, they built a one-room frame mission church, "the House of God" on their property. There, Sarah and Frances ministered to poor quarry workers who lived in nearby shacks. The House of God was still operating when Sarah Ostrom died in December 1925.<sup>27</sup>



Frances was a civil service worker at Kelly Field at the time of her mother's death. She lost no time hiring engineer Hans Helland to survey and subdivide her inherited property that became known as New City Block 6461. Frances filed the plat for the subdivision she named Mistletoe Place in March 1926. With the exception of three parcels previously conveyed to family members, the development contained 8.98 acres, extending from Jones Avenue (west) to the old Upper Labor Acequia right-of-way now renamed Dewberry (east), and from East Magnolia (north) to Woodlawn Avenue (south).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Bexar County Marriage Records, City of San Antonio, D-2: 600 (Ostrom and Hummer, July 31, 1866); "Villa de Paree Will be Opened to the Public Sunday by Robards," San Antonio Light, February 20, 1927, 41; Report of Deaths and Burials, February 18, 1885; Ostrom was listed as "Reverend Velie Conklin Ostrom" in a list of 1839 graduates of Western Reserve College published in 1856 ([https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2203/images/41198\\_1220705043\\_2762-00024?pId=5321755](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2203/images/41198_1220705043_2762-00024?pId=5321755), Accessed May 11, 2022); "Need a Home but Built a House of God instead," San Antonio Light, November 12, 1913, 20. Velie and Sarah Ostrom married in 1866 in Bexar County. They were living on Rock Quarry Road in 1870. When Velie Ostrom died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1885, his death record stated that he had lived in San Antonio for thirty years. Sarah Ostrom was noted for her philanthropic work. In addition to operating the House of God, she donated land near San Pedro Springs for a woman's home. The address of the Ostrom's house in 1913 was 1822 Jones Avenue. She began her mission by holding open air services in her yard.

<sup>28</sup> Bexar County Plat Records, 642:246; San Antonio Express, December 29, 1925, 13; Bexar County Probate Records, Sarah

Mistletoe Place opened in June 1926. Marketed as “100% Modern- Restricted- Close-In,” purchasers could buy either a lot priced between \$1,000 and \$1,750 or construct their own custom-built house.<sup>29</sup> A large sign on Jones Avenue pointed to Mistletoe Avenue. By early 1927, Frances Ostrom had partnered with developer Henry A. RoBards to create the “Villa de Paree.” Houses in the Villa were described as “modernized French architecture.” Built according to plans by the Karren and Tobias Lumber Company at a cost of \$5,000 to \$6,000, the houses featured “the latest conveniences and American improvements.”<sup>30</sup> By 1931, 19 houses stood on either side of Ostrom Drive and only one more was illustrated by 1938.<sup>31</sup>

**FRENCH VILLAGE**  
A Touch of Paris  
Located Between E. Woodlawn and Magnolia Avenues  
Just East of Jones Avenue

**Like Castles in Clouds  
but the FRENCH VILLAGE is Real!**

**The French Village  
—and—  
The Villa de Paree  
Open Today  
for Inspection**

**“CASTLES in CLOUDS”** is a brilliant romantic term for our common ordinary day dreams to which we are all addicted. In the midst of our busiest moments we will pause for perhaps a few brief seconds to stare blankly ahead in some dream of the future, only to be rudely brought back to the present with the work at hand.

**WHAT is your “Castle?”** The future home of a tiny son or daughter whose photo rests before you on your desk? Perhaps that of a wife or a sweetheart? Or even for the declining years for Mother and Dad?

**HOME** for them. The right sort of a home. One that they will be proud of, and most of all, enjoy living in. A home that you will leave behind for your children. A home to be exceptionally appreciated by all.

**SUCH** are the homes of the French Village with all the artistry and picturesqueness that is absolutely genuine with the modernism of all up-to-date conveniences.

**AS** you enter the gateway you immediately begin appreciating the work of Miss Frances Ostrom, the present owner of the

Water Heater, the Kohler & Kohler Plumbing Fixtures, distributed by the Southern company; the lighting equipment installed by the Mintel Electric Sales company; the fittingly designed wall paper by the Glidden company of Texas; the floor finishing by F. S. Risinger; the Sanistone Drain Boards from L. E. Wilkins, and furnished by the John L. Jones Furniture company. ALL insured by Trice & Ludolph.

**STRATEGICALLY** located within heart of the business center and just outside FRENCH VILLAGE are FOUR BUSINESS LOTS, where will be built, independent stores for the several necessities of the neighborhood.

**FRENCH** successfully low for the average. These FOUR BUSINESS LOTS will meet you, and only make but, come a great investment, but actually about a great saving for the majority of investors who start today.

**Drive Out Today**

**\$1000  
To Be Given Away  
Grand Opening  
—TODAY—**

R. G. Miller Building Company will hand each of the first ten purchasers a check for one hundred dollars to apply on either a lot or a home in the FRENCH VILLAGE in SAN ANTONIO.

**FREE—\$1000—FREE**

**A. SACKS & CO.  
PLUMBING  
CONTRACTORS  
604 MAIN AVE. TRAVIS 516**

**THE GLIDDEN CO.  
OF TEXAS  
WALLPAPER  
154 W. COMMERCE ST.  
GEORGETT 2958**

**MISS FRANCES OSTROM  
OWNER OF FRENCH VILLAGE  
JONES & MISTLETOE AVE. WOODLAWN 2092**

**PITTSBURG  
WATER HEATER CO.  
308 BROADWAY  
GEORGETT 2066**

**LIGHTING EQUIPMENT BY  
MINTEL ELECTRIC  
SALES CO.  
100-102 HOFSTEN AVE.  
TRAVIS 0925**

Figure A.10. Source: San Antonio Light, February 20, 1927.

## Lindell Place: 1929

In March 1929, while construction was still ongoing in the Villa de Paree, the city approved L.E. Fite’s plat for the development of a single street he named Magnolia Place but formally called Lindell Place. It was the last subdivision in the River Road

Ostrom, Case 14560, March 24, 1926; San Antonio City Directory, 1925. When the chapel was built, services were held three times a week. Spanish-speaking Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers conducted the services.

<sup>29</sup> “Mistletoe,” San Antonio Express, June 13, 1926, 37.

<sup>30</sup> “Furniture is Given Away with Lots,” San Antonio Light, April 3, 1927, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1931, 1938.

neighborhood to be platted and built out. Fite, who was president of the Guaranty Building Corporation, acquired the land immediately north of H.J. Shearer's Brackenridge Parkway addition and hired surveyor A.J. Dreyfuss to subdivide lots that extended along the north and south sides of Magnolia Place from Lindell on the west to the road that followed the river on the east. Included was a triangular lot bordered by Lindell, Magnolia, and the small street by then called Dewberry. To the north lay the property of the River Road Day School.<sup>32</sup>

