

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

December 07, 2016

Agenda Item No: 17

HDRC CASE NO: 2016-478
COMMON NAME: San Pedro Creek from Fox Tech High school throughout Downtown to the vicinity of the old stock yards
ZONING: UZROW
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
APPLICANT: Steven Tillotson/Munoz & Company
OWNER: San Antonio River Authority
TYPE OF WORK: San Pedro Creek linear park
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to perform modifications and construct a linear park at San Pedro Creek. The 2.2 mile section of section of San Pedro creek that courses from Fox Tech High School through downtown to the vicinity of the old stock yards is subject to flood control improvements and other improvements. The applicant has proposed to modify the creek channel to contain the 100 year floodplain within the banks of the creek and reimagine the creek as a linear park. Within this request, the applicant has proposed the following:

1. Final approval of work package 2, from the tunnel inlet to north of the W Houston Street bridge. This request includes 100 percent design for all scopes of work except landscaping, irrigation and wayfinding. Within this package, pedestrian pathways, retaining walls, bridges and structural improvements are proposed.
2. Final approval of work package 3, from Commerce Street to Dolorosa. This request includes foundation extensions, the reconstruction of the Carter Building's foundation, wall stabilization between the Carter Building and the Continental Hotel (west bank) and drilled shafts for west channel wall stabilization if sequenced with underpinning work.
3. Final approval of work package 5, which consists of drilled shafts (bridges and walls) from Houston Street to the Commerce Street bridge. This request includes bridge and retaining wall drilled shafts for bridges at Houston, Commerce, the Alameda wall, the Penner parking lot wall, the High Paseo Bridge, the band shell foundation, the Chinampa, demolition work from Houston to Dolorosa and the demolition of the Dollar General at 323 W Commerce.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Sec. 35-640. - Public Property and Rights-of-Way.

(a) Public Property. Generally, the historic and design review commission will consider applications for actions affecting the exterior of public properties except in the case of building interiors that are the sites of major public assemblies or public lobbies. The historic and design review commission will also consider applications for actions affecting public properties such as city parks, open spaces, plazas, parking lots, signs and appurtenances.

(b) Public Rights-of-Way. Generally, the historic and design review commission will consider applications for actions affecting public rights-of-way whose construction or reconstruction exceeds in quality of design or materials standards of the design manual of the public works department.

(Ord. No. 98697 § 6)

Sec. 35-641. - Design Considerations for Historic and Design Review Commission Recommendations.

In reviewing an application, the historic and design review commission shall be aware of the importance of attempting to find a way to meet the current needs of the City of San Antonio, lessee or licensee of public property. The historic and design review commission shall also recognize the importance of recommending approval of plans that will be reasonable to implement. The best urban design standards possible can and should be employed with public property including buildings and facilities, parks and open spaces, and the public right-of-way. Design and construction on public property should employ such standards because the use of public monies for design and construction is a public trust. Public commitment to quality design should encourage better design by the private sector. Finally, using such design standards

for public property improves the identity and the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Sec. 35-642. - New Construction of Buildings and Facilities.

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

(a) Site and Setting.

(1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2) Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3) Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, berms, plantings or other means.

(4) Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b) Building Design.

(1) Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

(2) Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in harmonious conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.

(3) Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.

(4) Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.

(5) Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.

(6) Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.

(7) Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.

(8) Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

(c) Multiple Facades. In making recommendations affecting new buildings or structures which will have more than one

