

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

June 02, 2021

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2021-259  
**ADDRESS:** 1123 E COMMERCE ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 588 BLK 1 LOT 9  
**ZONING:** D  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 2  
**DISTRICT:** St Paul Square Historic District  
**LANDMARK:** Cameo Theater  
**APPLICANT:** Lindsey Logan/SAGE San Antonio for Growth on the East Side  
**OWNER:** CITY TRIBE  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Marker installation  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** May 13, 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 install 5 historical markers as part of phase 1 of the proposed East Side Markers Project.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Sec. 35-645. - Signs and Billboards on Public Property or Right-of-Way.*

(a) General Provisions. All non-regulatory signage on public property, on the public right-of-way, or overhanging the public right-of-way shall conform to all city codes and must be approved by the historic preservation officer prior to installation. Permits must be obtained following approval of the application. The historic preservation officer may submit an application under this section to the historic and design review commission for their recommendation prior to approving, denying, or approving with conditions the application. Memorials, markers, naming rights of public property, and recognition of charitable donations given to the City of San Antonio shall be additionally governed by existing policies for memorials and markers and/or any formal action passed by city council. Temporary displays approved by the department exercising control of the public property are authorized if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas

## FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant has proposed to install 5 historical markers on San Antonio's east side as phase 1 of the East Side Markers Project. Douglas Architects is assisting SAGE San Antonio for Growth on the East Side with the implementation of the East Side Markers program. The applicant has proposed to install the first 5 markers near 1123 E Commerce, 1416 E Commerce, 207 N Center, 709 S Pine, and 333 Martin Luther King. A public input session was facilitated by the applicant and community feedback was incorporated in the project proposal. It is anticipated that the Eastside Historical Markers Project will include thirteen markers in total. At this time, 14 sites have been considered for this project.
- b. **CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL** – Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles. Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval. The applicant received conceptual approval from the HDRC on November 18, 2020, and has returned to the HDRC with an updated application for final approval.
- c. **DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE** – The project was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on October 27, 2020. Overall, the project received positive feedback. The Committee discussed the proposed marker locations, marker design and text formatting, and questioned whether the proposed marker installation would require the nearby properties to be designated as historic landmarks. The Committee recommended that the markers feature a uniform font size, similar to the design of the Texas Historical Commission plaques, and that the applicant explore including QR codes or website information so that the public can find additional information about the sites.

- d. **MARKER DESIGN** – The applicant is requesting approval to install five (5) adorned bronze plaques. The plaques will be similar in design to the Texas Historical Commission plaques and will be mounted on posts that are installed into a footing embedded in concrete. The signage area will be approximately 7 square feet and the post will be a minimum of 40 inches. The total height of the pole-mounted plaque will be approximately 6' – 7". The text has been reviewed by the City's Cultural Historian. Staff finds that the proposed plaque is in accordance with UDC Section 35-645 and is appropriate.
- e. **MARKER LOCATION** – The applicant has proposed to install the markers nearby the locations associated with the person, place, or event being commemorated. The requested markers will be placed near 1412 E Commerce, 1127 E Commerce, 215 Center, 727 Iowa, and 333 Martin Luther King. Staff finds the finalized proposed marker locations appropriate and consistent with the UDC.
- f. **MARKER POLICY** – The applicant has met all requirements of the City of San Antonio Monuments, Memorials, Markers and Plaques Policy. The applicant has assumed financial responsibility for the complete design, manufacturing, installation, and maintenance endowment to ensure the adequate quality care for the marker. The applicant has provided evidence of existing funding for the proposed adorned bronze plaques and all associated costs. Improvements made on City lands become the property of the City of San Antonio. The final text on each plaque was reviewed by the City's Cultural Historian.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through f with the following stipulation:



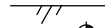

- i. That the final marker design features text that is uniform in font and size.

# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE BLACK COMMERCE STREET HISTORICAL MARKER SITE. SAN ANTONIO, TX.

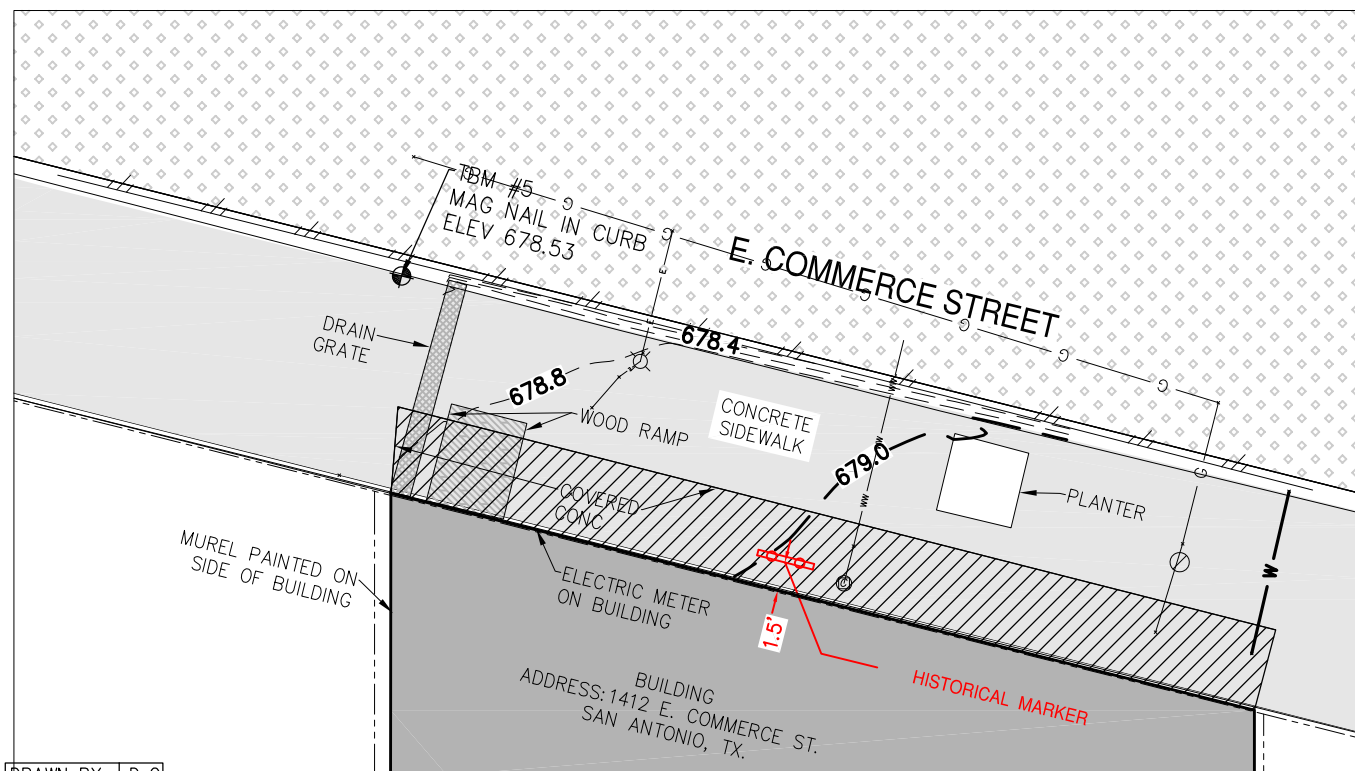
ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD 1988.

PROPERTY LINES SHOWN PER CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NCB MAPS ARE FOR  
GENERAL LOCATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. NO ON THE GROUND BOUNDARY WAS  
MADE AT THIS TIME.

