

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 17, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-583
ADDRESS: 410 AUSTIN ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 517 BLK 11 LOT S 36.2 FT OF 3 & N 11.4 FT OF S 47.6 FT OF W 96 FT OF 3
ZONING: D, HL
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
LANDMARK: Robitzsch Brothers Building
APPLICANT: SHIRLEY GERRY & HARMEL OLAF & KIMBERLY
OWNER: SHIRLEY GERRY & HARMEL OLAF & KIMBERLY
TYPE OF WORK: ADA improvements, exterior alterations
APPLICATION RECEIVED: October 27, 2021
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Rachel Rettaliata

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install an ADA accessible door opening on the north elevation.
2. Construct an exterior staircase on the north elevation to access the second floor.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alterations

1. Materials: Woodwork

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Inspections*—Conduct semi-annual inspections of all exterior wood elements to verify condition and determine maintenance needs.
- ii. *Cleaning*—Clean exterior surfaces annually with mild household cleaners and water. Avoid using high pressure power washing and any abrasive cleaning or stripping methods that can damage the historic wood siding and detailing.
- iii. *Paint preparation*—Remove peeling, flaking, or failing paint surfaces from historic woodwork using the gentlest means possible to protect the integrity of the historic wood surface. Acceptable methods for paint removal include scraping and sanding, thermal removal, and when necessary, mild chemical strippers. Sand blasting and water blasting should never be used to remove paint from any surface. Sand only to the next sound level of paint, not all the way to the wood, and address any moisture and deterioration issues before repainting.
- iv. *Repainting*—Paint once the surface is clean and dry using a paint type that will adhere to the surface properly. See *General Paint Type Recommendations* in Preservation Brief #10 listed under Additional Resources for more information.
- v. *Repair*—Repair deteriorated areas or refasten loose elements with an exterior wood filler, epoxy, or glue.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Facade materials*—Avoid removing materials that are in good condition or that can be repaired in place. Consider exposing original wood siding if it is currently covered with vinyl or aluminum siding, stucco, or other materials that have not achieved historic significance.
- ii. *Materials*—Use in-kind materials when possible or materials similar in size, scale, and character when exterior woodwork is beyond repair. Ensure replacement siding is installed to match the original pattern, including exposures. Do not introduce modern materials that can accelerate and hide deterioration of historic materials. Hardiboard and other cementitious materials are not recommended.
- iii. *Replacement elements*—Replace wood elements in-kind as a replacement for existing wood siding, matching in profile, dimensions, material, and finish, when beyond repair.

2. Materials: Masonry and Stucco

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Paint*—Avoid painting historically unpainted surfaces. Exceptions may be made for severely deteriorated material where other consolidation or stabilization methods are not appropriate. When painting is acceptable, utilize a water permeable paint to avoid trapping water within the masonry.
- ii. *Clear area*—Keep the area where masonry or stucco meets the ground clear of water, moisture, and vegetation.
- iii. *Vegetation*—Avoid allowing ivy or other vegetation to grow on masonry or stucco walls, as it may loosen mortar and stucco and increase trapped moisture.

iv. *Cleaning*—Use the gentlest means possible to clean masonry and stucco when needed, as improper cleaning can damage the surface. Avoid the use of any abrasive, strong chemical, sandblasting, or high-pressure cleaning method.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *Patching*—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 is not an appropriate patching or replacement material for stucco.

ii. *Repointing*—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. 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.

iii. *Removing paint*—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.

iv. *Removing stucco*—Remove stucco from masonry surfaces where it is historically inappropriate. Prepare a test panel to ensure that underlying masonry has not been irreversibly damaged before proceeding.

6. Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

i. *Openings*—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.

ii. *Doors*—Preserve historic doors including hardware, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures.

iii. *Windows*—Preserve historic windows. When glass is broken, the color and clarity of replacement glass should match the original historic glass.

iv. *Screens and shutters*—Preserve historic window screens and shutters.

v. *Storm windows*—Install full-view storm windows on the interior of windows for improved energy efficiency. Storm window may be installed on the exterior so long as the visual impact is minimal and original architectural details are not obscured.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

i. *Doors*—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.

ii. *New entrances*—Ensure that new entrances, when necessary to comply with other regulations, are compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances.

iii. *Glazed area*—Avoid installing interior floors or suspended ceilings that block the glazed area of historic windows.

iv. *Window design*—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.

v. *Muntins*—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.

vi. *Replacement glass*—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.

vii. *Non-historic windows*—Replace non-historic incompatible windows with windows that are typical of the architectural style of the building.

viii. *Security bars*—Install security bars only on the interior of windows and doors.

ix. *Screens*—Utilize wood screen window 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.

x. *Shutters*—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.

7. Architectural Features: Porches, Balconies, and Porte-Cocheres

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Existing porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres*—Preserve porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres. Do not add new porches, balconies, or porte-cocheres where not historically present.
- ii. *Balusters*—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.
- iii. *Floors*—Preserve original wood or concrete porch floors. Do not cover original porch floors of wood or concrete with carpet, tile, or other materials unless they were used historically.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Front porches*—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.
- ii. *Side and rear porches*—Refrain from enclosing side and rear porches, particularly when connected to the main porch or balcony. Original architectural details should not be obscured by any screening or enclosure materials. Alterations to side and rear porches should result in a space that functions, and is visually interpreted as, a porch.
- iii. *Replacement*—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.
- iv. *Adding elements*—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.
- v. *Reconstruction*—Reconstruct porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. If no such evidence exists, the design should be based on the architectural style of the building and historic patterns.

10. Commercial Facades

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Character-defining features*—Preserve character-defining features such as cornice molding, upper-story windows, transoms, display windows, kickplates, entryways, tiled paving at entryways, parapet walls, bulkheads, and other features that contribute to the character of the building.
- ii. *Windows and doors*—Use clear glass in display windows. See Guidelines for Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens for additional guidance.
- iii. *Missing features*—Replace missing features in-kind based on evidence such as photographs, or match the style of the building and the period in which it was designed.
- iv. *Materials*—Use in-kind materials or materials appropriate to the time period of the original commercial facade when making repairs.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *New features*—Do not introduce new facade elements that alter or destroy the historic building character, such as adding inappropriate materials; altering the size or shape of windows, doors, bulkheads, and transom openings; or altering the facade from commercial to residential. Alterations should not disrupt the rhythm of the commercial block.
- ii. *Historical commercial facades*—Return non-historic facades to the original design based on photographic evidence. Keep in mind that some non-original facades may have gained historic importance and should be retained. When evidence is not available, ensure the scale, design, materials, color, and texture is compatible with the historic building. Consider the features of the design holistically so as to not include elements from multiple buildings and styles.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure at 410 Austin is a 2-story brick commercial structure constructed circa 1895. The property first appears on the Sanborn Maps in 1896. The structure features a decorative brick parapet with parapet sculptures, a sawtooth brickwork pattern on the upper facade, and arched window and door headers on the front facade. The property is an individual landmark.
- b. DOOR INSTALLATION – The applicant has proposed to install a new ADA-accessible door opening on the first floor of the north (side) elevation facing an existing parking lot. The north elevation currently features a small window and a vent opening on the second story and a ghost sign near the front facade wall plane. The

applicant has proposed to install a 3'x7' steel door toward the rear of the north elevation. Guideline 6.A.i for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations recommends against creating new primary entrances on the primary façade. According to Guideline 6.B.ii, new entrances should be compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances. Staff finds the proposed door opening is not visible from the public right-of-way and is generally appropriate for a commercial structure. Staff finds that the applicant should submit final material specifications for the door product for review.