(1) important facade, such as those which will face two (2) streets or a street and the San Antonio River, the historic and design review commission shall consider the above visual compatibility standards with respect to each important facade.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant has proposed to perform modifications and construct a linear park at San Pedro Creek. The 2.2 mile section of section of San Pedro creek that courses from Fox Tech High School through downtown to the vicinity of the old stock yards is subject to flood control improvements and other improvements. The applicant has proposed to modify the creek channel to contain the 100 year floodplain within the banks of the creek and reimagine the creek as a linear park. At this time, the applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for architectural and engineering scopes of work included in work packets 2, 3 and 5.
- b. This case was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on November 9, 2016, where committee members noted that specific tile designs would need to return to the HDRC for approval.
- c. Work package 2 includes 100 percent design for all scopes of work except for landscaping, irrigation and wayfinding. The applicant has proposed to install pedestrian walkways consisting of concrete, raised seating areas, terraced landscaped areas, planting areas and tiled retaining walls. At this time, the applicant has noted the installation of tile along retaining walls adjacent to the pedestrian path; however, a specific design has not been finalized for the design of the tile. The applicant has noted that specific tile design will be determined at a later date. The applicant is to return to the HDRC for approval of the tile work.
- d. Work package 3 includes primarily structural work that includes foundation extensions, the reconstruction of the Carter Building's foundation, wall stabilization between the Carter Building and the Continental hotel (west bank) and drilled shafts for west channel wall stabilization. Also included in this work package is the construction of pedestrian bridges across the creek channel that are to be covered with tile. As mentioned in finding b, specific designs for the tile work have not been finalized. The applicant is to return to the HDRC for final approval of the tile work.
- e. Work package 5 includes drilled shafts (bridges and walls) from Houston Street to the Commerce Street bridge. This request includes bridge and retaining wall drilled shafts for bridges at Houston, Commerce, the Alameda wall, the Penner parking lot wall, the High Paseo Bridge, the band shell foundation, the Chinampa, demolition work from Houston to Dolorosa and the demolition of the Dollar General at 323 W Commerce.
- f. Staff finds that the applicant's proposed materials and design aspects meet the UDC's standards for Public Property and the Public right of way.
- g. 323 W COMMERCE DEMOLITION – The applicant received conceptual approval on August 3, 2016, for the demolition of the structure at 323 W Commerce and the construction of a public plaza as part of the San Pedro Creek Improvement Project. The structure at 323 W Commerce was constructed circa 1953 and designed by the local architecture firm Peery & Tuggle. Allison B. Peery was well-known for his modern design work in San Antonio, and he would go on to work with O'Neil Ford as site plan coordinator for HemisFair '68. The building was initially occupied by F.W. Woolworth Co. Its mid-century mercantile design is expressed through the stark brick façade interrupted by a single horizontal band of windows at the second story, its blade sign, and recessed entryway at the street level framed by large display cases.
- h. 323 W COMMERCE DEMOLITION – At the August 3, 2016, HDRC hearing, it was found that the structure at 323 W Commerce was eligible for demolition. At that time, staff found that there was a documented discrepancy in the ordinance which resulted in an erroneous update to the zoning map to include a historic zoning overlay for this property. Staff found that the proposed replacement plans of a public plaza created another opportunity for activation along this corridor. Its location on the opposite bank from the upstream amphitheater provides better design balance and livens up this previously barren stretch. Planting areas along the northern wall will mask the starkness of the Alameda Theater addition. The vista will also generate visual interest at an important juncture of the pedestrian experience, pulling the eye from the street level retail downward to the park through a more organic transition. At this time, the applicant has provided construction documents for the construction of this park. Staff finds the proposed replacement appropriate.
- i. ARCHAEOLOGY- Archaeological compliance for this project is under the Texas Antiquities Code and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 1966 as amended. Previous archaeological investigations have occurred for project compliance, and archaeological monitoring is required for portions of the project area. The project area is in close proximity to several significant previously recorded archaeological sites, including the probable first site of Mission San Antonio de Valero and the 1722 site of the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar. If a previously unidentified archaeological site is encountered during construction work, activities should be

immediately stopped in the vicinity and the OHP should be notified. The development project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology.