## LEGEND:

-  = LIGHT POLE
-  = CLEAN OUT
-  = EDGE OF ASPHALT
-  = TEMPORARY BENCHMARK

## KEY PLAN SCALE: 1"=100'



DRAWN BY: DvC  
FIELD CREW: JG



SCALE: 1"=10'  
DETAIL MAP



290 S. CASTELL AVE., STE. 100  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130  
TBPE FIRM F-10961  
TBPLS FIRM 10153600

BLACK COMMERCE STREET  
ADDRESS: 1412 E. COMMERCE STREET  
SAN ANTONIO, TX.  
JOB NO.: 393.001  
FIELD DATE: 11/24/2020  
REVISED: 5/04/2021-UNDERGROUND UTILITIES ADDED

# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE CAMEO THEATER HISTORICAL MARKER SITE SAN ANTONIO, TX.

ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD 1988.

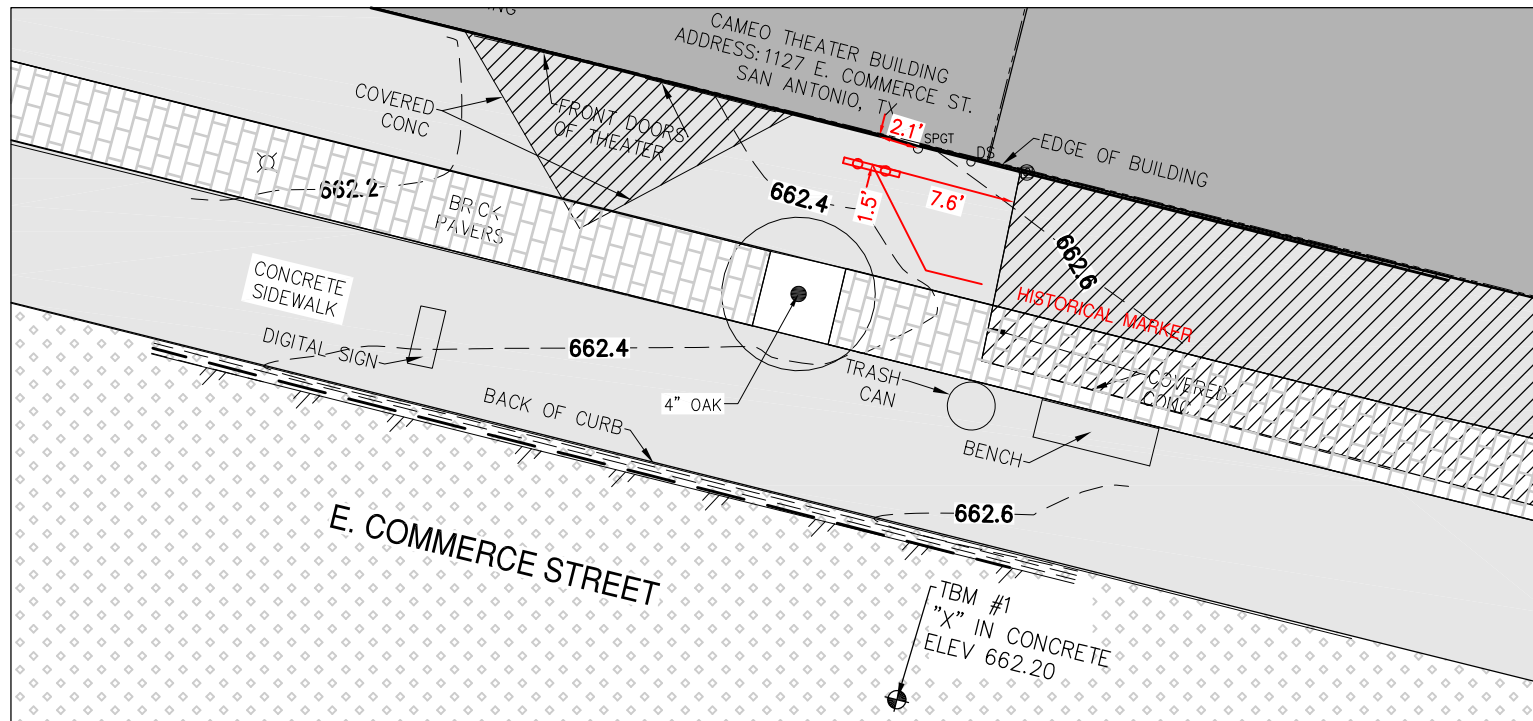
PROPERTY LINES SHOWN PER CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NCB MAPS ARE FOR GENERAL LOCATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. NO ON THE GROUND BOUNDARY WAS MADE AT THIS TIME.

## LEGEND:

- SPGT = SPIGOT
- = LIGHT POLE
- ⊙ = CLEAN OUT
- = SIGN
- DS = DOWN SPOUT
- = EDGE OF ASPHALT
- ⊕ = TEMPORARY BENCHMARK

## KEY PLAN

SCALE: 1"=100'



SCALE: 1"=10'  
DETAIL MAP

DRAWN BY: DvC  
FIELD CREW: JG



290 S. CASTELL AVE., STE. 100  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130  
TBPE FIRM F-10961  
TBPLS FIRM 10153600

CAMEO THEATER  
ADDRESS: 1127 E. COMMERCE STREET  
SAN ANTONIO, TX.  
JOB NO.: 393.001  
FIELD DATE: 11/24/2020  
REVISED: 5/4/21 - NO UTILITY MARKINGS FOUND










# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE GW BOULDIN NEWSPAPER HISTORICAL MARKER SITE. SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

