



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

VARIANCE REQUEST ANALYSIS

TPV 20-026

Project:	Medina River Greenway Phase 3
Address:	1349 Neal Rd, San Antonio, TX 78264
A/P #/PPR #/Plat#:	AP# 1913627
VR Submittal Date:	March 2, 2020
VR Submitted by:	Mr. Brandon Ross of City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department
Issue:	Below 80% significant tree and 100% heritage tree preservation within 100-Year Floodplain and Environmentally Sensitive Area (2010 Ordinance)
Code Sections:	Unified Development Code (UDC), Section 35-523 (h)
By:	Herminio Griego, Assistant City Arborist

The Development Services Department (DSD) has reviewed the information presented in Mr. Homer Garcia's letter dated February 26, 2020.

The Unified Development Code (UDC) – Article V, Section 35-523 (h), 100-Year Floodplain(s) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas states that, "Significant trees shall be preserved at eighty (80) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas. Heritage trees shall be preserved at one hundred (100) percent preservation within both the 100-year floodplain and environmentally sensitive areas. Mitigation shall be prohibited in floodplains and environmentally sensitive area except when a variance is granted by the Planning Commission."

The applicant is requesting a Variance Request to mitigate for removal of a heritage tree in excess of the 100% preservation requirements within the Environmentally Sensitive Area in place under the 2010 Tree Preservation Ordinance for construction of Medina River Greenway Phase 3 project. DSD staff does agree with the applicant's request to mitigate for the removal of heritage tree below 100% for the following reasons:

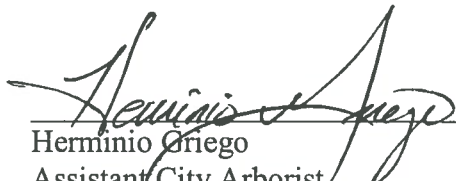
1. *Existing site conditions* – The Medina River Greenway Phase 3 project consists of a 3.1 mile trail from Land Heritage Institute property to the Pearsall Road Trailhead. When the trees were first surveyed for the project in 2013, tree number 4099 measure 20 inches in diameter. A great deal of time has elapsed in the implementation of the project due to flooding, site erosion and contracting issues. As of February 2020, tree number 4099 now measures 26 inches in diameter. Additionally, whereas the original design for the bridge across Medina River was a concrete structure requiring that piers be drilled into the river bed, the Parks and Recreation department is now planning to install a pre-fabricated bridge to avoid environmental impacts and alleviate constructability concerns with drilling piers into the Medina River. In order to place the bridge at the river crossing

location, a crane will need to be utilized and tree number 4099 will need to be removed. The required mitigation for the removal of the 26 inch Cottonwood is 78 inches.

2. *Tree mitigation* - The project will exceed the required mitigation of 78 inches by planting (70) – 1.5 inch to 2 inch caliper native medium to large shade trees for a total of 106.5 inches planted back on Land Heritage Institute (LHI) property. LHI will perform the site preparation, tree plantings and maintenance to get the trees established. The proposed planting plan provides added species diversity to include native medium and large shade tree species per Appendix E “San Antonio Recommended Plant List.” Trees proposed to be planted for mitigation include: Bur Oak, Mexican Sycamore, Pecan, Cedar Elm, Live Oak and Monterey Oak.

DSD staff supports the applicant’s request to fall below 100% of heritage tree preservation requirements within the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) based on the conditions of the site, design constraints, and exceeding mitigation requirements. The proposed Variance Request meets the intent and spirit of the Tree Ordinance therefore, staff recommends approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval



Herminio Griego
Assistant City Arborist
DSD – Land Development – Tree Preservation

4.30.2020

Date



Stephen Stokinger, P.E.
Development Services Engineer
DSD – Land Development - Engineering

2020/05/06

Date

I have reviewed the Variance Request Analysis and concur with the recommendation.