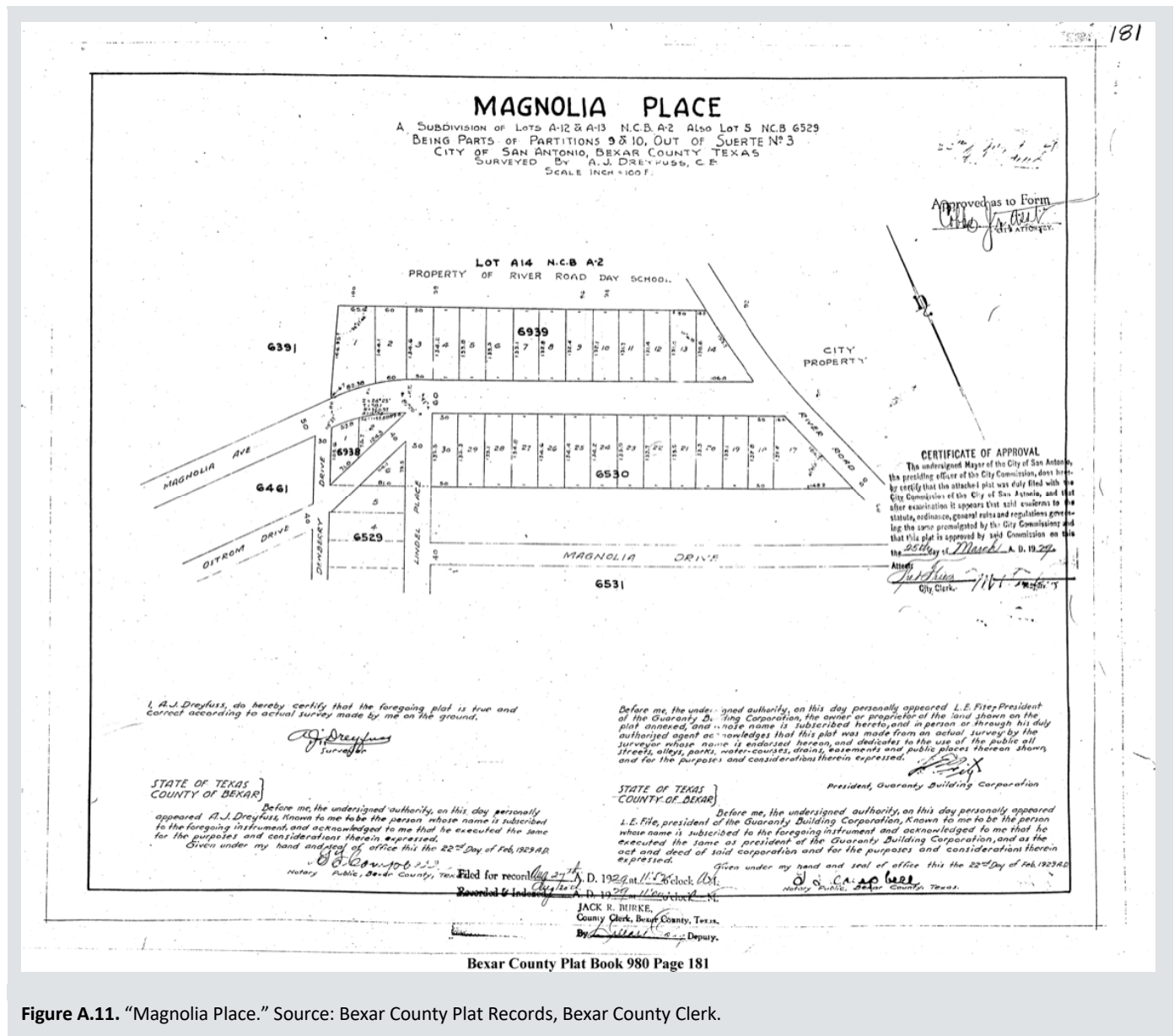


Figure A.11. "Magnolia Place." Source: Bexar County Plat Records, Bexar County Clerk.

Construction began in April 1929 and by late July, L.E. Fite announced the opening of Lindell Place, estimated to cost \$250,000. "French Normandy and Spanish stucco predominate with the choice of five or six room floor plans offered the purchaser."<sup>33</sup> Lindell Place was "In the shadow of Alpine Drive." Golf, polo, the Sunken Gardens and Koehler Park were a short walk away. Children could ride burros and horses, wade in the river and hunt for pecans. Press reports remarked that River Road, by then renamed Memorial Drive to honor those who fought in World War I, would be paved and beautified within the year.<sup>34</sup>

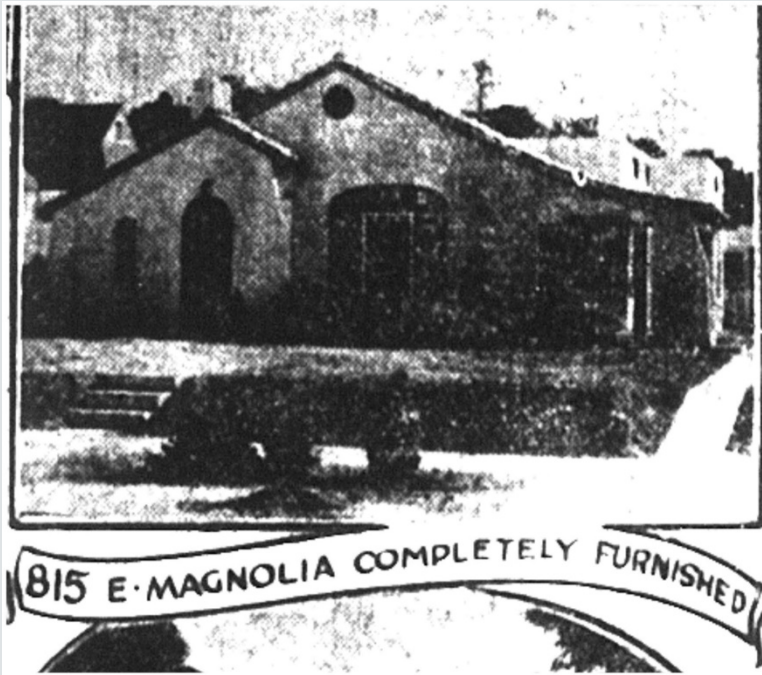
<sup>32</sup> Bexar County Plat Records, 980:181. The road following the river was first referred to as River Drive and then named Memorial Drive. It was commonly known as River Road, which it is called today.

<sup>33</sup> "\$250,000 Home Project is Launched," San Antonio Light, July 28, 1929.

<sup>34</sup> "\$250,000 Home Project is Launched," San Antonio Light, July 28, 1929.



The houses at 227 Lindell and 813, 814, and 815 East Magnolia were among the first to be completed. Five houses were being shown by mid-October 1929, just before the stock market crashed on October 29, marking the beginning of the Great Depression. Three weeks later, Fite was advertising fifteen “choice lots” referred to as “Fite Specials.”<sup>35</sup> Only six houses were standing in 1938, reflecting the effect of the Depression on building activity. Thirteen years later, houses stood on all but two lots.<sup>36</sup>



**Figure A.12.** Source: San Antonio Express, September 15, 1929.

In 1931 as the development of the River Road neighborhood continued and the drive along the river was completed, the city also took steps to finally extend Mulberry Avenue (formerly Olympian Way) east across the river to connect with Broadway. Until that time an unpaved section of Mulberry ended just east of North St. Mary's Street (formerly Jones Avenue) at the polo field fence. A mile of pavement and a bridge over the San Antonio River were needed to make the connection to a park road east of the river.<sup>37</sup> This would provide “a new artery for traffic from Main Avenue to Broadway.”<sup>38</sup> By October 1931, the work was approved.

## The River Road Country Day School

Anastacia Zambrano died in 1837, but it was not until 1851 that Partition Eight of the family's property was transferred to Pedro Flores and Partition Nine to Jose Montes. Both were grandchildren of Anastacia's younger sister, Josefa Zambrano y Montes and Francisco Montes. They were, at the time, the only surviving direct family heirs. Some confusion over property ownership continued until 1858 when the north half of Partition Nine, including the house, known today as 104 Anastacia Place, was conveyed to Pedro Flores. Flores and his wife, Melchiora Indo de Flores, sold the property in 1875 to developers H.B. Adams and E.D.L. Wickes. The house is thought to have remained vacant until 1903. Adams and Wickes used the property repeatedly as collateral for various loans and, following Adams' death in 1895, the 4.68-acre tract was sold at a sheriff's auction. It was purchased by a creditor who subsequently sold it in 1903 to Orson E. Hough, a retired railroad man. Hough and his wife May, who had married the previous year, renovated and lived in the house that carried the address 12 Fitzhugh, the

<sup>35</sup> “Lots Go on Sale in Lindell Place as Fite Specials,” *San Antonio Express*, November 17, 1929, 41.