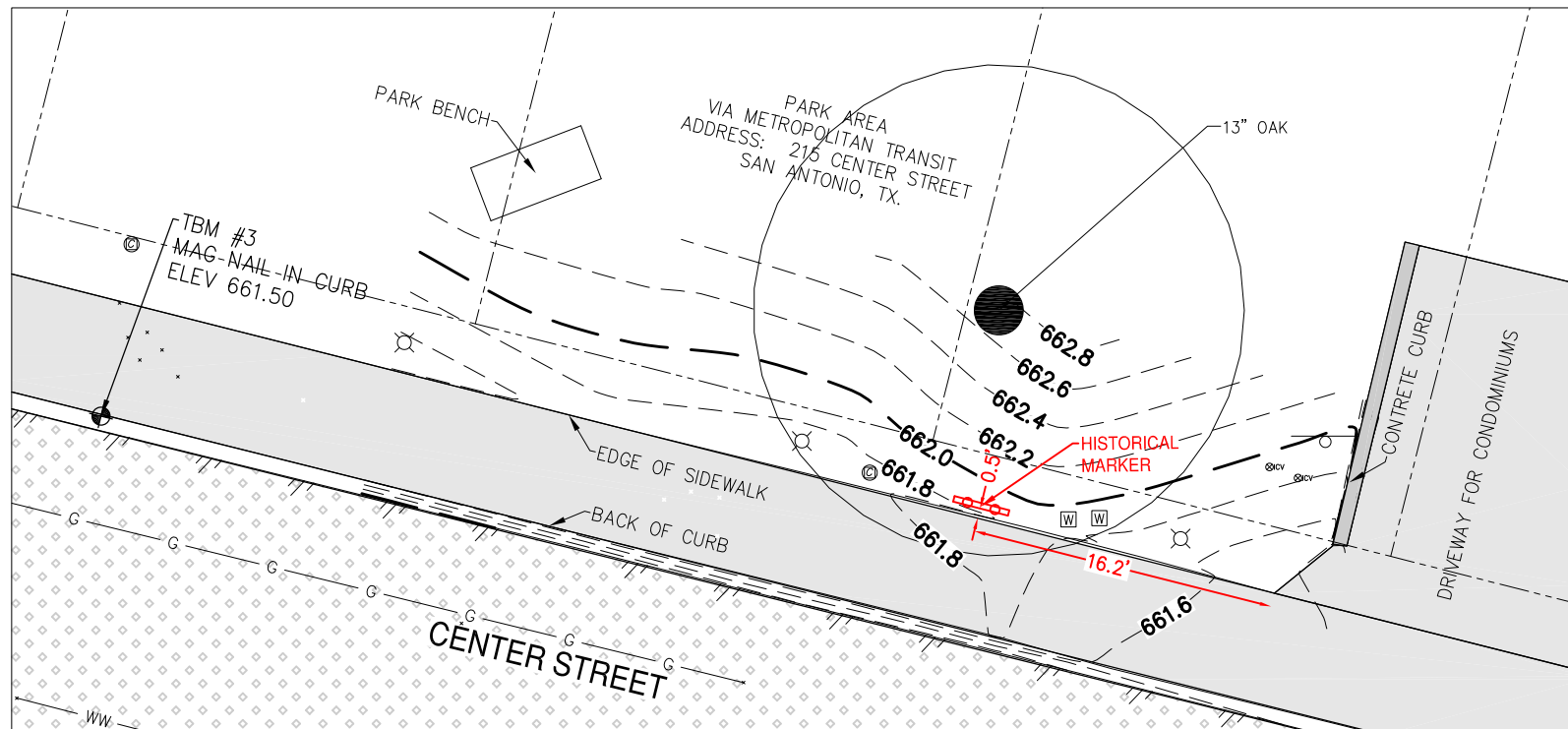
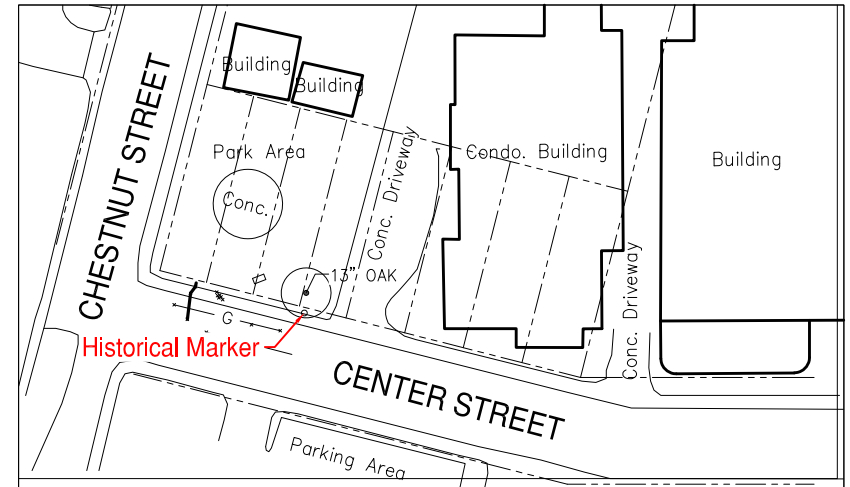
ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD 1988.

PROPERTY LINES SHOWN PER CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NCB MAPS ARE FOR GENERAL LOCATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. NO ON THE GROUND BOUNDARY WAS MADE AT THIS TIME.

## LEGEND:

-  = WATER METER
-  = LIGHT POLE
-  = CLEAN OUT
-  = SIGN
-  = IRRIGATION CONTROL VALVE
-  = EDGE OF ASPHALT
-  = TEMPORARY BENCHMARK

KEY PLAN  
SCALE: 1"=100'



SCALE: 1"=10'  
DETAIL MAP



290 S. CASTELL AVE., STE. 100  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130  
TBPE FIRM F-10961  
TBPLS FIRM 10153600

DRAWN BY: DvC  
FIELD CREW: JG

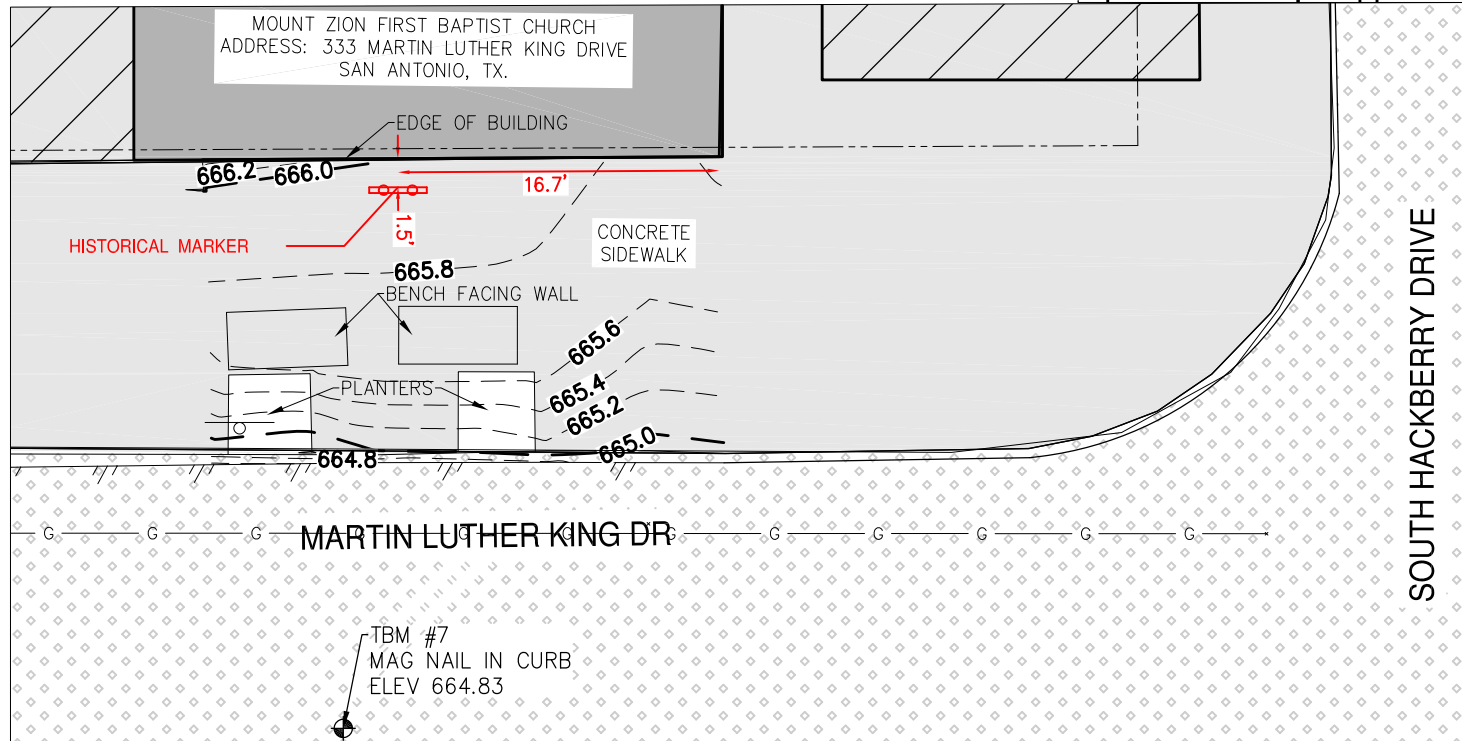
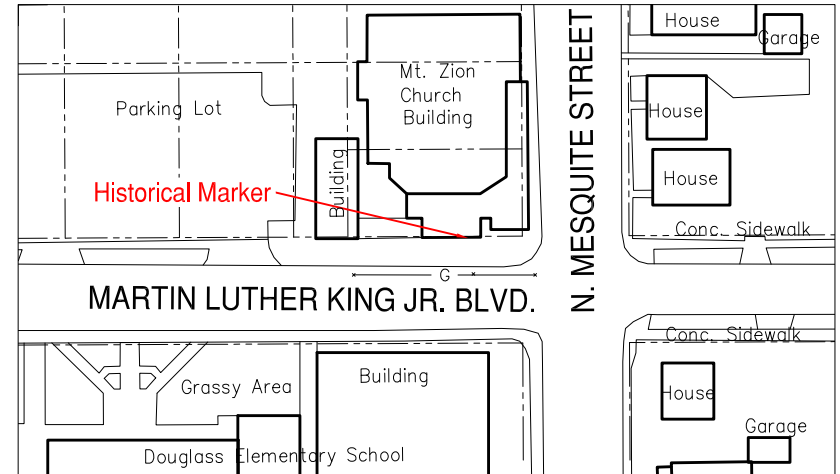
G.W. BOULDIN NEWSPAPER  
ADDRESS: 215 CENTER STREET,  
SAN ANTONIO, TX.  
JOB NO. 393.001  
FIELD DATE: 11/24/2020  
REVISED: 5/4/21 - UNDERGROUND UTILITIES ADDED

# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE JOHN INMAN HUMAN RIGHTS HISTORICAL MARKER SITE SAN ANTONIO, TX.

ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD 1988.

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KEY PLAN  
SCALE: 1"=100'



SCALE: 1"=10'  
DETAIL MAP

DRAWN BY: DvC  
FIELD CREW: JG



290 S. CASTELL AVE., STE. 100  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130  
TBPE FIRM F-10961  
TBPLS FIRM 10153600

JOHN INMAN HUMAN RIGHTS  
ADDRESS: 333 MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD.  
SAN ANTONIO, TX.  
JOB NO.: 393.001  
FIELD DATE: 11/24/2020  
REVISED: 5/4/21 UNDERGROUND UTILITIES ADDED

# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE SNCC LEGACY PROJECT HISTORICAL MARKER SITE SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

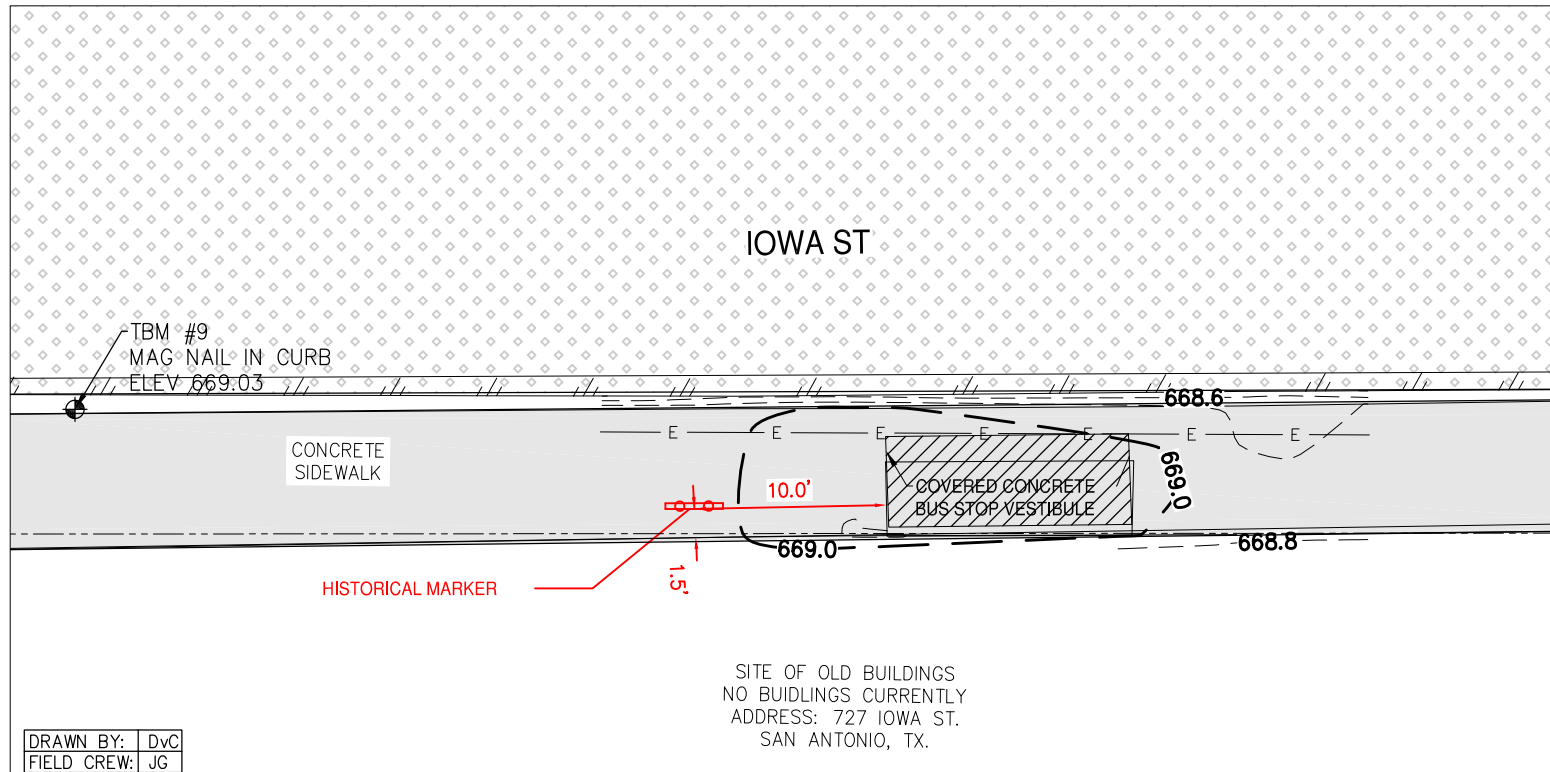
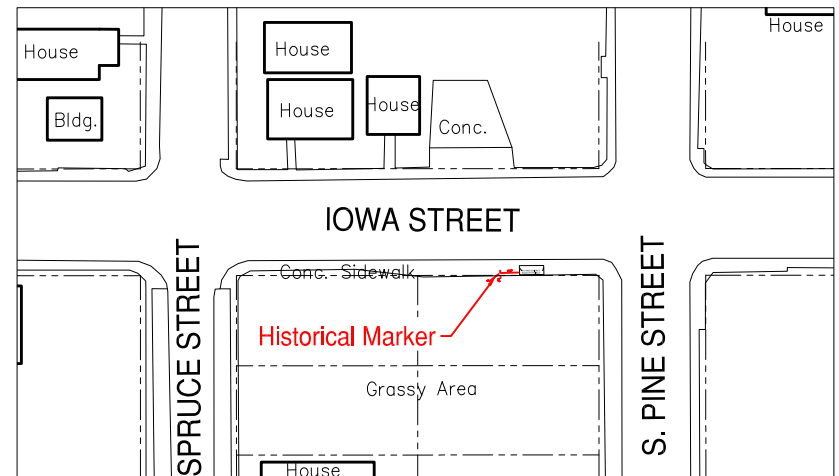
ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD 1988.