RECOMMENDATION:

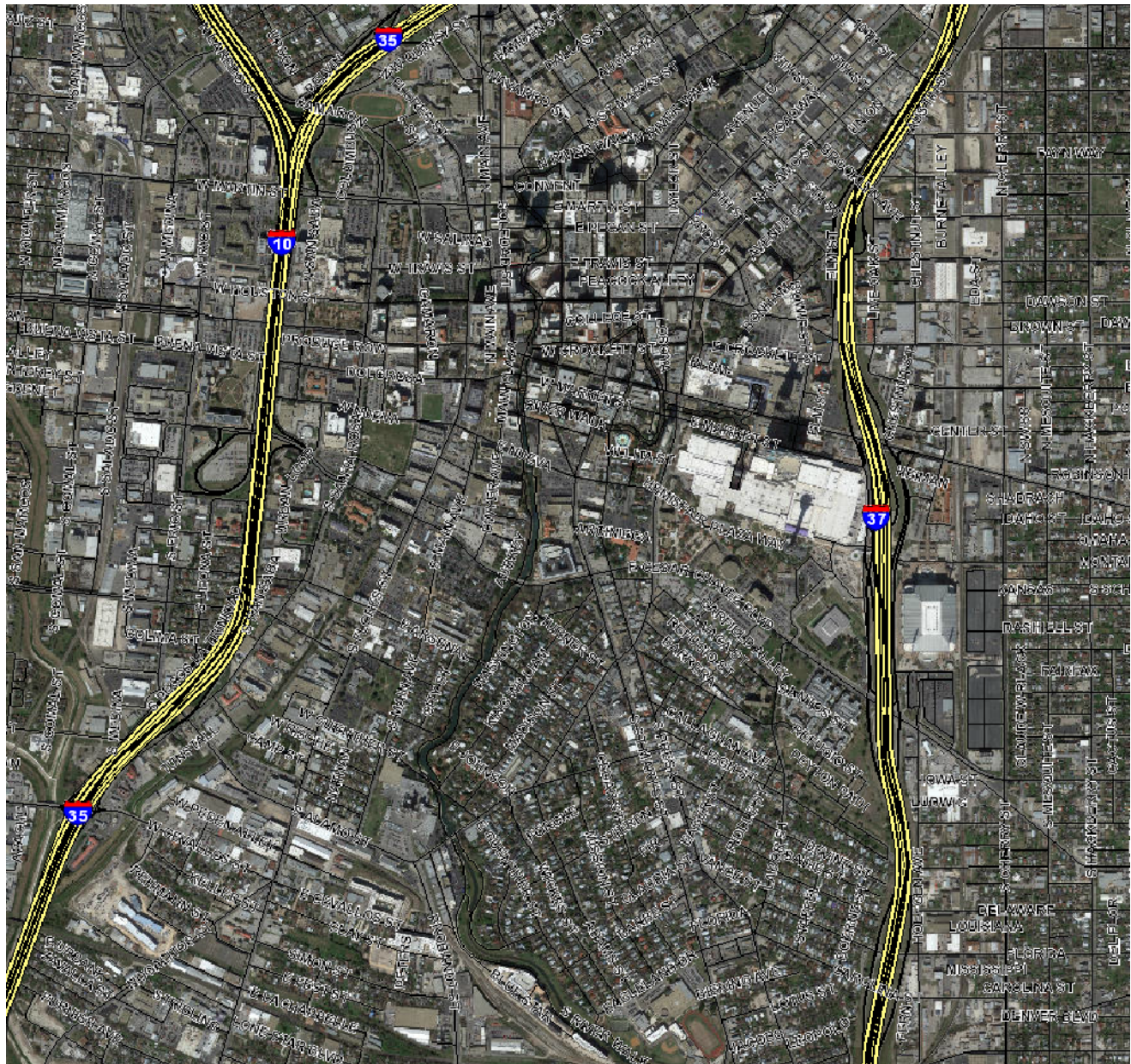
Staff recommends approval of items #1 through #3, not including landscaping, irrigation, wayfinding signage and tile work based on findings a through g with the following stipulation:

- i. Archaeological compliance for this project is under the Texas Antiquities Code and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 1966 as amended. Previous archaeological investigations have occurred for project compliance, and archaeological monitoring is required for portions of the project area. The project area is in close proximity to several significant previously recorded archaeological sites, including the probable first site of Mission San Antonio de Valero and the 1722 site of the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar. If a previously unidentified archaeological site is encountered during construction work, activities should be immediately stopped in the vicinity and the OHP should be notified. The development project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology.