<sup>36</sup> “Lindell Place Home Draped, Open Today,” *San Antonio Express*, October 20, 1929, 45; “Lots Go on Sale in Lindell Place as Fite Specials,” *San Antonio Express*, November 17, 1929, 41; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1931, 1938, 1951.

<sup>37</sup> “Mulberry Avenue Extension,” *San Antonio Express*, February 15, 1931, 35; “Bridge, Paving Bids to be Asked by the City,” *San Antonio Express*, June 2, 1931, 24.

<sup>38</sup> *San Antonio Light*, October 25, 1931, 3.

small street now known as Trail. Following Orson's death in 1918, May continued to live there.<sup>39</sup>

May Hough's land was in the path of the Memorial Drive right-of-way. In 1922, as construction proceeded south from Koehler Park, she granted the city an unrestricted public easement to build the road through .67-acres of her property. Hough sold her remaining property incrementally. In November 1925, she conveyed 1 acre to Miss M. Sybil Browne, reserving easements should a 30-foot-wide street be constructed through the property. Utility easements were also reserved to provide access to the Browne property. The year after selling the 1-acre tract to Browne, May Hough leased her the remaining 2.64-acres for one year with an option to purchase the land. Browne exercised that option in October 1926.<sup>40</sup>

Sybil Browne was the daughter of Hetty Sibyl Browne, a progressive educator who, over the course of her career, wrote widely on the subject of education. Both mother and daughter graduated from Columbia University where Hetty received her master's degree from Teachers' College and Sybil received her undergraduate degree. Influenced by leading educational reformers, it was Hetty's vision to open a school in the rural setting near the San Antonio River for boys and girls from ages three to junior high school. On March 1, 1926, just four months after Browne purchased the old Zambrano house, Hetty opened the River Road Country Day School.<sup>41</sup>



**Figure A.13.** River Road Country Day School students with teachers and parents. Courtesy: Barbara Witte-Howell.

The River Road Country Day School offered "a rich, natural environment with university trained teachers" where a child would be "stimulated to reach his highest all-around development."<sup>42</sup> The school soon reached its capacity of 45 students. A nursery school for 20 three and four-year-old children was added after Browne acquired the rest of the Hough property. The nursery school was said to "develop children mentally, socially, emotionally and physically."<sup>43</sup> Children enjoyed free activity under the observation of university-trained teachers. The school's non-traditional curriculum emphasized "scholarship and self-discipline," combined with art, music, and dance.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> BCDR 213:227-228 (Spring to Hough, September 11, 1903); Bexar County Marriage Records, R:145 (Hough and Taylor, September 14, 1902); *San Antonio Express*, March 27, 1918.

<sup>40</sup> BCDR 786:2-3 (Hough to City of San Antonio, August 12, 1924); BCDR 851:401-404 (Hough to Browne November 18, 1925); BCDR 851:138-139 and 851:861:139-140 (Hough to San Antonio Public Service Company, November 30, 1925); BCDR 912:263-264 (Hough to Browne, October 19, 1926); BCDR 903:586-587 (Hough to Browne, October 26, 1926). By 1921, the house was numbered 114 Fitzhugh. Though the easement was sold in 1922, it was not recorded until 1924. Hough reserved a 15-foot easement on the north side of the one-acre tract for a future street running from east to west, with an additional adjacent 15-foot strip reserved if the projected street were to be 30-feet wide.

<sup>41</sup> *San Antonio Express*, February 2, 1926, 8; "Nursery School will be opened," *San Antonio Express*, August 14, 1927, 64.

<sup>42</sup> *San Antonio Express*, February 7, 1926, 14-B.

<sup>43</sup> "Nursery School Will be Opened," *San Antonio Express*, August 14, 1927.

<sup>44</sup> *San Antonio Light*, August 12, 1928, 8:8.

When the school first opened, only the Zambrano House stood on the property, but when the site was enlarged, a two-story schoolhouse was constructed. The building, inspired by a Spanish farmhouse and designed by Harvey Page, was a pre-cast concrete block, trademarked as “Nelstone,” with a stucco finish and cypress balconies and shutters. It was already complete when photographed for a newspaper story published in August 1927.<sup>45</sup> Adding to the compound, a small fachwerk house was moved to the site from behind the Thielepape House on Nacogdoches Street behind the Alamo sometime during the 1920s.<sup>46</sup>

On June 1, 1929, the school’s board of directors, operating under a corporation formed in the school’s name, approved a resolution authorizing the purchase of Sybil Browne’s property. In March 1930, Sybil transferred her two pieces of land to the school, together with the \$50,000 promissory note she held. At that time, Sibyl had returned to New York to teach art education at Columbia.<sup>47</sup>

The River Road Country Day School was visited by educators from throughout the country who came to study the Browne’s progressive teaching model. During its 11 years of operation, it became well regarded among the country’s progressive institutions. But the impact of the Depression took its toll on the school. As the Depression deepened, a portion of the stock sold to capitalize the school remained unpaid, and on June 30, 1931, the corporation was forfeited. The \$50,000 note had been paid, and the original shareholders agreed the property should revert to Hetty Browne. It was transferred into her name on June 19, 1935.<sup>48</sup>

The twelfth anniversary of the school’s founding was celebrated in March 1937, but the school ceased operation later that year. Hetty Browne sold the Zambrano house in October 1937 to Frank and Florence Rosengren, who also purchased the rest of the property in 1938. Frank and Florence Rosengren had been in San Antonio less than three years when they bought the River Road property. They moved here in 1935 from Chicago where they operated a bookstore. In San Antonio, they hoped to find a better climate for their son who had respiratory issues. The couple opened the Rosengren bookstore in the Milam Building and looked for a school for their son, Frank (also called Figgi). They selected the River Road Country Day School along the San Antonio River where Frank and Florence lived until they died. Frank’s early education at the River Road Country Day School served him well. He went on to become a noted playwright, screenwriter, and producer. After successful careers in New York, he and his wife Camille returned to San Antonio where they became stewards of both the Zambrano House and Rosengren’s Bookstore, a beloved cultural landmark. Both Frank and Camille lived in the Zambrano House until their deaths in 2010 and 2021 respectively, leaving their daughter Emily Ferry to continue their River Road legacy.<sup>49</sup>

## **U.S. 281 (also called the North Expressway or the McAllister Freeway)**

San Antonio grew rapidly in the years following World War II. Traffic congestion increased as residents moved from old neighborhoods near downtown to sprawling modern subdivisions. New highways were planned and built extending in all directions from the city’s historic core. One proposed road was referred to as the “North Expressway.” City bond funding was approved in 1961, but years of contentious opposition to the proposed route through Brackenridge Park and Olmos Basin followed. The expressway, named for councilman and businessman Walter W. McAllister, who championed its construction,

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<sup>45</sup> “Attractive Home of River Road School,” *San Antoni Express*, August 14, 1927, 6-C; Robert Wilson Harris notes regarding the River Road Country Day School, copy in files of Maria Watson Pfeiffer.

<sup>46</sup> Personal files, Maria Watson Pfeiffer. Limited research was conducted by Pfeiffer on the “jacalita” for her step-brother, Jim Cullum, Jr.

<sup>47</sup> BCDR 1173:214-215 (Day School to Public, March 20, 1930). Though the resolution was adopted on June 1, 1929, it was not filed until March 1930; BCDR 1171:214-216 (Browne to Day School, March 30, 1930).