PROPERTY LINES SHOWN PER CITY OF SAN ANTONIO NCB MAPS ARE FOR  
GENERAL LOCATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. NO ON THE GROUND BOUNDARY WAS  
MADE AT THIS TIME.

## LEGEND:

- E — = OVERHEAD ELECTRIC
- / / — = EDGE OF ASPHALT
- ⊕ = TEMPORARY BENCHMARK

KEY PLAN  
SCALE: 1"=100'



SCALE: 1"=10'  
DETAIL MAP

DRAWN BY: DvC  
FIELD CREW: JG



290 S. CASTELL AVE., STE. 100  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX 78130  
TBPE FIRM F-10961  
TBPLS FIRM 10153600

SNCC LEGACY SITE  
ADDRESS: 727 IOWA STREET  
SAN ANTONIO, TX.  
JOB NO.: 393.001  
FIELD DATE: 11/24/2020  
REVISED: 5/4/21 NO UTILITY MARKINGS FOUND

## Black Commerce Street

East Commerce Street was the business heart of the eastside African American community. Here, Black residents could secure services not available to them elsewhere in segregated San Antonio. These businesses were owned and led by African American professionals and community leaders. East Commerce Street had a strong history of black life and culture that once dominated the area. Most of it is now gone, the result of several barriers designed to segregate the area, including McAllister Freeway which established an additional barrier to the existing railroad tracks. After the street was made one way, most of the last remaining black businesses were destroyed.

Preachers Professional Building at 1416 E. Commerce housed several of these businesses, among them was the law office of Hattie Briscoe. Hattie Elam Briscoe, the first Black woman to enroll, and graduate, from St. Mary's University School of Law. Graduating first in her class in 1956, she would serve as the only Black woman attorney in Bexar County for the next 27 years. Briscoe earned her bachelor's degree from Wiley College, a historically black liberal arts college in Marshall Texas, after receiving a scholarship to attend. Home of the *Great Debaters*, Wiley College students launched some of the first sit-in demonstrations against segregation in Texas which would have helped to steel Hattie's determination to break the chains of segregation.

By 1944, Briscoe had become a cosmetology instructor, teaching night classes at Hicks Beauty School on S. Pine Street. She later became an instructor of cosmetology at the segregated Wheatley High School in San Antonio. Briscoe continued to seek higher education for herself. Although forced to attend racially segregated Texas schools, Briscoe nonetheless excelled despite the generally inferior nature of segregated education, receiving a master's degree at then segregated Prairie View A & M College in 1951. In 1952, she entered St. Mary's Law School, a Catholic institution, where she attended night classes while working in the day. Briscoe practiced law for 42 years.

Also located on E. Commerce was an important barbershop. At 1412 East Commerce, next door, and in the same building, as the Cunningham Pharmacy and Soda Shop, was Taylor's Barber Shop. Verley Taylor hired Paul White after White completed his military service. White would go on to run the barbershop and become one of the last businessmen to witness the end of black businesses on East Commerce Street. White would cut Black soldiers' hair from Fort Sam Houston and patrons from many of the Black businesses and neighborhoods north and south of East Commerce Street. Many African Americans visited his barbershop and discussed politics while getting their haircut. This was not unusual then, or now, as any Saturday visit to either a black beauty salon or a black barbershop will often yield intense discussions about politics, rumors, deaths, and funerals in the community. It was no different in Paul White's shop. Even when barbers tried to put a lid on political shoptalk, it always found a way to erupt.

Mr. White mentored and hired one such famous local barber Charles Williams. Williams would become an entrepreneur opening his own shop and a barber college. When Paul White died, he was 86 years old. Only John Inman, a black barber a few blocks away on South Hackberry Street, was older than White. Customers often noted how he was saddened at what the city had done to destroy black businesses and the cultural life that once existed on East Commerce Street.

White cut hair at a time on E. Commerce Street when the Cameo theater at 1123 E. Commerce was dedicated to entertaining black audiences and featuring black performers. Also operating at the time, was the black owned De Luxe Hotel at the corner of E. Commerce and Sycamore Street, -Homer Rodger's Acme **Taylors** and Hatters, -the Lifesaver's Bar and Grill, Bette's Eat Shop, **Bellinger's** Taxi Cab Company, Red Top Cab, -Fishers Café, **the Avalon Grill**, the Froggie Bottom Club (also referred to as the Foggie Bottom by some)- and Dr. Madison Preacher's office, one of the few black physicians in San Antonio for many years.

Later, in the 1980s, the City of San Antonio dedicated the Homer Rodgers Memorial Bridge that extends over East Commerce Street to Homer Rodgers, a businessman and civil rights activist. According to Jean Rodgers-Clack, in talking about her father's business and others in St. Paul Square, "You could be suited for hand crafted silk embroidered shirts or a tailor-made suit at Homer Rodger's Acme Taylors and Hatters, grab a cab at the Red Top Taxi stand or stop in at the popular grocery and bakery. If you needed the services of a bail bondsman, you'd see Henry Nance or Hays Pendergraph."

Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas  
Contributors:  
Aubry C. Lewis  
Jean Rodgers-Clack  
Charles Williams

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**Commented [MD2R1]:**

**Commented [CG(3)]:** Since not all addresses are listed, it would be better to not list only some

**Commented [CG(4)]:** Already mentioned.

## **G.W. Bouldin**

### **An Important African American Leader in San Antonio**



This area known as St. Paul Square is steeped in history. This vicinity once teemed with Black businesses, and several African American churches including 2<sup>nd</sup> Baptist Church and St. Paul's Colored Methodist. It was also the place where civil rights leader G. W. Bouldin housed several businesses and his newspaper. In 1936, G. William Bouldin lived at 1730 East Houston Street where he would have meetings with mayors and civil rights leaders. He arrived in San Antonio in 1908 and worked as a Pullman Porter for the segregated railroad system. He was born in Hondo, Texas on June 29, 1895, and soon after coming to San Antonio established an African American newspaper called the San Antonio Inquirer in 1906, located in this block at 207 N. Center Street. Later, the paper moved to the corner of E. Commerce and Hackberry Streets. It was while he was the editor of the paper that the Bureau of Investigation began harassing him for articles he published critical of the treatment of Black soldiers of the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry during the "Houston Riot" and tried at Fort Sam Houston. The article that was used to prosecute Boldin was contained in the November 24, 1917 edition of his newspaper. On December 11, 1917, the soldiers were hanged on the Salado Creek for their part in protecting the black community of Houston, Texas. In a courtroom at the Fort Sam Houston Post Chapel, 19 Black soldiers were racially railroaded to the gallows. This barbaric act was condemned across the country and was also spotlighted in an article in Bouldin's paper.

G.W. Bouldin was tried and convicted under the Espionage Act in 1919, at a time when the First Amendment was compromised, and sent to Leavenworth Prison for two years for simply allowing an article critical of the mistreatment of these African Americans soldiers to be printed in his paper. His sentence was commuted by the President to one year and a day. Bouldin was a fighter for civil rights and Black upliftment and refused to give up even after serving his time in prison. Bouldin went on to become a builder, a real estate man, a mortician, and a newspaper man. In fact, Bouldin operated and owned funeral homes throughout the state of Texas and established Mount Zion Funeral Parlor with the famous businessman Frank E. Lewis in San Antonio in 1923. This structure was formerly the St. Paul Colored Methodist Church across the street at 230 N. Center.