- c. EXTERIOR STAIR INSTALLATION – The applicant has proposed to construct an exterior staircase on the north elevation to access the second story. The structure historically featured an exterior staircase on the south elevation and, historically, the structure did not feature an interior staircase. Currently, the second story can only be accessed by a ladder. The applicant has proposed to construct a staircase on the north elevation, rather than the location of the previously existing staircase on the south elevation, due to site conditions on the south elevation. The applicant has proposed to install a painted steel staircase with a steel handrail, a steel brace on the wood-clad rear addition, and steel supports on each side of the new door opening. The proposed staircase is oriented toward the rear for second-story entry via the rear balcony. Guideline 7.B.iv states that replacement elements, such as stairs, should be designed to be simple so as to not distract from the historic character of the building. Do not add new elements and details to create a false historic appearance. According to Guideline 7.B.v, architectural elements should be reconstructed based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. The applicant has provided photographic evidence of the historic staircase. While the proposed exterior stair does not match the previously existing staircase in design or location, staff finds that the simple design, location, and orientation of the staircase does not detract from the historic character of the building, that the staircase will not damage the brick elevation and will be reversible, and the staircase will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way. Staff finds the proposal appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

Item 1, staff recommends approval of the door installation based on finding b with the following stipulation:

- i. That the applicant submits final material specifications for the door product to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Item 2, staff recommends approval of the staircase installation based on finding c with the following stipulation:

- i. That the staircase is freestanding from the brick façade and is installed as a reversible condition.

City of San Antonio One Stop



August 11, 2021

— User drawn lines

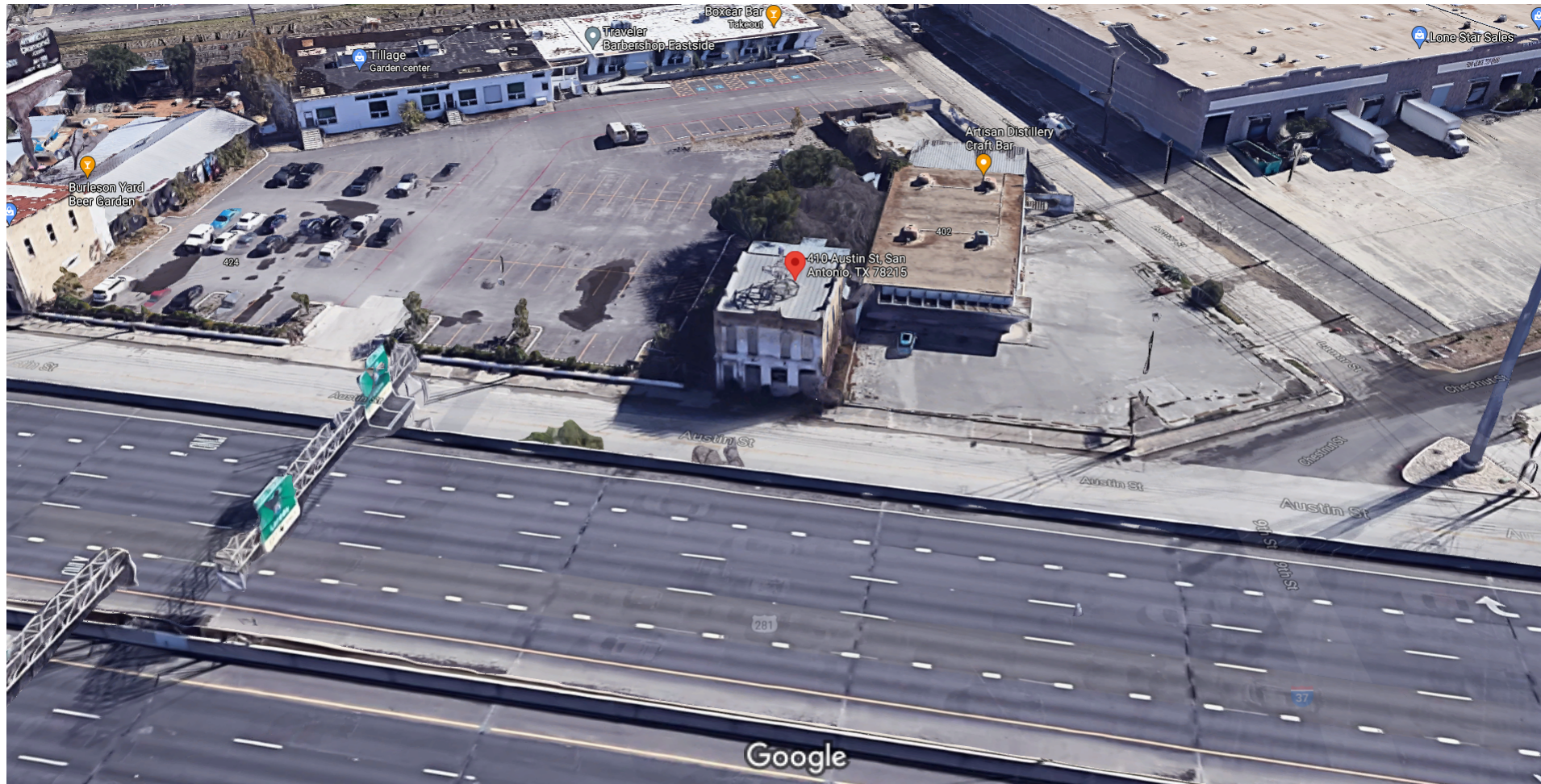
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Google Maps 410 Austin St