<sup>48</sup> BCDR 1487:444-447 (River Road Country Day School to Browne, July 8, 1935).

<sup>49</sup> BCDR 1597:630-631 (Browne to Rosengren, October 18, 1937); BCDR 1659:572-572 (Browne to Rosengren, November 19, 1938); Mary Carolyn Hollers George, *Rosengren’s Books: An Oasis for Mind and Spirit* (San Antonio: Wing’s Press, 1915) 25. The Sibyl Browne Papers, housed at the DRT Library, are not available for research at the time of this writing in May 2022. Material about the River Road Country Day School is included in that collection. The school house was sold to James A. Cullum, Jr. in 1993. He died in 2019 and his daughter, Blanquita Sullivan and her family live there today. Frank Duane Rosengren inherited the Zambrano House following Florence Rosengren’s death in 1988. He and his wife, Camille, lived there, and after his death in she remained in the house until her death in 2021. It is now owned by their daughter, Emily Ferry. Camille Rosengren was a founding member of the River Road Neighborhood Association.



did not open until February 1978.

The expressway's proposed center section ran through the western edge of Brackenridge Park and threaded between Alamo Stadium and the Sunken Garden Theater on its pathway north through Olmos Basin. Preservationists and environmentalists decried this intrusion on dedicated parkland. The Sierra Club, joined by the fledgling citizens group Save Our City, joined in the fight. While legal proceedings continued, construction was halted on the contentious center section. Former Conservation Society president Wanda Graham Ford appeared on the cover of *Life Magazine* with the incomplete highway ramp looming behind her. Opponents planted the "Tree of Hope" in the expressway's right-of-way and held an 11-day vigil to protect it.<sup>50</sup>



**Figure A.14.** Aerial view of U.S. 281 right-of-way between Alamo Stadium and the Sunken Garden Theater. Courtesy: Texas Department of Transportation.

Faced with growing backlash from the city, the Conservation Society dropped its opposition, and though the fight was carried on for a time by individual members and supporters, construction eventually proceeded. As a result of the expressway's construction, the River Road neighborhood lost many houses from the western portions of the Belmont Park and Mistletoe additions. Just as devastating, the neighborhood lost its tranquility when high-speed traffic began racing past the once-quiet neighborhood.

## The People of the River Road Neighborhood

Though some residents of River Road in the 1960s and early 1970s likely opposed the expressway, outspoken opponents including Sally Buchanan and Clifton McNeel later made the neighborhood their home. Writing in 2015, Mary Carolyn Hollers George, who lived in River Road for 17 years, observed, "The neighborhood is favored typically- then and now- by artists and architects, writers, musicians, and intellectuals."<sup>51</sup>

The River Road Country Day School, which operated in the neighborhood from 1926 until 1937, drew the attention of creative personalities to the riverside enclave. One artistically inclined family settled there the same year the school opened.

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<sup>50</sup> Lewis F. Fisher, *Saving San Antonio* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1995) 330-331. Fisher's book contains a detailed account of the entire North Expressway fight.

<sup>51</sup> George, 25.

Bootmaker Sam Lucchese built a house at the southeast corner of Armour and Lindell that included a stage where his daughter, famed opera singer Josephine Lucchese, performed. In the early days of the neighborhood, John T. Wilson built homes as wedding presents for his daughters, including Ethel, who became one of the city's leading artists and preservationists.<sup>52</sup>

After Frank and Florence Rosengren purchased the school property in the late 1930s, a constant parade of creative minds passed through their home. Artist Georgia O'Keeffe is said to have painted there. The old school building was eventually purchased by renowned jazz musician, Jim Cullum. Watercolorist Caroline Shelton, author Lois Burkhalter, ceramist Harding Black, and Broadway producer Walter Starcke, all made their homes in River Road. Countless other writers, architects, artists, designers, actors, and musicians have lived and worked here or simply passed through, each contributing their own storied layer that has given River Road its unique patination.

While the expressway battle was still ongoing, 70 neighbors joined together to form the River Road Neighborhood Association. One of the organizers, Lanny Sinkin, stated: "Our real thrust is aimed at neighbors working together for mutual enjoyment, to benefit each other in the area and to work on problems created by projects of public agencies that may affect us."<sup>53</sup>

The Association's work since its founding has been consistent with this original intent. Founding member, Arthur "Hap" Veltman, chaired the Advisory Committee for the first Brackenridge Park master plan adopted by City Council in 1980. Others, including founding member Lawrence "Larry" De Martino, were outspoken advocates for both the park and neighborhood as new plans were developed in subsequent decades. They and many of River Road's early protectors worked throughout their lives to preserve the unique neighborhood they called home, leaving an invaluable legacy for those who continue their mission.

In 2022, the group's purpose is to protect, maintain, and enhance their neighborhood, focusing on the "ecological, historical, social and cultural elements which formed the neighborhood and endowed the area with its present character."<sup>54</sup> In the 47 years since its founding, the association has worked diligently to fulfill this purpose. Notable among their causes have been the protection of Alamo Stadium, preservation of trees in Brackenridge Park threatened by construction of a city parking garage, and ongoing efforts to protect the river's natural channel, fight intrusive development, and seek assurances that residents will enjoy access to their neighborhood during special events in Alamo Stadium and Brackenridge Park.



**Figure A.15.** Photo of River Road Neighbors. Courtesy of Bill Sibley.

The association worked to establish the River Road Historic District, which was adopted in 2011 by City Council. To support and enhance the historic district, in 2022 the group is developing the *River Road Historic District Design Manual* tailored to the area's unique features. The goal is for this manual to strengthen efforts to preserve the history and quality of life of the River Road neighborhood, whose origin and identity are inseparable from the river that shapes the area. This history is meant to further inform these guidelines, placing the River Road Historic District and neighborhood in its full historical context.

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<sup>52</sup> Gene Elder, Untitled list of creative people who have lived in the River Road neighborhood. The list is an informal compilation of e-mails and notes gathered by Elder from River Road residents. The list was provided to Pfeiffer by Boo Witte Howell. Ethel Wilson Harris's granddaughter, Boo Witte Howell, has lived in the neighborhood for many years.

<sup>53</sup> "River Road group forms," *San Antonio Express*, March 8, 1976, 3-A.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.riverroadna.org>, accessed May 15, 2020.

## Appendix B: Glossary

**Abut:** To adjoin at an end; to be contiguous.

**Acequia:** An irrigation system that diverts water from a natural river or stream using dams, canals, swales, and desagues (drainpipes).

**Arcade:** A line of arches resting on columns or piers; often a covered walkway with such arches lining one side or both sides.

**Arch:** A curved and sometimes pointed structural member used to span an opening.

**Awl:** A small, pointed tool.

**Awning:** A projecting roof-like structure sheltering a door or window, often canvas.

**Balcony:** A railed projecting platform found above ground level on a building.

**Bargeboard:** A board, sometimes decorative, that adorns the gable-end of a gabled roof.

**Battered Foundation:** A foundation that is inclined, so that it appears to slope inward as it rises upward.

**Bead Board:** Wood paneling with grooves.

**Belt Course:** A horizontal band running around a building; often a bank of bricks or a flat wood molding.

**Berm:** A raised bank at the edge of a yard beside a road or sidewalk.

**Board and Batten:** Wood siding with wide boards, placed vertically, and narrow strips of wood (battens) covering the seams between the boards.

**Boxed Eaves:** Eaves that are enclosed with a fascia and panels under the soffit.

**Bracket:** A projecting support used under cornices, eaves, balconies, or windows to provide structural or visual support.