According to another Black newspaper, the July 10, 1936 issue of the San Antonio Register, Bouldin established funeral homes in Hallettsville, Lockhart, Luling, Gonzales, Yoakum, San Marcos, Kenedy, Goliad, and Corpus Christi. G.W. Bouldin stood out as a light and a beacon in the African American community of San Antonio and should be honored for his contributions to San Antonio as a whole. Bouldin died on July 5, 1936 and his death certificate was signed by the famous black medical doctor, Madison L. Preacher. Bouldin was buried on July 9, 1936 and was an active member of the United Brothers of Friendship, a Black lodge.

Bouldin was a member of West End Baptist Church which had a large send off on the occasion of his death. Bouldin did not forget where his roots were and was not ashamed of his activities for the betterment of African Americans.

Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas

Sponsors: City of San Antonio, TIRZ Board 11  
San Antonio for Growth on the East Side (SAGE)

## John Inman Fighter for Human Rights

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John Inman was born in 1896, the year the infamous Plessey v. Ferguson Supreme Court case made segregation legal. Inman, a fixture in the civil and human rights movement in San Antonio, graduated from theological seminary in the 1930's but according to his daughter Janice Inman-Joseph, he chose "teaching instead of preaching." Inman fought against segregation in San Antonio by participating in protests at segregated facilities in his early years and never stopped even as he approached later years. Inman, a barber by profession, taught his customers about civil and human rights as they sat in his shop. One could go to his barbershop and pick up material concerning the latest news in the black community, both locally and nationally. He was always willing to discuss the inequalities that existed in the city and across the country and the importance of action to address the plight of people.

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Inman's community barbershop on S. Hackberry Street was across the street from Mount Zion First Baptist Church, where he was an active member. According to researcher Alwyn Barr, in quoting A.C. Sutton, John Inman was always in the lead for civil rights. Sutton said, "Anything that looked like a movement, he would be a part of." After federal authorities at Kelly Air Force discovered that Inman was a revolutionary, they removed his barbershop from the base causing economic hardship for his family. However, much to the displeasure of segregationists, Inman kept up the fight for human dignity from his family home and barbershop on S Hackberry Street. In 1928, John Inman became the president of the San Antonio Branch of the NAACP. He fought for infrastructure improvements on the East Side and carried out a campaign to end the poll tax.

John Inman was allied with Rev. Claude Black and the G. J. Sutton family. In the 1930's and 1940's, the Black community was active in encouraging voting by holding mock "Sepia Mayoral Campaigns," which are recorded in the Black Press (San Antonio Register), and "Anti-Poll Tax Rallies" on the east and west sides of the city (Register, March 31, 1939). John Inman was also a local labor activist and participated in these mock mayoral campaigns which were organized by what was then called the Negro Chamber of Commerce. He was actually elected in a mock mayoral campaign in an effort to show that Blacks deserved to hold the position of mayor in San Antonio during the era of segregation. Inman was a fighter for social justice for many years. A Black revolutionary during the Bellinger era, Inman lived a long life, and fought for positive change for decades. He was an advocate of worker's rights and supported workers of all ethnic groups including Mexican American Pecan Shellers that carried out a strike for better working conditions under the leadership of Emma Tenayuca. John Inman was active in a black and brown coalition that was organized into the "Workers Alliance." Inman was able to organize black support for the Pecan Sheller's Union and his help was invaluable. Shamefully his organizing success has gone uncelebrated.

Inman's influence would be felt years later when he conducted political education classes for San Antonio SNCC members, civil rights workers, and others in the 1960s. He never gave up and was quoted in the community by many people who remembered that he said, "The harder they fought me, the harder I fought back. I was never afraid of risking my life for the cause of justice and freedom." In the 1970s, John Inman was a member of the San Antonio Committee to Free Angela Davis and helped to organize one of the largest rallies in the country of close to 3,000 participants for her freedom at La Villita Assembly Hall. John Inman passed away in 1996 at the age of 100.

**Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas**





## The SNCC Legacy Project



At this site was the office of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Langston Hughes Afro-American Theater in 1969. The SNCC office was the scene of planning meetings to organize Black Student Unions on College campuses across the city, and for protests against injustice. The SNCC office was attacked by police forces after a protest in downtown San Antonio against police abuse in 1969. SNCC was considered the most radical group in the Civil Rights Movement by representing an approach to dismantling the Jim Crow system of the South. SNCC activists were active in grassroots organizing and directly confronted those that sought to keep racial discrimination policies afloat. One of the original founders and leaders of SNCC was the late Congressman John Lewis.

For many years prior to that, this vicinity, known as Denver Heights, was a focal point serving the community with black businesses such as Leonard's Pharmacy while the educational needs of children were provided at Norris Wright Cuney Elementary Elementary School. According to San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) records, a school for African American students opened as Santa Clara Public School in 1902, in the Baptist Settlement, which was a two-room school that was moved to Iowa Street as the "Cuney Annex" in 1923, and in 1932 went to 935 Iowa Street which is now Friendship Baptist Church.

At this corner was a black segregated theatre known by various names including the Leon Theater and the Ritz Theater. In 1969, it served as a playhouse where black poets and playwrights gathered to provide the community with plays and poetic readings that spoke to the cultural experiences and protests of the black community. Some of the members of the theatre group were also SNCC members as the two groups complimented one another in the freedom struggle for civil and human rights. One could often hear the sounds of African drumming from performers such as local activist and organizer Charles Middleton. Ony Whittier, Abram Emerson, and others performed as actors in the theater in plays that reflected the Black Struggle for human rights. While SNCC members trained in Karate, and schoolchildren enjoyed breakfast at Antioch Baptist Church as part of the first Free Breakfast Program for School Children organized by the SNCC in 1969. Within this area, once occupied by Germans, a black middle-class survived the indignities of segregation by providing a music shop called Music and TV World, a coffee shop, Muhammad's Mosque, Clardy's Pharmacy, Dr. Clarence Horne's Dentistry, Tip-Top Cleaners, a Texas-styled "Ice House" and others. Famous black leaders lived or provided services in the area, and included Jesse Mae Hicks. Rev. Claude Black, John Inman. Lafayette Walker, Attorney Hattie Briscoe, and others. Also, across the street was Wong's Chinese Grocery Store which served the black community for many years. Diagonally across from this location was a boarding house for black Pullman Porters who worked on the train at St.

Paul's Square. The clenched fist symbolizes the battle against segregation, injustice, and racism that was carried out by SNCC activists and the generations before them.

Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas

Developed by members of The SNCC Legacy Project: John Allen, Paul Battle, Becky Brenner, Abram Emerson, Dianne Green, Claudis Minor, Kamala Platt, and Mario Marcel Salas

**Commented [CG(1)]:** What clenched fist does this refer to? It made me think of the hand art in Pittman Sullivan Park, but that's an open hand. I think it's the modifier "The" in the sentence that makes me think you are referring to one specific fist. Maybe just clarify this such as "The clenched fist used to greet . . ." or "The clenched fist sculpture in. . . ."

## The SNCC Legacy Project



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Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas

Developed by members of The SNCC Legacy Project: John Allen, Paul Battle, Becky Brenner, Abram Emerson, Dianne Green, Claudis Minor, Kamala Platt, and Mario Marcel Salas

**Commented [CG(1)]:** What clenched fist does this refer to? It made me think of the hand art in Pittman Sullivan Park, but that's an open hand. I think it's the modifier "The" in the sentence that makes me think you are referring to one specific fist. Maybe just clarify this such as "The clenched fist used to greet . . ." or "The clenched fist sculpture in. . . ."