The applicant is to return to the HDRC for approval of landscaping plant materials, wayfinding signage, the location of irrigation equipment and specific designs of tile work.

CASE MANAGER:

Edward Hall

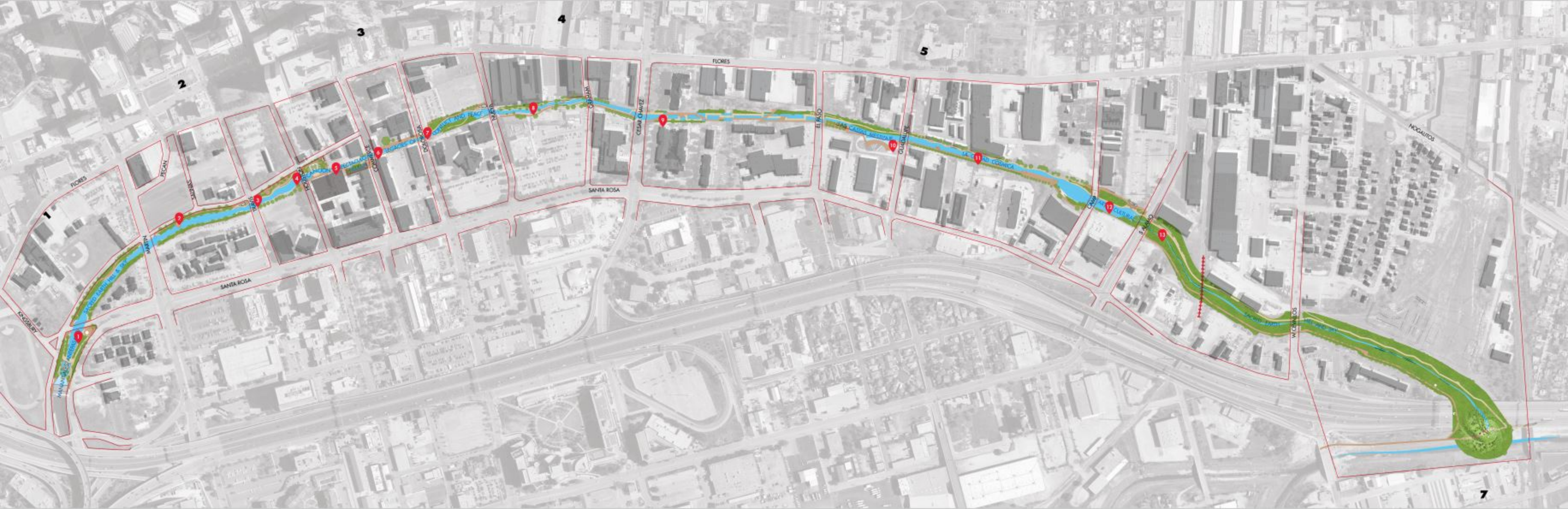


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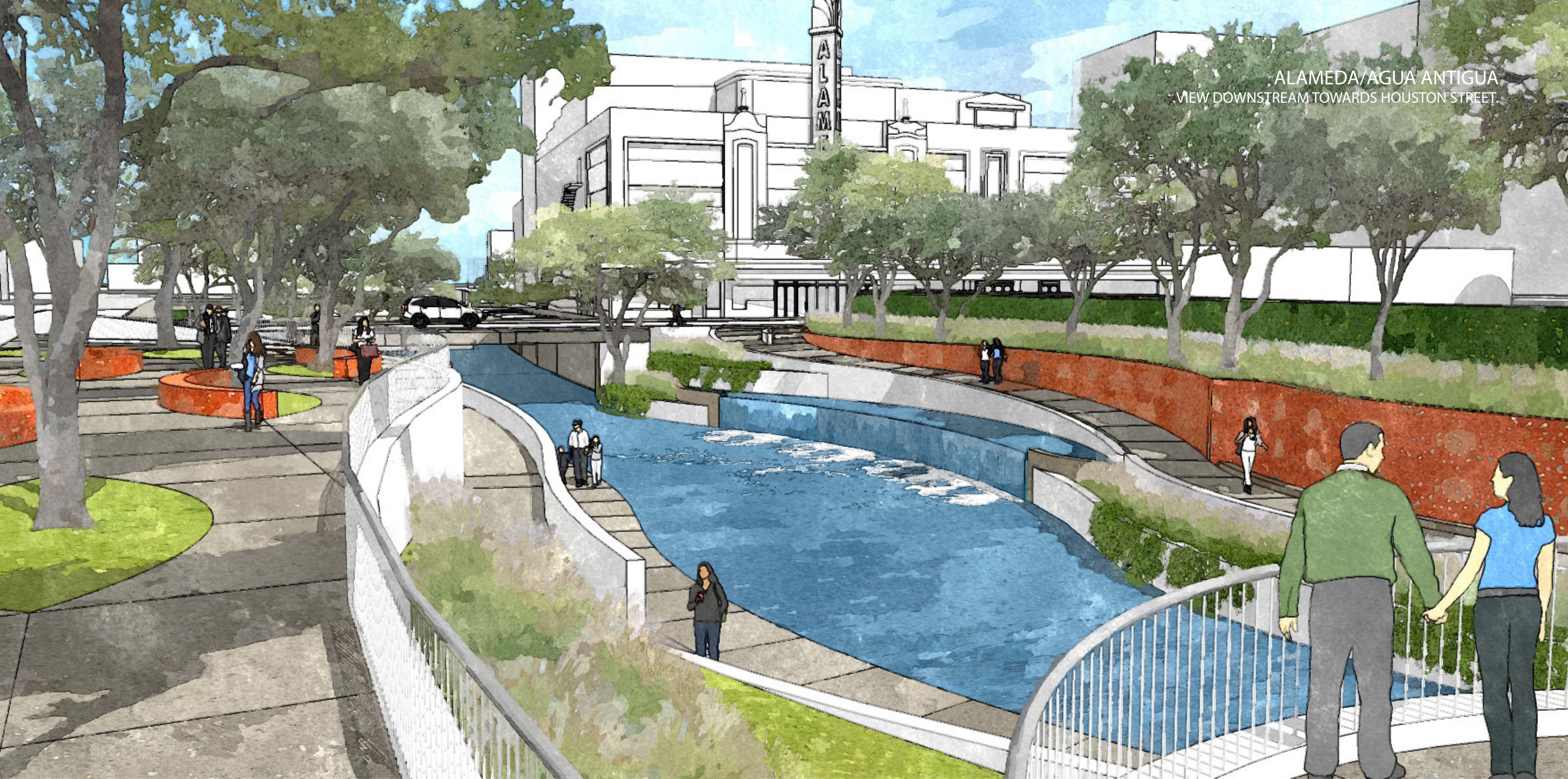
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VIEW UPSTREAM TOWARDS INLET STRUCTURE





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ALAMEDA/AGUA ANTIGUA
VIEW DOWNSTREAM TOWARDS HOUSTON STREET



ALAMEDA/AGUA ANTIGUA
VIEW DOWNSTREAM TOWARDS COMMERCIAL STREET



AGUA ANTIGUA
VIEW DOWNSTREAM FROM HOUSTON ST. BRIDGE





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