**Brick:** A building or paving unit made of fired clay, usually rectangular in shape.

**Buttress:** An exterior masonry support set at an angle perpendicular to the exterior wall, often used to counter lateral thrusts placed on the exterior walls by interior roof vaults.

**Canal:** A man-made waterway used to divert water for irrigation or transportation; sometimes part of an acequia system.

**Canopy:** A projection over a niche or doorway; often decorative or decorated.

**Capital:** The uppermost part, or head, of a column or pilaster.

**Casement Window:** A window sash that swings open along its entire length; usually on hinges fixed to the sides of the opening into which it is fitted.

**Clapboard Siding:** Wood siding for exterior walls, commonly applied horizontally with one board partially overlapping the next; profile is cut at an angle so that the lower edge is thicker than the upper edge.

**Colonnade:** A series of columns arranged at regular intervals, typically supporting one side of a roof.

**Column:** A round, vertical support; in classical architecture, the column has three parts: base, shaft, and capital.

**Concrete Block:** A hollow or solid concrete masonry unit consisting of cement and suitable aggregates combined with water.

**Concrete Slab:** A flat, rectangular, reinforced concrete structural member; especially used for floors and roofs.

**Coping:** The protective uppermost course of a wall or parapet.



**Corbelling:** Pattern in a masonry wall formed by projecting or overhanging masonry units.

**Cornice:** A projecting, ornamental molding along the top of a building, wall, etc., finishing or crowning it.

**Crenellation:** A parapet with alternating solid and void spaces, originally used for defense; also known as battlement.

**Dam:** A structure used to hold back water and/or divert the flow of water.

**Desague:** Translated from Spanish as “drainage,” this term often refers to drain pipes incorporated into acequias.

**Deteriorated Beyond Repair:** The individual building component is decayed to the point where it cannot serve its structural purpose(s), as determined by the Historic Preservation Office staff and/or the Historic Landmarks Commission. Examples of elements deteriorated beyond repair include, but are not limited to:

- An individual wood window muntin decayed so that it cannot hold a pane of glass as intended; decay is documented by probing the core with an awl and lifting up irregular pieces of wood.
- An individual wood weatherboard decayed to the point where it cannot hold paint to keep the building watertight; decay is documented by probing the core with an awl and lifting up irregular pieces of wood.
- An individual porch column decayed so that it can no longer support the porch roof; decay is documented by a sag in the porch roof even when the porch foundation is shown to be level.
- A metal decorative railing corroded so that it threatens to expand and crack the adjacent surface; corrosion is documented by a bubbling texture, and/or probing the metal with a sharp object and digging out brittle strands.

**Dormer:** A vertically set window on a sloping roof; also the roofed structure housing such a window.

**Dentils:** A series of closely spaced, small, rectangular blocks, used especially in classical architecture.

**Double-Hung Window:** A window with two (or more) sashes, or glazed frames, set in vertically grooved frames and capable of being raised or lowered independently of each other.

**Eaves:** The lower edges of a roof that project beyond the building wall.

**Engaged Column:** A column that is partially attached to a wall.

**Entablature:** A beam carried by columns; in Classical architectural styles, typically elaborated with a three-tiered molding, divided into the cornice (top), frieze (middle), and architrave (bottom).

**Eyebrow Dormer:** A low dormer with a wavy line over the lintel, resembling an eyebrow.

**Façade:** An exterior wall.

**Fanlight:** An arched window with muntins that radiate like a fan; typically used as a transom.

**Fascia Boards:** Horizontal boards, typically wood, that cover the ends of rafters.

**Fence:** A barrier constructed of upright posts connected by wood boards or metal lattice, typically used to mark a property boundary or enclose an area of ground.

**Fenestration:** An opening in a surface.

**Fixed Sash:** A window, or part of a window, that does not open.

**Flat Roof:** A roof that has only enough pitch so that water can drain.

**Foil:** A decorative motif formed by a series of intersecting arcs, arranged in a flower-like shape; a series of three arcs, resembling a clover, is known as a *trefoil*.

**Frieze:** The middle section of an entablature (defined above).

**Gabled Roof:** A roof having a single slope on each side of a central ridge; usually with a gable at one or both ends of the roof.

**Gambrel Roof:** A roof having a double slope on two sides of a building; the most common example is a barn roof.

**Glazing:** Window or glass, as within a door or window.

**Half-Timbered:** Heavy timber framing with the spaces filled in with plaster or masonry.

**Hipped Roof:** A roof having adjacent flat surfaces that slope upward from all sides of the perimeter of the building.

**Historic-Age:** The City of San Antonio's historic preservation ordinance considers that building fabric that is 25 years or older may contribute to the character of a historic district. Some provisions within this manual specifically mention "historic-age" features. Within the River Road Historic District, buildings and features 25 years or older are considered "historic-age."

**Hood:** A protective and sometimes decorative cover over doors, windows, or chimneys.

**In-kind:** Replacement of a feature with the same material, such as wood for wood.

**Jalousie Window:** A window composed of angled, overlapping slats of glass, arranged horizontally like a shutter in order to tilt open for ventilation.

**Landscape Wall:** A solid barrier constructed of masonry units (like brick, stone, or concrete block), typically used to mark a property boundary or enclose an area of ground. Also see "Retaining Wall" below.

**Leaded Glass Window:** A window composed of pieces of glass that are held in place with lead strips; the glass can be clear, colored, or stained.

**Lintel:** The piece of timber, stone, or metal that spans above an opening and supports the weight of the wall above it.

**Lites:** Window panes.

**Mansard Roof:** A roof having two slopes on all four sides; the lower slope is much steeper than the upper.

**Masonry:** A construction method that stacks masonry units, such as stones or bricks, and binds them with mortar to form a wall.

**Molding:** A decorative profile that is given to architectural members and subordinate parts of the buildings; whether cavities or projections such as cornices, bases, door and window jambs and heads.