Melissa Ramirez
Assistant Director
DSD – Land Development

5/7/2020

Date



City of San Antonio **PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

March 13, 2020

Administrative Exception / Variance Request Review
City of San Antonio
Development Services Department
1901 S. Alamo
San Antonio, TX 78204

Re: Medina River Greenway Phase 3 - Project Finalization
A/P #: 1913627

UDC Code Section or Issue:

- Administrative Exception
- Environmental Variance

Development Services Department Representative,

It is requested that the City of San Antonio consider an administrative exception/variance for the above referenced project regarding Unified Development Code (UDC) Section 35-523.

The Medina River Greenway Phase 3 project consists of a 3.1 mile trail from Land Heritage Institute property (LHI) to the Pearsall Road Trailhead. This project is part of a growing network of interconnected hike and bike trails now known as the Howard W. Peak Greenway Trails system, which is funded through sales tax initiatives approved by voters in 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015. The objectives of the program are to acquire and preserve open space along San Antonio creekways and to develop multi-use hike and bike trails, trailheads, signage, and associated amenities for use by San Antonio residents and visitors.

When the trees were first surveyed for the project in 2013, tree number 4099 (Cottonwood tree near the river-crossing location) measured 20 inches in diameter. A great deal of time has elapsed in the implementation of the project due to flooding, site erosion, and contracting issues. As of February 2020, tree number 4099 now measures 26 inches in diameter. Additionally, whereas the original design for the bridge across Medina River was a concrete structure requiring that piers be drilled into the river bed, the Parks and Recreation is now planning to install a pre-fabricated bridge to avoid environmental impacts and alleviate constructability concerns with drilling piers into the Medina River.

In order to place the bridge at the river-crossing location, a truck will deliver the bridge to the site through LHI property and a crane will be used to raise the bridge, orient it appropriately, and lower it onto the concrete supports (a.k.a. bridge abutments) on either side of the river. The crane will park next to the site, pick up the bridge from the trailer, rotate it in the air to the exact location, and lower it onto the supports. In order to do this, the heritage tree needs to be removed where the crane will lift and rotate the bridge from the trailer to the supports. Other alternatives have been explored, but would require more significant tree impacts. For pictures of the Cottonwood tree please see to Exhibit A. The 2013 tree survey is depicted on Exhibit B.

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Because the tree impacts are on property owned by the Land Heritage Institute (LHI), LHI representatives have requested that the City's Parks and Recreation Department pay for the tree to be mitigated onsite and with the oversight of LHI management. Mitigation funds of \$15,600 (26 inches X \$600 per inch) will be paid to LHI to perform the site preparation, tree plantings, and maintenance to get the trees established. For the proposed Tree Mitigation Plan (including site plan and tree list) please see Exhibit C.

Given the benefits of the proposed trail bridge project, the associated preservation of Medina River floodplain land by the Parks and Recreation Department, and the proposed tree mitigation plan, the Parks and Recreation Department respectfully requests approval to remove the 26 inch heritage tree in question, in order for construction of the Medina River Greenway project to proceed. The proposed administrative variance is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the UDC as it will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of the public.

We are happy to provide further information if required.

Sincerely,

Homer Garcia III, Director
City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department
Applicant/Owner

For Office Use Only: AEVR #: _____ Date Received: _____

DSD – Director Official Action:

☐ APPROVED

☐ APPROVED
W/COMMENTS

☐ DENIED

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Comments: _____

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Exhibit A: Location and current photos of the 26" Cottonwood Tree