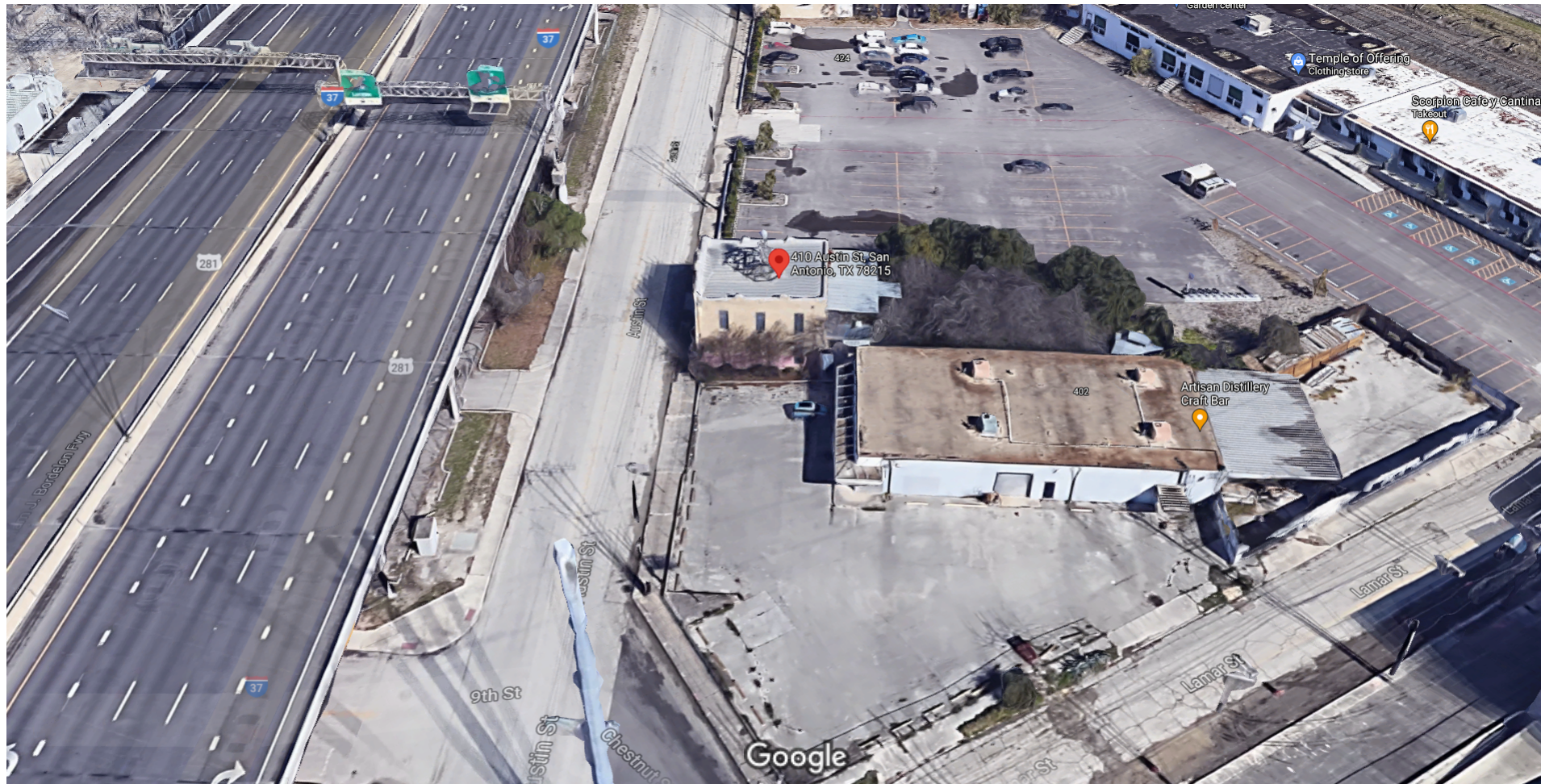
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