

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

August 18, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-396
ADDRESS: 317 WICKES
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 939 BLK 2 LOT 5
ZONING: RM-4, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: King William Historic District
APPLICANT: Roger Williamson/WILLIAMSON FAMILY PROTECTION TRUST
OWNER: Roger Williamson/WILLIAMSON FAMILY PROTECTION TRUST
TYPE OF WORK: Porch step and handrail modifications
APPLICATION RECEIVED: July 10, 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 a wood overlay on the existing concrete front porch steps.
2. Install a wood handrail at the front walkway steps.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alterations

1. Materials: Woodwork

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- Inspections*—Conduct semi-annual inspections of all exterior wood elements to verify condition and determine maintenance needs.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Repair*—Repair deteriorated areas or refasten loose elements with an exterior wood filler, epoxy, or glue.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure at 317 Wickes is a 1-story, single-family residence constructed in the Folk Victorian style. The structure features a composition shingle front gable and hip roof, wood windows, wood cladding, and a rounded porch with Corinthian columns, wood decking, and concrete front steps. The property is contributing to the King William Historic District.
- b. **FRONT PORCH STEP MODIFICATION** – The applicant has proposed to install a wood step overlay on the existing concrete front porch steps with wood handrails. Guideline 7.A.iii for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations states that original wood or concrete porch floors should be preserved. Do not cover original porch

floors of wood or concrete with carpet, tile, or other materials unless they were used historically. Additionally, Guideline 7.B.iv for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 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 that create a false historic appearance. As the front porch features wood decking and the concrete front porch steps are likely not original to the structure and the requested wood step overlay is reversible, staff finds the request generally consistent with the Guidelines. Staff finds that the applicant should take steps to control the collection of moisture and vegetation between the concrete steps and the wood step overlay to prevent deterioration.

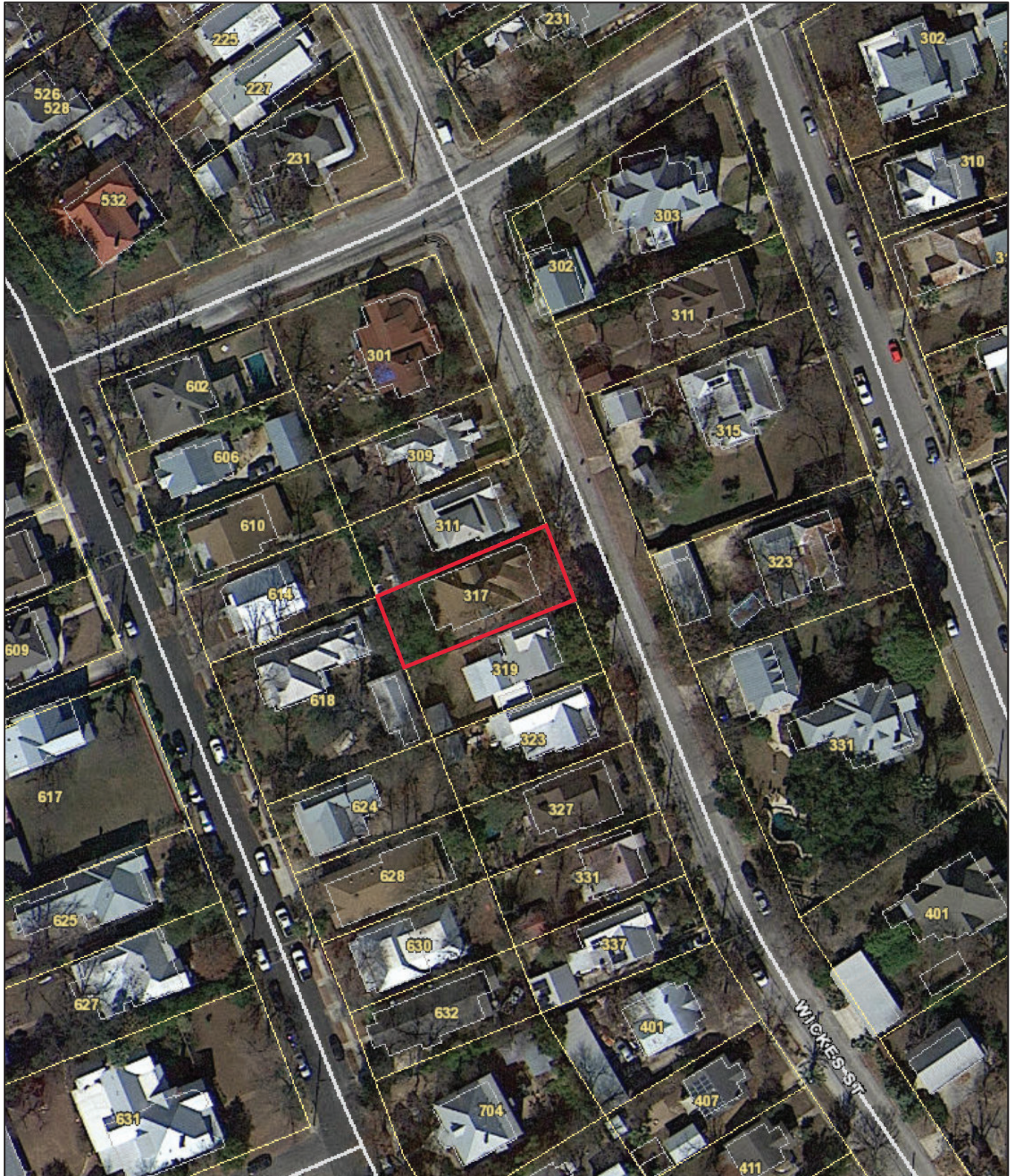
- c. **HANDRAIL INSTALLATION** – The applicant has proposed to install a wood handrail at the front walkway steps. The example handrail submitted with the application materials is not appropriate for installation. Staff finds that the wood handrail installed at the front walkway steps should match the handrail proposed for installation at the front porch steps.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of request items 1 & 2 based on findings a through c with the following stipulations:

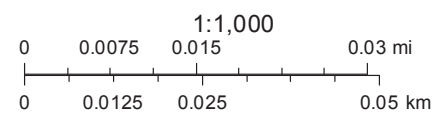
- i. That the applicant installs fully wood railings at the front porch and front walkway steps that feature both a top and bottom rail. The bottom rail should feature a vertical orientation and should be installed approximately three to four inches above the steps. Both top and bottom rails should be constructed from 2"x4" members. The proposed railing should not feature an overall height of more than three (3) feet.
- ii. That the applicant submits updated material specifications for the proposed front porch step and front walkway step railings to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

City of San Antonio One Stop

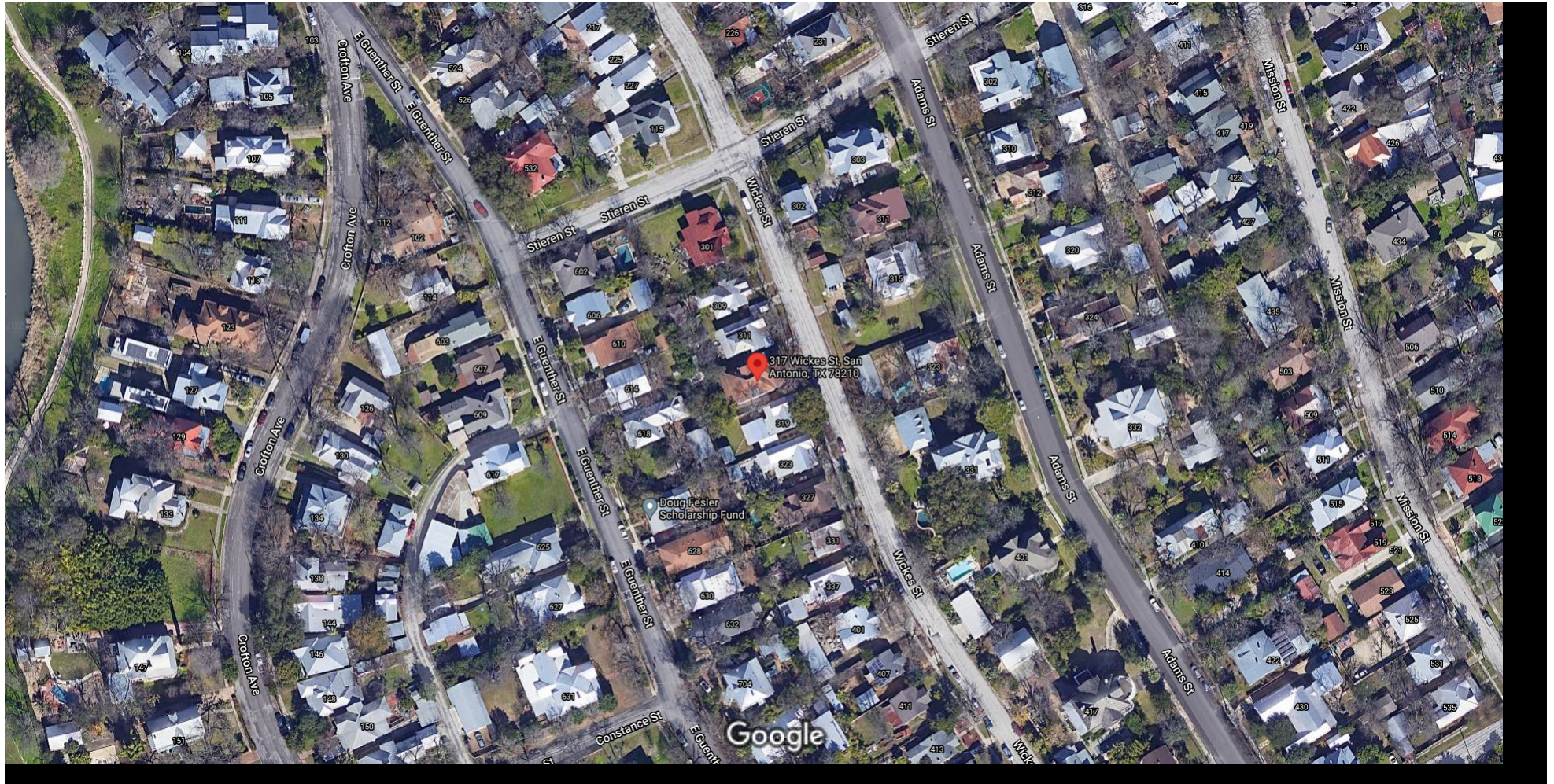


August 11, 2021

— User drawn lines



Google Maps 317 Wickes St



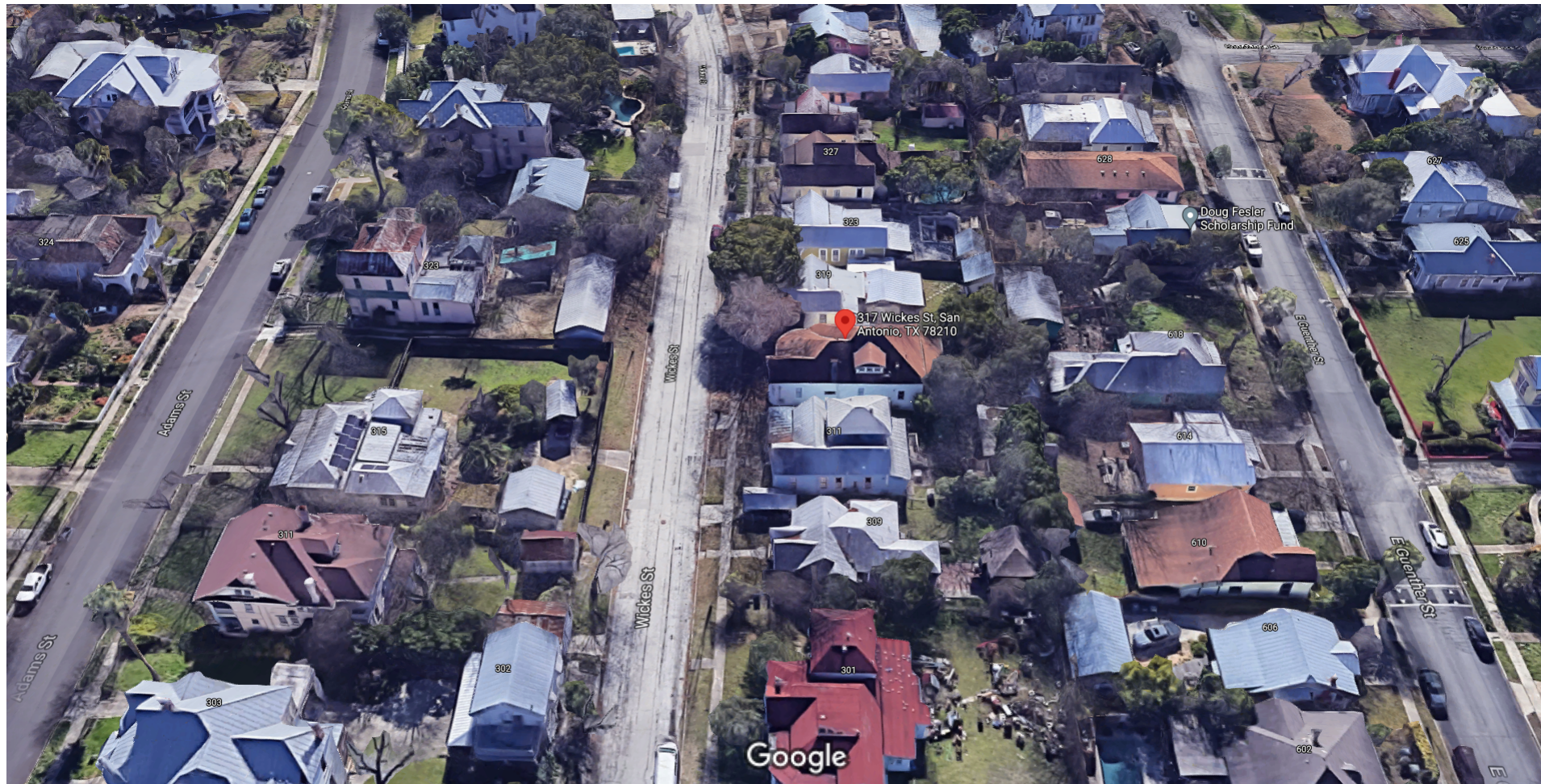
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