TEAMWORK



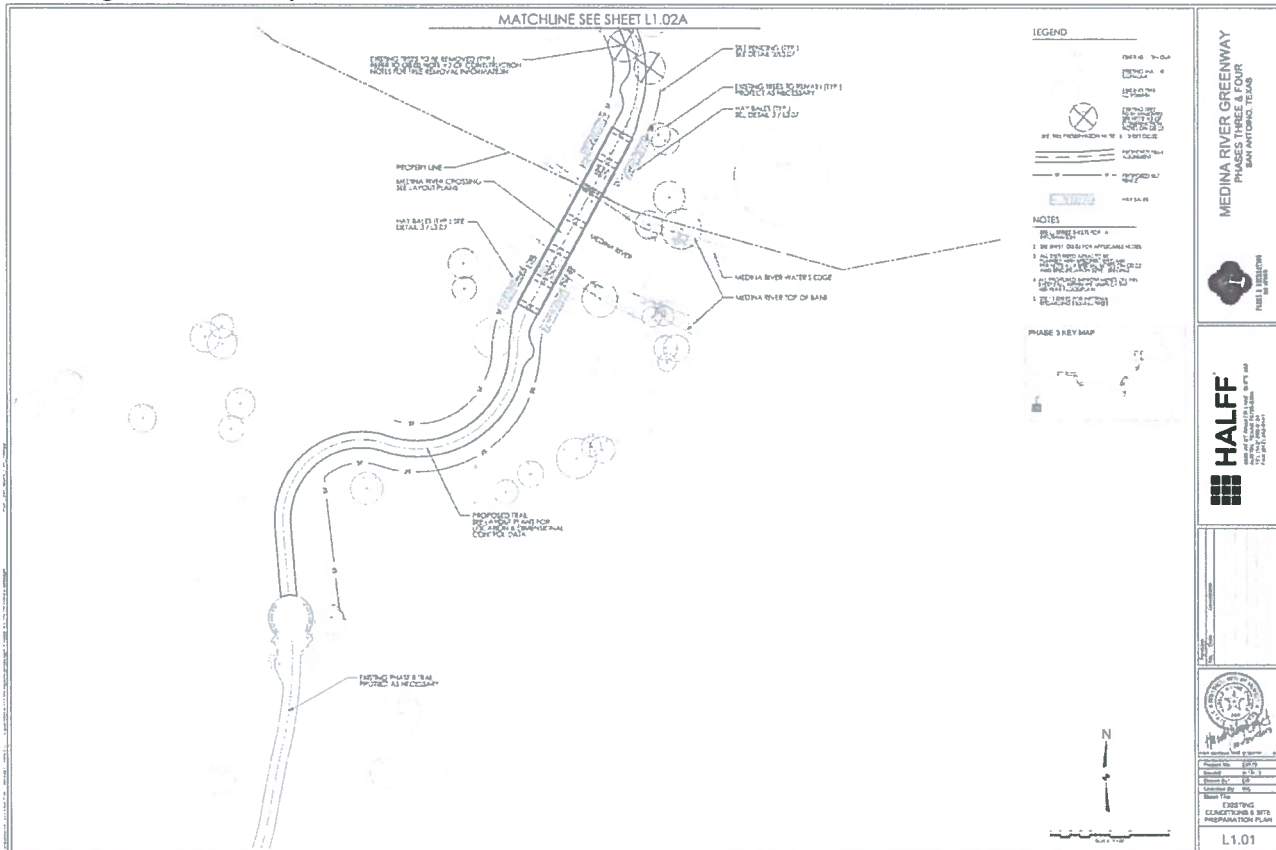
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TREE NUMBER	SIZE AND SPECIES
4099	20" - COTTONWOOD
4259	14" - COTTONWOOD
4268	16" - PECAN
4277	13" - PECAN
4307	14" - COTTONWOOD
4315	15" - COTTONWOOD
4318	12" - COTTONWOOD
4327	12" - CHINA BERRY
4328	15" - WILLOW
4329	15" - CHINA BERRY
4332	16" - CHINA BERRY
4334	12" - CHINA BERRY
4335	12" - CHINA BERRY
4337	15" - CHINA BERRY
4347	13" - CHINA BERRY
4348	12" - CHINA BERRY
4357	15" - CHINA BERRY
4375	14" - CHINA BERRY
4378	12" - CHINA BERRY
4379	15" - COTTONWOOD
4385	20" - COTTONWOOD
4383	15" - COTTONWOOD
4393	12" - COTTONWOOD



City of San Antonio
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Exhibit C: Proposed Tree Mitigation Plan (Site Plan and Tree List) – see attached