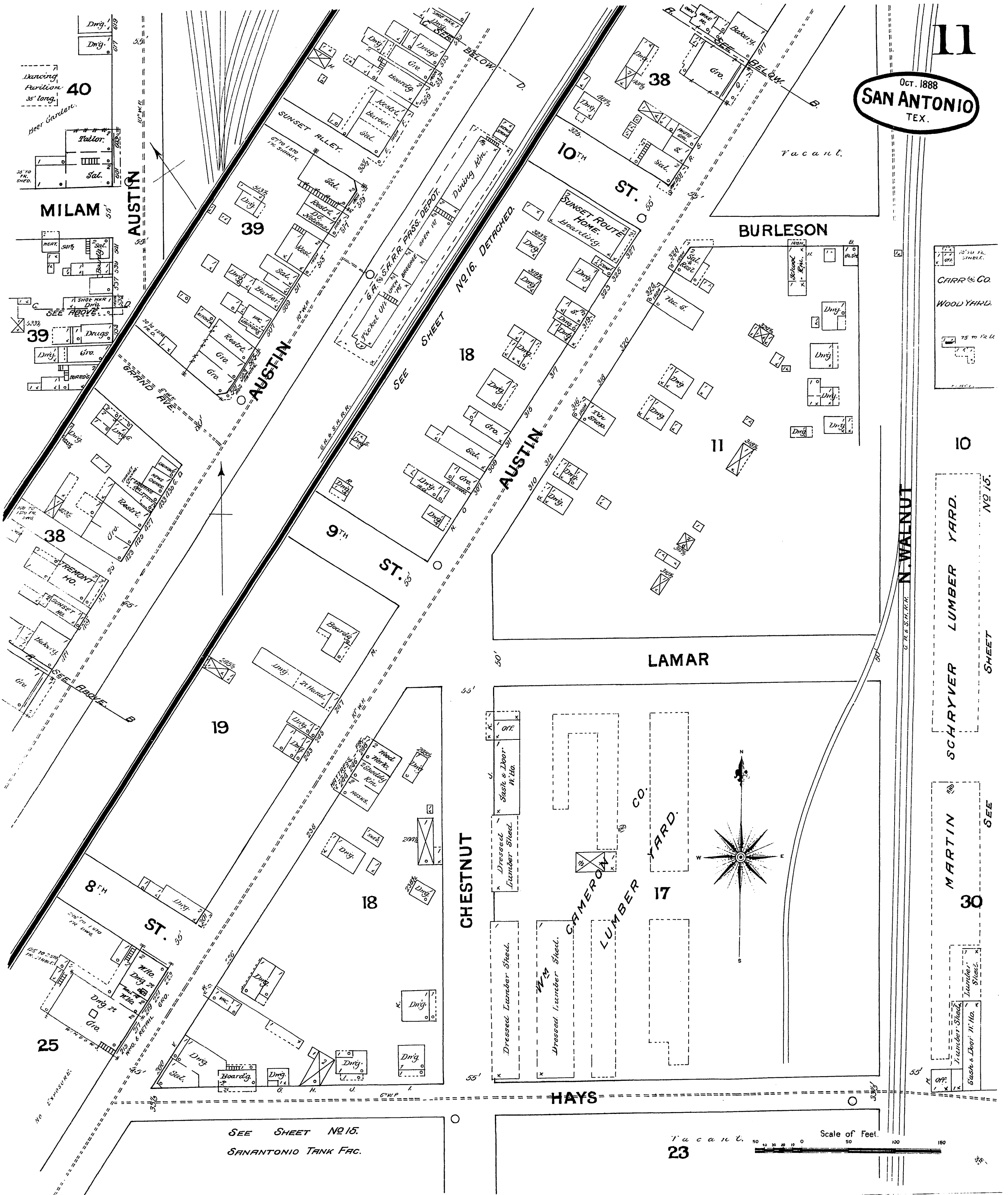