## The Cameo Theater

By

Mario Marcel Salas

The Cameo Theater, located at 1123 E. Commerce, originally served as one of several segregated film facilities for Black people in San Antonio. The theater was built in 1940, but the Leon, the Ritz, and the Keyhole theatres preceded the Cameo. The Cameo was a focal point for the latest Black films by Black producers and writers. The Cameo served as a movie theater and a vaudeville house for singers and musicians. In the early years, performers such as Fats Domino, B.B. King, and Louis Armstrong played at the Cameo. Other performing musicians, who stayed at the Deluxe Hotel across the street, may have visited the Cameo and included Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Lionel Hampton. This area was a hub of black businesses that served the community because of segregation.

Early history that influenced the building of the Cameo included D.W. Griffith's racist film, *Birth of a Nation* (1915) which electrified Black civil rights activists and aspiring Black cinematographers. The film served as a catalyst for white supremacists across the country. The film was an anti-Reconstruction disgusting fairy-tale that cast Black people in racist stereotypical roles while the Ku Klux Klan was presented as the "great white hope." Its main attempt was to deny giving Black people equal rights. The film was widely protested by the Black community. However, *Birth of a Nation* sparked other responses as well, including efforts by Emmett J. Scott to produce *Birth of a Race* (1918), a production envisioned as a straightforward retort to Griffith's racist film. Many of the Black films generated sought to create positive and truthful images of Black life and to demonstrate the ignorance of racialized thought. These events sparked the building of Black movie houses in San Antonio.

The Cameo was in the economic Black section of San Antonio at the time and in the area known as St. Paul Square (Sunset Station) extending to the edge of the central business district. Since downtown restaurants were segregated, including those in department stores such as Joske's, Kress, and Woolworth, Blacks had to go to the Black segregated section of the city. Later, after the area was gentrified and black businesses replaced, its history was erased. During its time, the theatre was in walking distance from the black community. Residents from the East Terrace Housing Projects, the Wheatley Courts, and black middle-class residents from the Denver Heights area, could be seen trekking up East Commerce to see a film produced by Black filmmakers. Black residents from the Sutton Homes and the Carson Homes also attended the theatre, while Blacks from the West and North Sides often rode the bus to get to the area. Films in the 1960s were divided into two parts at the Cameo, and during the intermission people would be entertained with the latest Black music recordings from such musicians as Booker T. and the MGs and others. These films, which were once called "Race films," were the tags applied to Black films between 1910 and 1950.

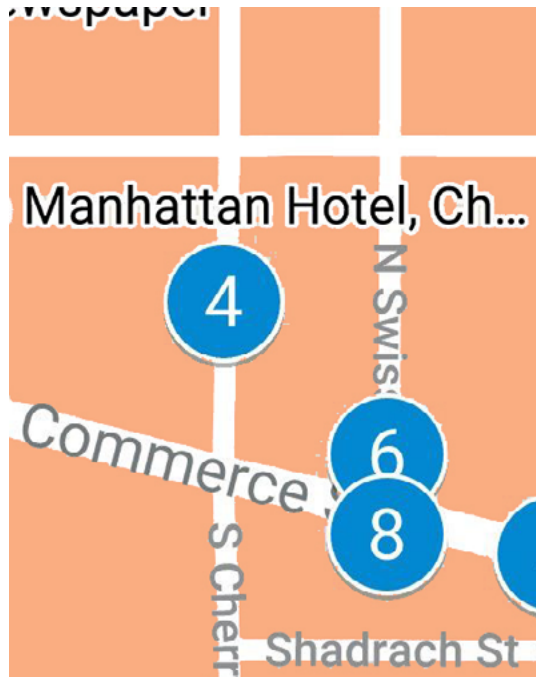
Films shown at the Cameo were the result of the pioneer works of Black film producers before the Cameo was built. Leading the way in Black film production was Bill Foster (1884),

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founder of the first known Black motion picture company in 1910. Others included Noble Johnson who developed the Lincoln Motion Picture Company in 1916, Oscar Micheaux who created the Micheaux Film Company in 1918, and Spencer Williams (1893–1969), who made the most well-liked “race movie” ever released, *Blood of Jesus* (1941), which was produced in Texas and shown at the Cameo. These films attempted to counteract white supremacist propaganda.

**Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas**



**The Cameo Theater and Black Commerce Street**

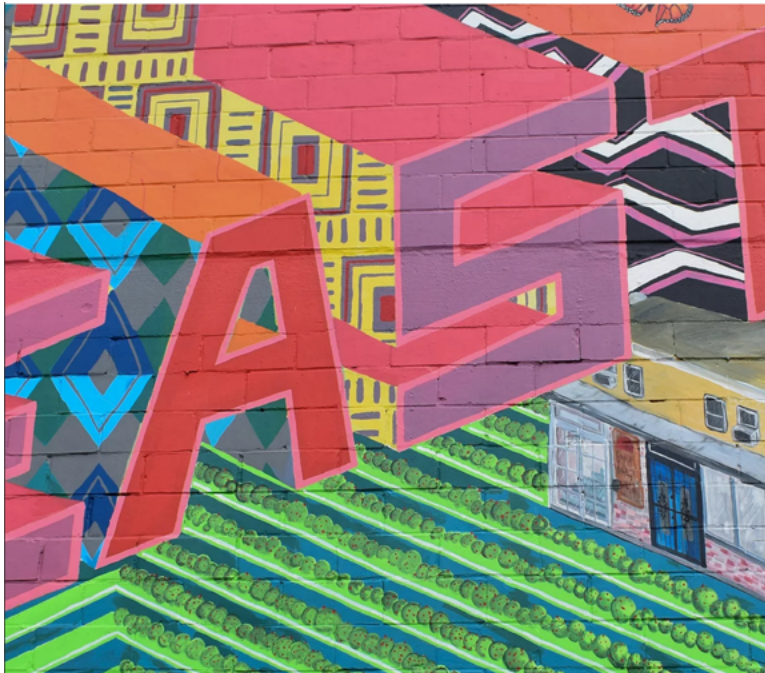
The Cameo Theater, located at 1123 E. Commerce, originally served as one of several segregated film facilities for Black people in San Antonio. The theater was built in 1940, but the land, the lot, and the building were purchased by the Cameo. The Cameo was a local point for the latest Black films by Black producers and writers. The Cameo served as a movie theater and a nightclub for singers and musicians. In the early years, performers such as Fats Domino, B.B. King, and Louis Armstrong played at the Cameo. Other performing musicians, who stayed at the Delux Hotel across the street, may have visited the Cameo and included Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Lionel Hampton. This area was a hub of black businesses that served the community because of segregation.

Early history that influenced the building of the Cameo included D.W. Griffith's racist film, *Birth of a Nation* (1915), which glorified Black civil rights activists and inspiring Black entrepreneurs. The film served as a catalyst for white supremacy across the country. The film was an anti-Reconstruction depicting a false tale that casted Black people in racist derogatory roles while the Ku Klux Klan was presented as the great white hope. Its main attempt was to deny giving Black people equal rights. The film was widely protested by the Black community. However, *Birth of a Nation* sparked other responses as well, including efforts by Emmett J. Scott to produce *Birth of a Race* (1916). *Reconstruction* encouraged a straightforward report to Griffith's racist film. Many of the Black films generated sought to create positive and truthful images of Black life and to demonstrate the ignorance of depicted thought. These events sparked the building of Black movie houses in San Antonio.