TEAMWORK



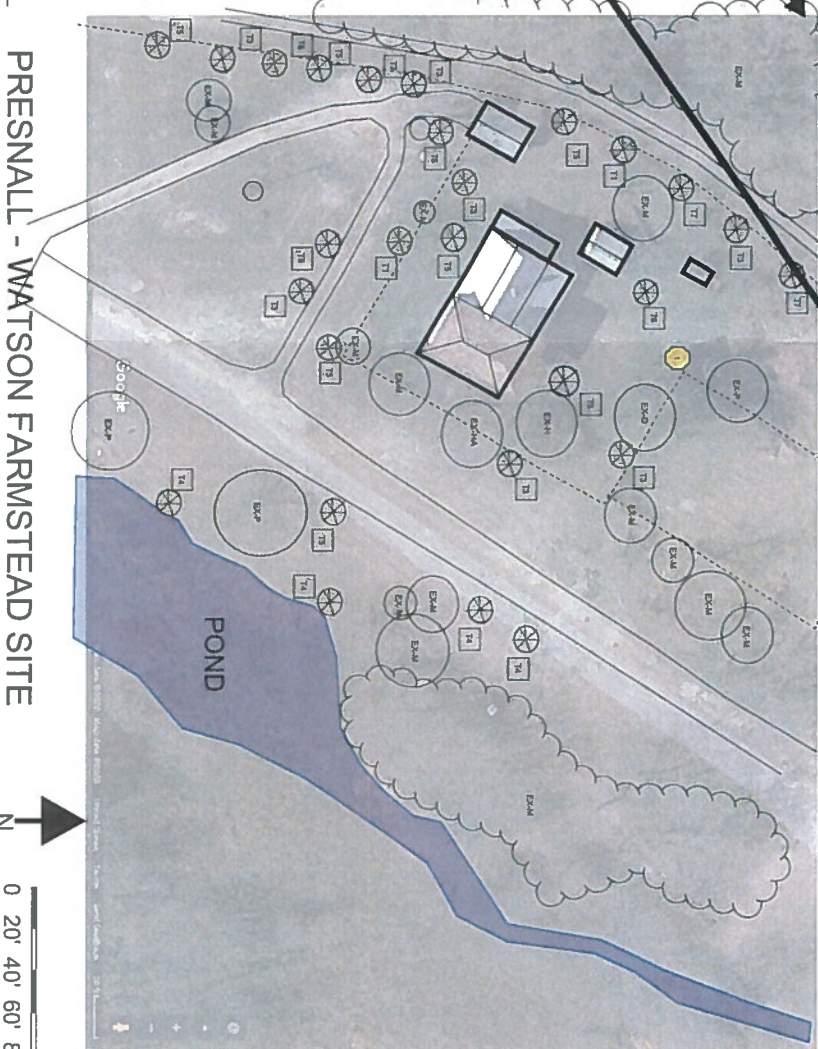
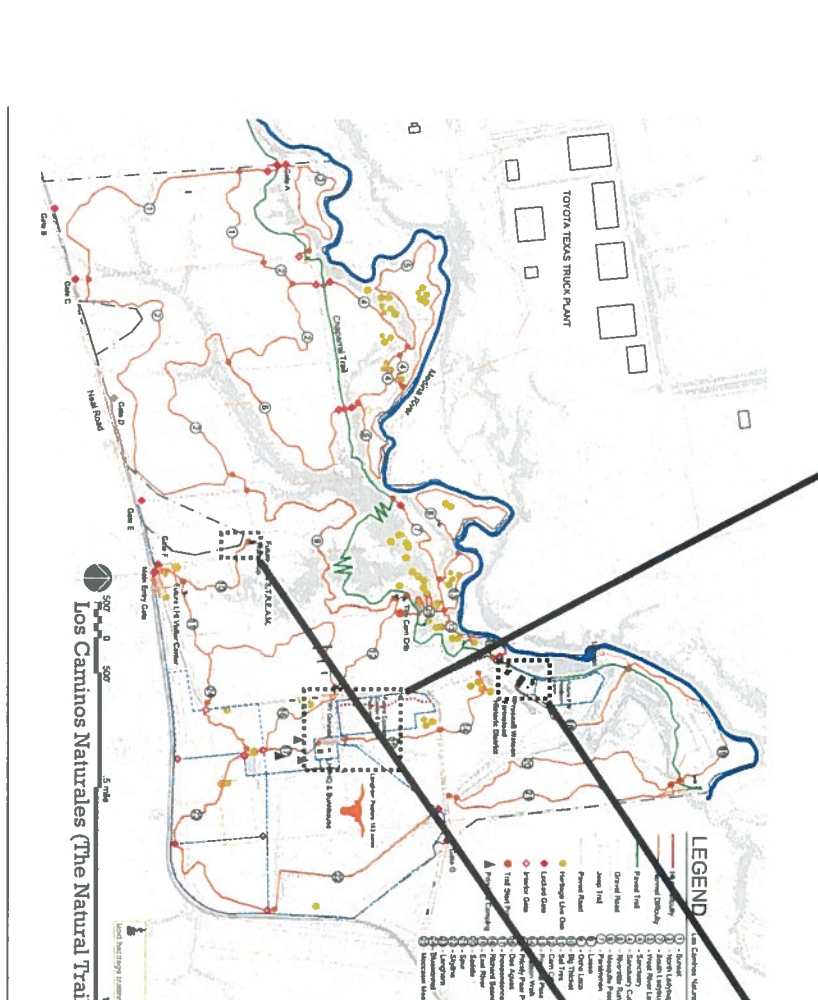
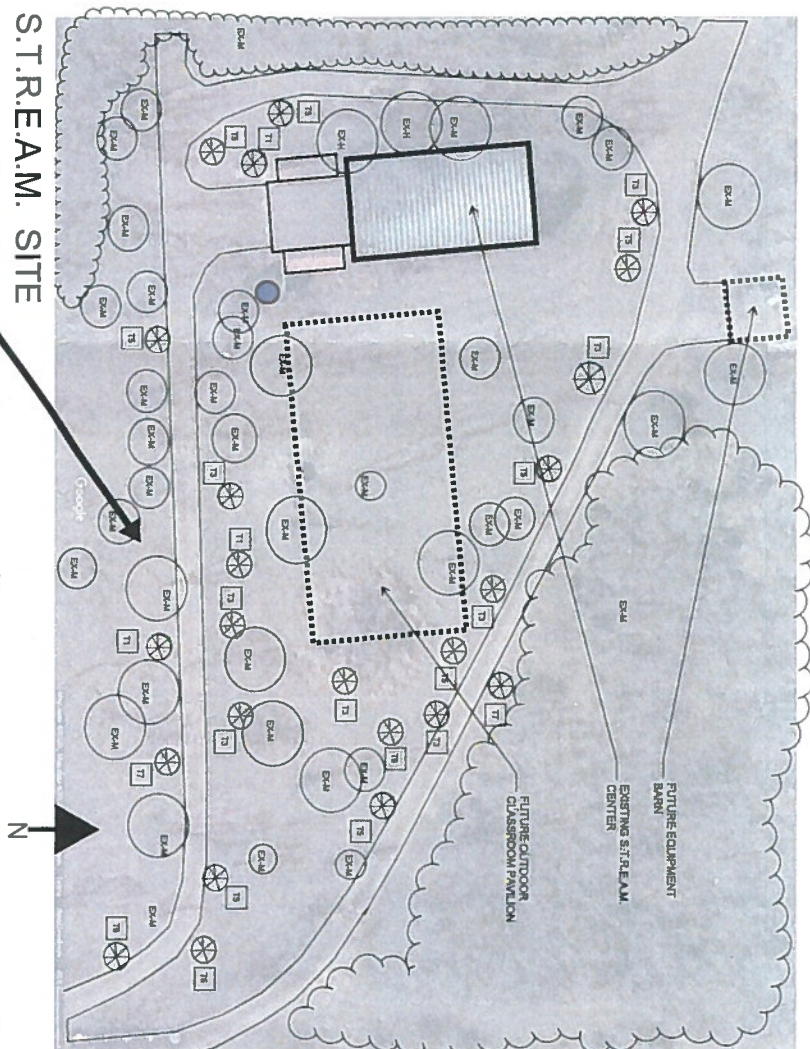
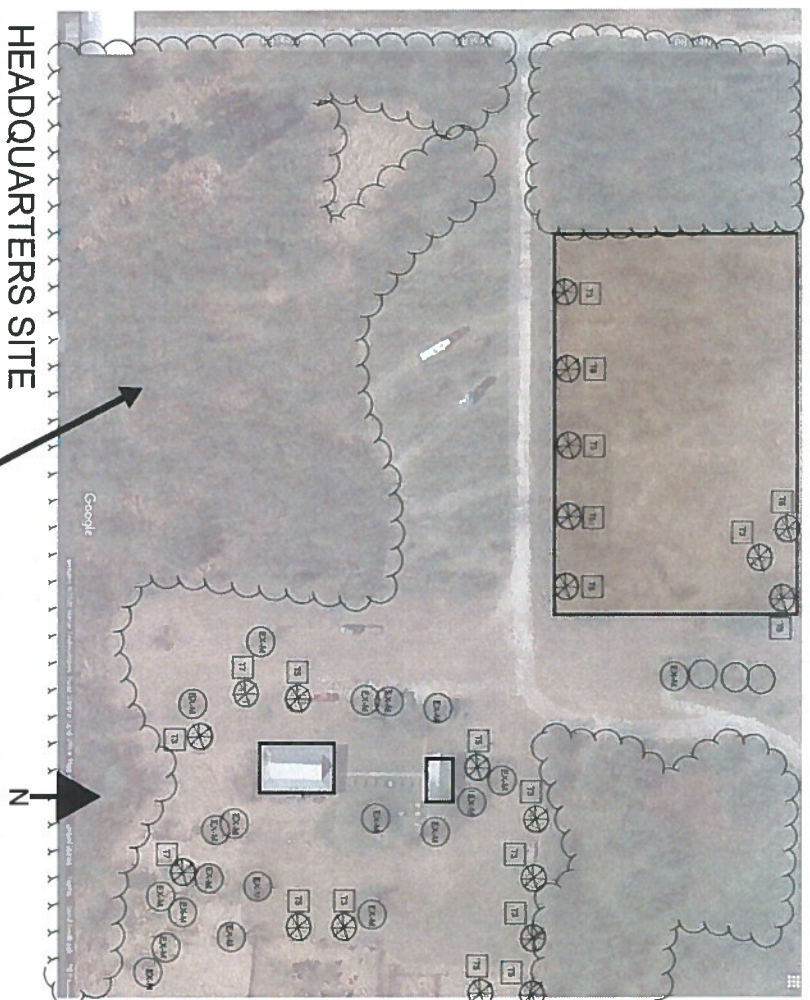
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PLANTING LEGEND

TREE LIST		(A-C) - NO COMMON NAME		(I) - UNLESS NOTED ON PLAN	
REF.	QTY.	SYMB.	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SPACES SYMBING	SIZE/ COMMENTS/ DETAIL
11	3		OLEIFERUS MACROCARPA BIRCH OAK	6	2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
12	0		CECIS CARYOPHYL X MEDOW/ MEDOW FLESHO	0	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
13	24		PLATANUS MEDOW/ REDWOOD STORMRE	36	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
14	4		CORYLUS LINDSEY/ WALNUT CRUSSTOW	6	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
15	24		QUERCUS CRUSSTOW/ OAK DUM	36	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
16	9		QUERCUS VIRGINIANA WHITE OAK	13.5	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN SEE BELOW
17	6		QUERCUS POLYMOCHA HARDWOOD OAK	9	1 1/2" CU AS SHOWN
70			TOTAL TREES PLANTED	106.5	TOTAL INCHES PLANTED



- [illegible]

