

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

December 01, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-598
COMMON NAME: Vollum between Fredericksburg Rd and W Mistletoe
ZONING: UZROW, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 7
DISTRICT: Monticello Park Historic District
APPLICANT: Richard Torres/City of San Antonio Public Works
OWNER: City of San Antonio
TYPE OF WORK: ADA and ROW improvements
APPLICATION RECEIVED: November 02, 2021
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Katie Totman

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to add ADA ramps along Vollum between Fredericksburg Road and W Mistletoe.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

1. Topography

A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- i. *Historic topography*—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. Maintain the established lawn to help prevent erosion. If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.
- ii. *New construction*—Match the historic topography of adjacent lots prevalent along the block face for new construction. Do not excavate raised lots to accommodate additional building height or an additional story for new construction.
- iii. *New elements*—Minimize changes in topography resulting from new elements, like driveways and walkways, through appropriate siting and design. New site elements should work with, rather than change, character-defining topography when possible.

3. Landscape Design

A. PLANTINGS

- i. *Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- ii. *Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.
- iii. *Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.
- iv. *Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.
- v. *Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

- i. *Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.
- ii. *Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. *Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

C. MULCH

Organic mulch – Organic mulch should not be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Organic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as beneath a tree canopy.

- i. *Inorganic mulch* – Inorganic mulch should not be used in highly-visible areas and should never be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Inorganic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as along a foundation wall where moisture retention is discouraged.

D. TREES

- i. *Preservation*—Preserve and protect from damage existing mature trees and heritage trees. See UDC Section 35-523 (Tree Preservation) for specific requirements.
- ii. *New Trees* – Select new trees based on site conditions. Avoid planting new trees in locations that could potentially cause damage to a historic structure or other historic elements. Species selection and planting procedure should be done in accordance with guidance from the City Arborist.
- iii. *Maintenance* – Proper pruning encourages healthy growth and can extend the lifespan of trees. Avoid unnecessary or harmful pruning. A certified, licensed arborist is recommended for the pruning of mature trees and heritage trees.

4. Residential Streetscapes

A. PLANTING STRIPS

- i. *Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.
- ii. *Lawns*— Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. *Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

B. PARKWAYS AND PLANTED MEDIANS

- i. *Historic plantings*—Maintain the park-like character of historic parkways and planted medians by preserving mature vegetation and retaining historic design elements. Replace damaged or dead plant materials with species of a like size, growth habit, and ornamental characteristics.
- ii. *Hardscape*—Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.

C. STREET ELEMENTS

- i. *Site elements*—Preserve historic streetlights, 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.
- ii. *Historic paving materials*—Retain historic paving materials, such as brick pavers or colored paving, within the public right-of-way and repair in place with like materials.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

- i. *Maintenance*—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.
- ii. *Replacement materials*—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.
- iii. *Width and alignment*— 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.
- iv. *Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.

v. *ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

B. DRIVEWAYS

i. *Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. 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.

ii. *Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

C. CURBING

i. *Historic curbing*—Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.

ii. *Replacement curbing*—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. Retaining walls and curbing should not be added to the sidewalk design unless absolutely necessary.

8. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

A. HISTORIC FEATURES

i. *Avoid damage*—Minimize the damage to the historic character and materials of the building and sidewalk while complying with all aspects of accessibility requirements.

ii. *Doors and door openings*—Avoid modifying historic doors or door openings that do not conform to the building and/or accessibility codes, particularly on the front façade. Consider using a discretely located addition as a means of providing accessibility.

B. ENTRANCES

i. *Grade changes*—Incorporate minor changes in grade to modify sidewalk or walkway elevation to provide an accessible entry when possible.

ii. *Residential entrances*—The preferred location of new ramps is at the side or rear of the building when convenient for the user.

iii. *Non-residential and mixed use entrances*—Provide an accessible entrance located as close to the primary entrance as possible when access to the front door is not feasible.

C. DESIGN

i. *Materials*—Design ramps and lifts to compliment the historic character of the building and be visually unobtrusive as to minimize the visual impact, especially when visible from the public right-of-way.

ii. *Screening*—Screen ramps, lifts, or other elements related to ADA compliance using appropriate landscape materials. Refer to Guidelines for Site Elements for additional guidance.

iii. *Curb cuts*—Install new ADA curb cuts on historic sidewalks to be consistent with the existing sidewalk color and texture while minimizing damage to the historical sidewalk.

FINDINGS:

a. The stretch of Vollum Avenue that is to be impacted is located on the north side of the Monticello Park Historic District. The project is proposed along Vollum Avenue between Fredericksburg Rd and W Mistletoe. The streetscape features historic curbing and existing sidewalks.

b. ADA RAMP INSTALLATION – The applicant has proposed to install/upgrade ADA ramps at the intersections of:

- i. Vollum and Fredericksburg Rd
- ii. Vollum and Mary Louise
- iii. Vollum and W Gramercy
- iv. Vollum and W Kings Hwy

Guideline 8.C.iii for Site Elements states that new ADA curb cuts on historic sidewalks should be installed to be consistent with the existing sidewalk color and texture while minimizing damage to the historic sidewalk. This stretch along Vollum currently features intersections with existing sidewalks that terminate at the street. The proposed ADA

ramps will be incorporated into the existing sidewalk sections, creating a slope that leads into the street. Intersections that do not currently feature sidewalk sections will have those added to match the existing configuration and patterns. New truncated domes should be terracotta in color. The proposed work will also include mill and overlay along Vollum Ave.



RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed ADA ramp improvements based on finding b with the following stipulations:

- i. That the historic curbing is retained and any curbing that requires replacement matches the existing in material, width, and profile.
- ii. That the applicant installs terracotta color truncated dome panels.
- iii. That any existing retaining walls be maintained where work is proposed.

Vollum & Fredericksburg
1 ADA ramp avoiding demoing patterned sidewalk

Legend

-  Curb
-  sidewalk







Vollum & Mary Louise
8 ada ramps w/ 2 at each corner

Legend

-  Curb
-  sidewalk



Vollum Ave
1200
Mary Louise
300 200









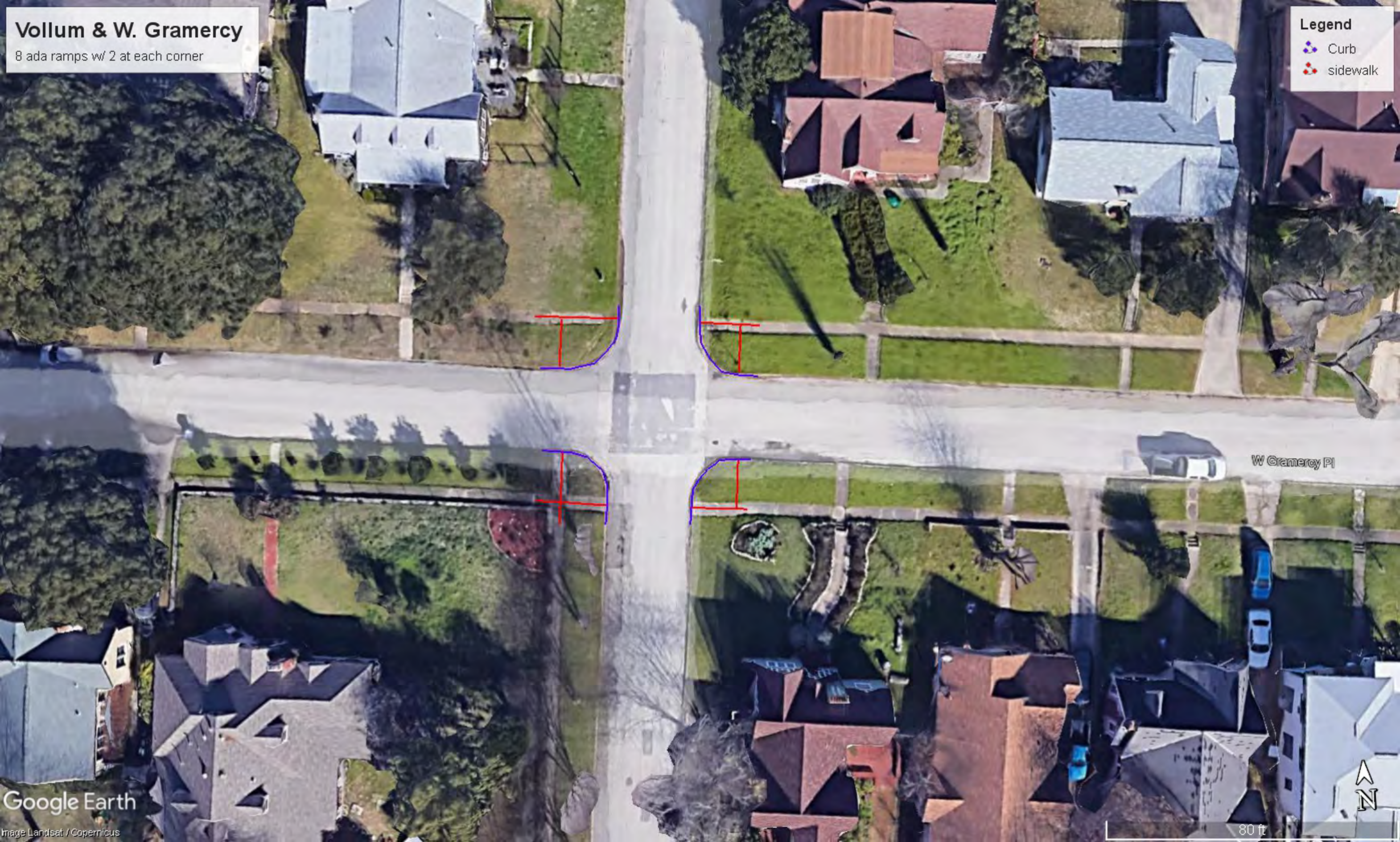
Vollum St

Vollum & W. Gramercy

8 ada ramps w/ 2 at each corner

Legend

-  Curb
-  sidewalk



W Gramercy Pl





Vollum Ave

W Gramercy Pl
1900-2000





1950



Vollum & W. Kings Hwy

8 ada ramps w/ 2 at each corner

Legend

- Curb
- sidewalk



70 ft



W Kings Hwy
1900
Vollum Ave

VMD
WASTE
MANAGEMENT