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Google Maps 410 Austin St



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CARR & CO.
WOOD YARD.

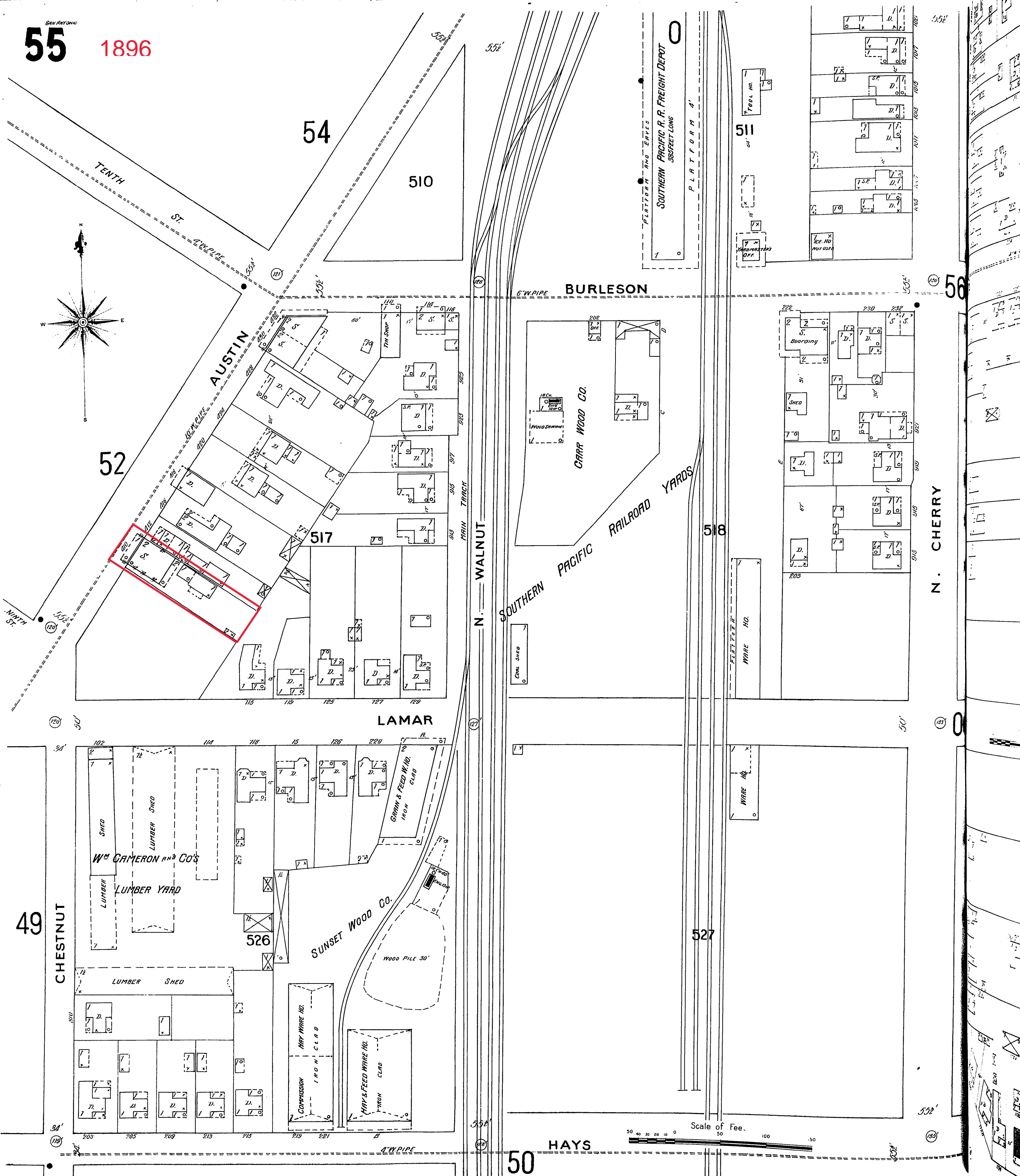
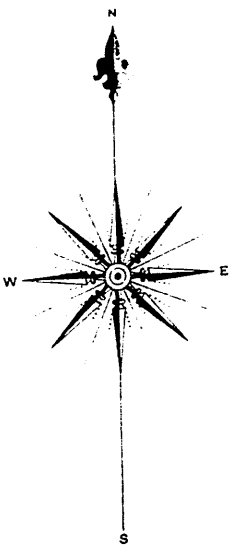
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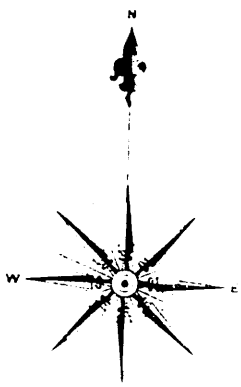
vacant.
23
Scale of Feet.
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55 1896



166

SHERMAN 1904



DEVILBIS ST.

510

165

AUSTIN

517

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N. WALNUT

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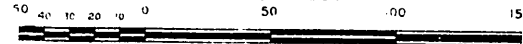
518

N. CHERRY 167

162

527

Scale of Feet



R H DOWMAN
LUMBER YARD

SUN SET WOOD CO.
STEAM RAIL YARD

ROBERTS
COPPER
MILL
ASPHALT MILL.
NOT IN OPERATION

FREIGHT WARE HO.

FREIGHT WARE HO.