**Mortar:** A mixture of cement, lime, sand, or other aggregates with water; used in plastering and bricklaying.

**Mullion:** A large vertical member separating two casements or coupled windows or doors.

**Muntin:** One of the thin strips of wood used to separate panes of glass within a window.

**Paneled Door:** A door constructed with recessed rectangular panels surrounded by raised moldings.

**Parapet:** A low wall or protective railing, usually used around the edge of a roof or around a balcony.

**Pediment:** A triangular section framed by a horizontal molding on its base and two sloping moldings on each side.

**Pier-and-Beam Foundation:** Foundation consisting of vertical piers that support horizontal beams.

**Pilaster:** A rectangular column or shallow pier attached to a wall.

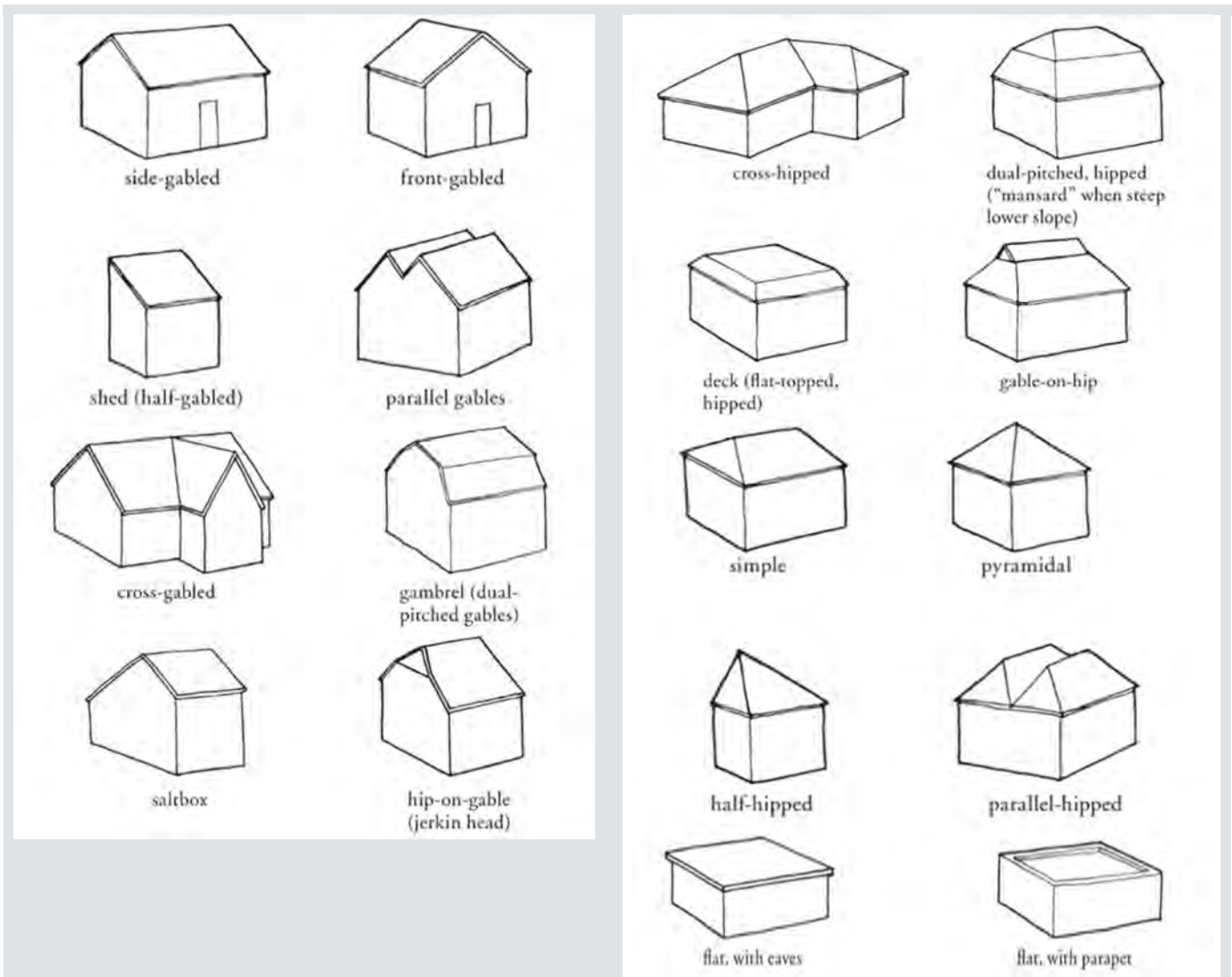
**Plinth:** A base for a column, usually square or rectangular; a square or rectangular ground-level base for an irregularly shaped building.

**Porch:** A covered entrance or semi-enclosed space projecting from the façade of a building; may be open-sided, screened, or glass-enclosed.

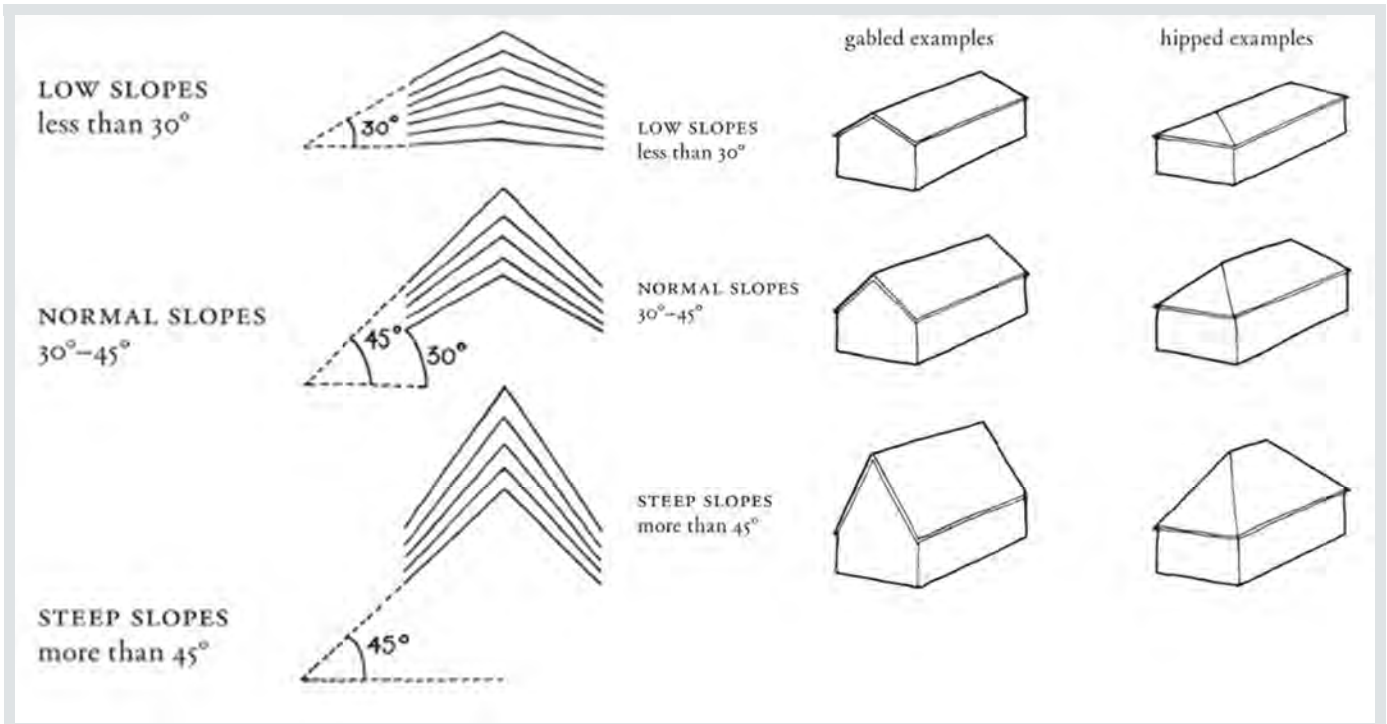
**Porte Cochere:** A roofed structure attached to a building and extending over a driveway, allowing vehicles to pass through.

- Portico:** A roof covering an entrance, often supported by columns, sometimes supported by brackets attached to a façade. May be freestanding or attached to a building.
- Pyramidal Roof:** A pyramid-shaped roof with four sides of equal slope and shape.
- Quoins:** Large or rusticated stone blocks at the corners of a masonry building.
- Rafter:** One of a series of structural members spanning from the ridge of the roof to the eaves, providing support for the covering of a roof.
- Repointing:** The act of repairing the joints of brickwork, masonry, etc., with mortar or cement.
- Retaining Wall:** A solid masonry wall (often brick, stone, or concrete) used to hold back soil on one side, creating different levels of terracing in a landscape and/or minimizing erosion.
- Roof Form:** The shape of a roof; typical examples are illustrated below (**fig. A-1**).
- Roof Slope:** Angle of a roof (also known as roof pitch); common examples illustrated below (**fig. A-2**).
- Slip Cover.** The covering of a building's original facade, be it building materials or features, with a different substance to create another appearance.
- Sash:** The framework for a window; also, a moveable part of a window.
- Shed Roof:** A roof containing only one sloping plane.
- Side Light:** A vertical window flanking a door.
- Side-Gabled Roof:** A gable whose face is on one side (or part of one side) of a building, perpendicular to the façade.
- Sill:** Horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door opening.
- Soffit:** The underside of overhanging eaves; the underside of other architectural structures such as an arch or balcony.
- Storm Window:** A secondary window installed to protect and/or reinforce the main window.
- String Course:** A horizontal band running around a building; often a bank of bricks or a flat wood molding (similar to a belt course, defined above).
- Stucco:** Exterior finish material composed of either Portland cement or lime and sand mixed with water.
- Swale:** An earthen depressed area of land used to hold or divert stormwater and/or river water; often incorporated into acequia systems.
- Terra-cotta.** A ceramic material molded decoratively and often glazed, used as a facing for buildings or as an inset ornament.
- Transom:** A horizontal window over a door or window.
- Turret:** A small tower projecting from a roof.
- Vergeboard:** A board, sometimes decorative, that adorns the gable-end of a gabled roof (similar to a bargeboard, defined above).
- Wall:** A solid vertical structural slab used to create an enclosure. Also see “Landscape Wall” and “Retaining Wall” above.
- Wing Wall:** A portion of the front façade extending past the side façade, often sloping down from the eaves to the ground at an angle; a subordinate wall, one end of which is built against an abutment.





**Figure B.1.** Diagrams depicting types of roofs commonly found on historic houses. Source: McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*.



**Figure B.2.** Diagram depicting roof slopes (or roof pitches) commonly found on historic houses. Source: McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses*.

# Appendix C: Historic District Boundaries and Prior Planning Efforts

## C.1. River Road Historic District Boundaries



**Figure C.1.1.** Map of current River Road Historic District. Sources: Base map from ESRI, boundary from the City of San Antonio, overlay by HHM.



## C.2. Prior Planning Efforts Affecting River Road

### Unified Development Code

The City of San Antonio's Unified Development Code (UDC) contains the local Historic Preservation Ordinance, as well as all other codes and ordinances relating to construction and land use within the city limits. The review process for local historic districts currently is set forth in Article V.<sup>55</sup> Another code with special relevance for the River Road Historic District is Article VI, Division 6, which sets forth additional design requirements for River Improvement Overlay ("RIO") Districts – applicable only to commercial properties and multifamily properties with more than eight units.<sup>56</sup> (Both articles are summarized in Table 1.3.1.) The River Road Historic District falls within RIO District 1 (fig. 1-2). The RIO District encourages preservation within the historic district, as well as preservation of the adjacent parkland, but it also encourages higher-density development nearby, placing pressure on the viewsheds from the district and the river watershed areas. Note that the UDC is updated every five years. For the most current adopted version of the UDC, see

[https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=14228](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=14228).

Table C.2.1. Summary of selected UDC articles applicable to preservation in the River Road Historic District (current as of 2022). For updates to the UDC, see [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=14228](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=14228).

UDC Article	Key Points
<b>Article VI, Division 2 – Historic Preservation<sup>57</sup></b>	Sec. 35-610. Alteration, Restoration, Rehabilitation, and New Construction. (a) In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application for a certificate to alter, restore, rehabilitate, or add to a building, object, site or structure designated a historic landmark or located in a historic district, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation and provisions adopted by city council as provided in this article. The historic and design review commission shall also utilize the Historic Design Guidelines as adopted by the city council, and any specific design guidelines adopted pursuant to the Unified Development Code and this article. If conflicting provisions of this chapter and city council approved guidelines have been approved, the city manager or the city manager's designee shall reconcile the conflict if possible so that effect may be given to each. If the conflict is irreconcilable, this chapter shall prevail. Applications shall be reviewed for consistency with the historic or district specific design guidelines adopted by city council. The application shall be reviewed for conformance to the general rules and principles contained in the guidelines. Applications should be approved if in general conformance with the guidelines but denial of an application by the city manager or the city manager's designee may be based on any inconsistency or nonconformance with the approved guidelines. Non-public interior spaces are exempt from this section. The only interior spaces to be considered for review, and therefore not exempt, are those publicly owned spaces that are, or were, accessible to the public (e.g., lobbies, corridors, rotundas, meeting halls, courtrooms), and those spaces, both public and privately owned, that are individually designated and are important to the public because of any significant historical, architectural, cultural, or ceremonial value.
<b>Article VI, Division 6 – "Rio" Districts (for commercial properties and multifamily properties with more than eight units)<sup>58</sup></b>	Sec. 35-670(b)(4)(A). Design Objectives for "RIO-1" River Improvement Overlay District – 1: i. Maintain the character of existing residential neighborhoods and redevelop commercial nodes. ii. Maintain two (2) separate contexts within its boundaries: 1) residential areas and 2) newly revitalized commercial nodes. iii. Allow higher density, multi-family residential and mixed-use buildings. iv. Preserve existing neighborhoods. v. Encourage mixed-use redevelopment of urban character along Broadway. vi. Allow for neighborhood-oriented business and redevelopment of the area. vii. Redevelop Broadway and Avenue B as urban corridors with consistent street edges.

<sup>55</sup> City of San Antonio Unified Development Code, Chapter 2, Article V, accessed September 30, 2021, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICO\\_CH2AD\\_ARTVHIDEREQO](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICO_CH2AD_ARTVHIDEREQO).

<sup>56</sup> City of San Antonio Unified Development Code, Article VI, Division 6 – "Rio" Districts, accessed September 30, 2021, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE\\_DIV6RIDI](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE_DIV6RIDI).

<sup>57</sup> City of San Antonio Unified Development Code, Article VI, Division 2 – Historic Preservation, accessed September 30, 2021, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE\\_DIV2HIPR](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE_DIV2HIPR).

<sup>58</sup> City of San Antonio Unified Development Code, Article VI, Division 6 – "Rio" Districts, accessed September 30, 2021, [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE\\_DIV6RIDI](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code?nodeId=ARTVIHIPRURDE_DIV6RIDI).

UDC Article	Key Points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>viii. Maintain scenic open space and the natural character of the river, particularly through Brackenridge Park.</li> <li>ix. Maintain scenic open space and natural character of the river, particularly through Brackenridge Park, so that it is in character with its nearby residential neighbors; residents should be able to easily access this open space while maintaining their sense of privacy.</li> </ul>

## River Road Neighborhood Plan Update

The first River Road neighborhood plan was adopted in 1985 and updated in 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2006. The River Road Neighborhood Association and the City of San Antonio worked together and focused on reducing the land area zoned for multifamily or commercial use. The majority of the neighborhood was zoned “Low Density Residential,” maintaining only a few lots zoned as “Medium Density Residential” or “Neighborhood Commercial.” This neighborhood plan removed the incentive to demolish smaller housing to form large-scale new construction, laying the groundwork for historic district designation in 2010. The full text of the 2006 River Road Neighborhood Plan Update is available online at [https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/Planning/NPUD/River\\_Road\\_NP\\_2006.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/Planning/NPUD/River_Road_NP_2006.pdf).



**Figure C.2.1.** Detail of a map comparing the boundaries of the River Road Neighborhood Association planning area with the River Road Historic District boundaries. A more detailed map of the boundaries of the River Road Historic District is provided above. Source: City of San Antonio, December 2021.

## San Antonio Strategic Historic Preservation Plan

In 2009, the City of San Antonio adopted a Strategic Historic Preservation Plan. This document identified the need for citywide design guidelines as a pressing priority. The full text of the Strategic Historic Preservation Plan is available online at [https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/Strategic-Historic-Plan\\_Final-8-2009.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/Strategic-Historic-Plan_Final-8-2009.pdf).

## City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines

As noted above in Section 1.1, the City of San Antonio also maintains *City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines*. Consistent with the recommendations of the Strategic Historic Preservation Plan, in 2012 the City of San Antonio published a set of citywide guidelines to help illustrate and clarify the requirements for “Alteration, Restoration, Rehabilitation, and New Construction” in historic districts set forth in Article VI, Division 2, Sec. 35-610. (See Table 1.3.1 above). Given their broad,



citywide scope, these guidelines are general. The citywide guidelines recommend that each district create district-specific guidelines, stating, “District-specific guidelines [will] address issues or elements that are unique within individual historic districts.”<sup>59</sup> This design manual is more specific than the citywide guidelines and should be considered a primary, overriding source of regulations within the River Road Historic District (consistent with Figure C.2.1 above). The full text of the 2012 guidelines is available online at <https://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/HDRC/HistoricDistrictGuidelines>.