CORD WOOD PILED

SHAW
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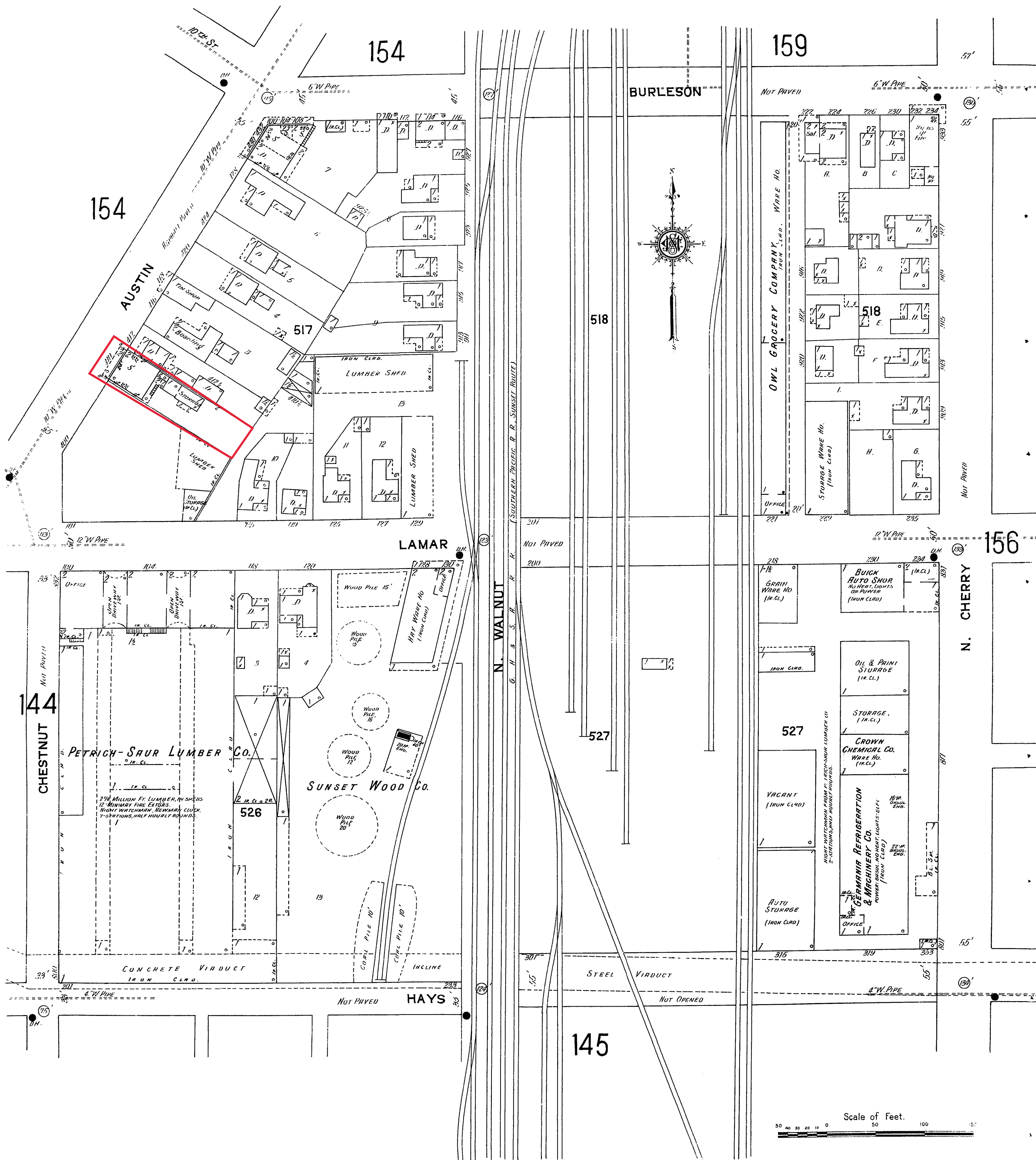
FREIGHT DEPOT

MACADAMIZED

MACADAMIZED

CHESTNUT

AUSTIN



EXISTING WINDOW



EXISTING WOOD
GUARDRAIL

NEW STEEL STAIR, PAINTED
10" STEEL STRINGER
DIAMOND PL. STEEL TREADS
3/4" SQ STEEL PICKETS

4x4
STEEL BRACE
BACK TOWARD

EXISTING WOOD SIDING

4x4 STEEL
COLUMN

NEW OPENING
FOR 3' X 7'
STEEL DOOR







DO NOT
BLOCK
DRIVEWAY
24 HOUR
ACCESS
REQUIRED