## **Overlapping Historic Designations within the River Road Historic District**

Note that one property within the River Road Historic District—the Zambrano House at 104 Anastacia Place—is also designated as a Registered Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL).<sup>60</sup> The RTHL program is administered by the Texas Historical Commission and entails preservation standards that may be stricter than those in this design manual. Any alterations to the Zambrano House must meet all RTHL standards, as well as the guidelines within this design manual and all of the other planning documents listed above. Information about the special requirements for RTHLs is available from the Texas Historical Commission at <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/recorded-texas-historic-landmarks>. If any other buildings within the River Road Historic District are designated as RTHLs in the future, alterations to the buildings also will need to comply with these requirements.

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<sup>59</sup> Clarion and HHM, *Citywide Historic District Guidelines*, Section 2, page 1, [https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/2 ExteriorMaintenanceandAlterations.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/2%20ExteriorMaintenanceandAlterations.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> “Zambrano House [RTHL,” designated 1966, Texas Historic Sites Atlas, from the Texas Historical Commission, <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/Details/5029005938>.

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## Appendix D: City of San Antonio Ordinance Information

### D.1. Historic Preservation

The City of San Antonio's historic preservation ordinance currently is published online at the link below. Routine updates to the ordinance will appear at this same site once formally adopted.

- [https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/OHP\\_Amendments\\_Ordinance-2010.pdf](https://www.sanantonio.gov/portals/0/Files/HistoricPreservation/OHP_Amendments_Ordinance-2010.pdf)

### D.2. Unified Development Code

The currently adopted City of San Antonio's Unified Development Code is published online at the link below:

- [https://library.municode.com/tx/san\\_antonio/codes/unified\\_development\\_code](https://library.municode.com/tx/san_antonio/codes/unified_development_code)

**Note that the UDC is updated every five years.** Draft or interim updates may not be reflected at the link above.



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## Appendix E: Preservation Resource Toolkit

This appendix intends to provide property owners an array of information to guide research and project planning, including:

- Historical Research Resources,
- Nationwide Preservation Guidelines, and
- Funding and Incentives for Historic Preservation.

### E.1. Historical Research Resources

When beginning the process of restoring, renovating, or constructing on a landmark property or within a historic district, it is best to research a building or structure and its surrounding environment. Research can provide information about when a building was constructed and how it changed over time – informing the evaluation of the building’s period of significance (as defined in Appendix B). The following is a synopsis of areas that may aid in the inquiry of a building or structure.

#### E.1.1. Historic Maps

- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1896–1913, Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin, <http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/f.html>.

#### E.1.2. Historic Photographs

- Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas Libraries, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>.
- Prints and Photographs Collection, Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/>.

#### E.1.3. Literature

##### E.1.3.1. City Directories and Telephone Directories

- Ancestry, <https://www.ancestry.com/> (subscription required).
- City Directory Collection, Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/CIT/>.
- Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, [https://www.cah.utexas.edu/research/directories\\_browse.php?location\\_id=49](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/research/directories_browse.php?location_id=49).

##### E.1.3.2. Newspapers

Old newspapers or periodicals may be a good source, particularly to find pictures of the building in its original state. This type of literature will record outstanding and daily events, providing a good opportunity to read how the building was originally used and by whom.

- Newspaper Archive, [www.newspaperarchive.com](http://www.newspaperarchive.com) (subscription required).
- Texas Digital Newspaper Program, Portal to Texas History, University of North Texas, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/explore/collections/TDNP/>.

##### E.1.3.3. Books

- Harris, Cyril M., EE. *Dictionary of Architecture and Construction*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1975.
- *Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 2015.
- Murtagh, William J. *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*. Pittstown, New Jersey: The Main Street Press, 1988.

##### E.1.3.4. Online Resources

- *AIA Directory of American Architects, 1956–1978*, American Institute of Architects, <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/AHDAA/overview>.

- Historic Building Catalog Collection, Association for Preservation Technology, Building Technology Heritage Library, [https://archive.org/details/buildingtechnologyheritagelibrary?sort=-downloads&and\[\]=subject%3A%22house+plans+-+catalogs%22](https://archive.org/details/buildingtechnologyheritagelibrary?sort=-downloads&and[]=subject%3A%22house+plans+-+catalogs%22).
- *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* [journal]. Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/shqonline>.
- *Texas Architect* [magazine], 1950–, <https://magazine.texasarchitects.org/issues/>.
- *Texas Contractor* [magazine]:
  - Sterling C. Evans Library, Texas A&M University, 1939–, <https://libcat.tamu.edu/vwebv/search?searchArg=texas+contractor&searchCode=TALL&setLimit=1&recCount=50&searchType=1&page.search.search.button=Search>, or
  - University of Texas at Austin Libraries, 1939–1946 and 1964–1978, <http://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/search~S29?Xtexas+contractor&searchscope=29&SORT=D/Xtexas+contractor&searchscope=29&SORT=D&SUBKEY=texas+contractor/1,87,87,B/holdings&FF=Xtexas+contractor&1,1>.
- *Texas General Contractors Association Monthly Bulletin*, 1920–, Houston Area Digital Archives, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/books/id/9648/rec/1>.
- Texas County Tax Rolls, 1837–1910, Family Search, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1827575>.
- *The Handbook of Texas Online*. Texas State Historical Association, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online>.

## E.2. Nationwide Preservation Standards and Guidelines

### E.2.1. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

These design standards are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, which is one component of the overall Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Standards are a series of concepts about maintaining, repairing, and replacing historic materials, as well as designing new additions or making alterations. The Guidelines offer general design and technical recommendations to assist in applying the Standards to a specific property. Together, they provide a framework and guidance for decision-making about work or changes to a historic property. The full text of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation is provided online at the link below:

- <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>.

### E.2.2. NPS Preservation Briefs

The National Park Service (NPS) also provides technical assistance and guidance on the preservation of historic properties through the publication of *Preservation Briefs* and Preservation Tech Notes. These resources focus on specific issues common in preservation. All are available online at:

- <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve.htm>.

### E.2.3. NPS Interpreting the Standards Bulletins

In addition to *Preservation Briefs*, the NPS also publishes *Interpreting the Standards Bulletins* to “assist building owners in applying the Standards to rehabilitation projects,” available online at:

- <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/standards-bulletins.htm>.

## E.3. Funding and Incentives for Preservation

A number of tax incentives and grants exist to promote preservation of historic buildings, sponsored by the state and federal government, as well as private nonprofit organizations. Note that federal tax credits are for income-producing properties only. State tax credits may be used by income-producing properties or nonprofit properties. Grant funding requirements vary but often prioritize awards for buildings with a community or nonprofit use.

- Federal percent historic rehabilitation tax credits, National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>.
- State of Texas 25 percent historic rehabilitation tax credits, Texas Historical Commission, <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/preservation-tax-incentives/texas-historic-preservation-tax-credit>.
- Texas Preservation Trust Fund grants, Texas Historical Commission, <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/texas-preservation-trust-fund-0>.
- City of San Antonio Local Tax Exemptions, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/About-Us/WhyPreserve/incentives>.

- City of San Antonio Vacant Buildings Program, <https://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/VacantBuildings/Resources>.
- San Antonio Conservation Society Building Grants, <https://www.saconservation.org/what-we-do/building-grants>.