The Cameo was in the economic Black section of San Antonio at the time and in the area between St. Paul Square (Burnett Station) extending to the edge of the central business district. Since all of the downtown restaurants, such as Joke's, Kress, and Woolworth, were segregated, Blacks had to go to this segregated section of the city. Later, after the area was gentrified and the black businesses replaced, its history was erased. During its time, the theater was in walking distance from the black community. Residents from the East Terrace Housing Projects, the Wheatley Courts, and black middle-class residents from the Denver Heights area, often could be seen trekking up E. Commerce to see a film produced by Black film makers. Black residents from the Sutton Homes and the Carson Homes also attended the theater, while Blacks from the West and North Sides often rode the bus to get to the area. Films in the 1940s were shown on two parts at the Cameo, and during the intermission people would be entertained with the recordings of the latest Black music such as Duke Ellington, T. and the Mikes and others. These films, which were once called "Race films," were the tags applied to Black films between 1915 and 1950.

Films shown at the Cameo were the result of the pioneer works of Black film producers before the Cameo was built. Leading the way in Black film production was Bill Foster (1884), founder of the first known Black motion picture company in 1910. Others included Noble Johnson who developed the Lincoln Motion Picture Company in 1916, Oscar Micheaux who created the Micheaux Film Company in 1918, and Spencer Williams (1885-1969), who made the most well-known "race movie" ever released, *Blood of Jesus* (1941), which was produced in Texas and shown at the Cameo. These films attempted to counteract white supremacist propaganda.

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**The Cameo Theater and Black Commerce Street**

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Author: Mario Marcel Salas



# EAST SIDE MARKERS PROJECT

## PHASE 1

10/27/20 FINAL DRAFT

Executive Summary

- Project Overview & History
- Public Input Session

List of Locations and Time Line

- Phase 1 & TBD

Marker Prototypes

- Typical Elevation & Installation Location Types
- Universal Anchor Detail - Design Intent
- Installation Location Type A & B
- Installation Location Type C\*

Location Maps - Phases 1-3

Locations & Site Data - Phase 1

- Sites 1, 5, 12, 13 & 14

Survey / Engineering Data - (TBD)



On October 8, 2019, an Eastside historical markers public input session was held at The Spire, 230 Center St, San Antonio.

The information and the images on the following pages depict the results:

The following locations listed below were the subjects at hand for discussion:

- 1. The Cameo (1123 E Commerce St) \*\*
- 2. The Walking Bridge Over Commerce St. (1149 E Commerce St) \*\*
- 3. The Deluxe Hotel at Hoefgen and E. Commerce \*\*
- 4. The Manhattan Hotel at Cherry and E. Commerce
- 5. Charles Bellinger’s gas station at Swiss and E. Commerce
- 6. Cunningham Pharmacy, Paul White’s Barbershop, Dr. Madison Preacher’s office, and Hattie Briscoe’s law office - all in building at the corner of Mesquite and E. Commerce
- Homer Rodger’s office \*\*
- 8. The Lifesaver Grill, between Mesquite and Cherry on E. Commerce
- 9. Reus Liquor Store and Restaurant at S. Hackberry and E. Commerce
- 10. Sunset Station. (1174 E Commerce St) \*\*
- 11. Macedonia Baptist Church (Center and Chestnut St.) \*\*
- 12. Office of G. W. Bouldin Newspaper, by the Viddora \*\*
- 13. SNCC

Community Input:

The following were additionally listed and briefly discussed for possible inclusion into the Historical Markers Project:

- Carver Colored Library Auditorium
- St. Peter Claver School
- Aycock Pharmacy
- Dr. Whittier CM + OC
- Leonard’s Pharmacy
- Fair Childs Tennis Courts Central Playground
- Macedonia/2nd Baptist
- Browning Barber
- Mattie Landry/Campfire Campfounders Girls
- Victoria St.
- Register Newspaper
- Cactus and MLK / Abernathy Texas Landmark
- Green Book Lodging
- Colored YWCA
- E. Commerce as a corridor
- Pullman Porters (Sunset Station)
- Parks - Lincoln Park
- Kennon BBQ
- Mint’s Beauty Nook
- Bellinger Mansion
- Pittman Sullivan (Sunken Garden)
- Ezell land
- Brackenridge Colored High School
- Douglas High School

Project Overview

The East Side Markers Project is a project sponsored by San Antonio for Growth on the East Side (SAGE). There is a desire from many residents to commemorate special people and places located on the east side of San Antonio, that were important and influential African American business people and service providers in the past.

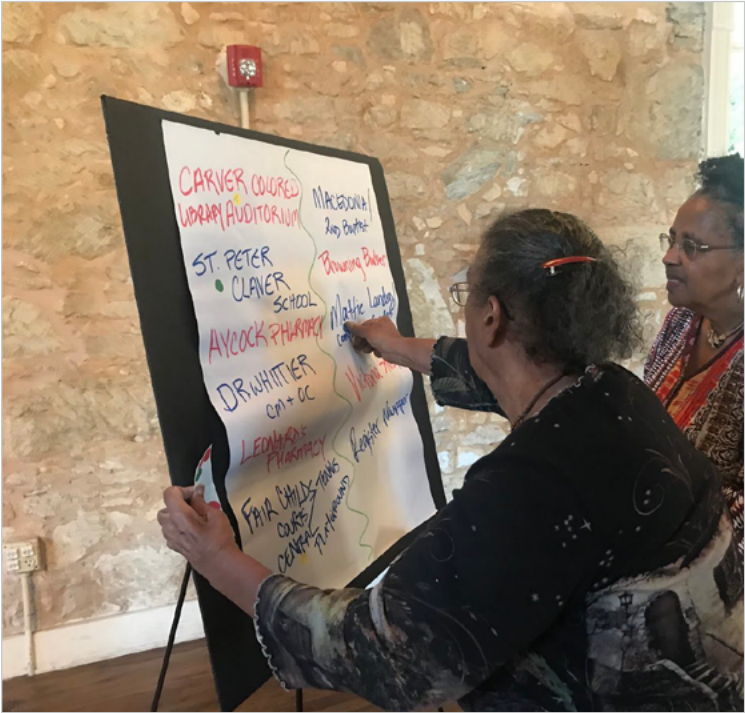
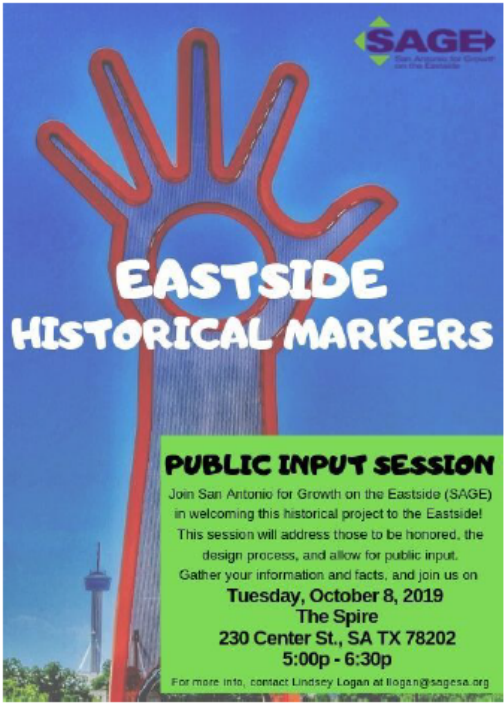
Many of the places are no longer standing, and it is the hope that these markers will connect current and future residents to the past and the people who lived through and were affected by a difficult and painful period in the history of the United States, and San Antonio in particular.

These markers will be installed in various location on the Eastside. This document strives to illustrate the background and the detail needed to inform the City and installers as to the intent of SAGE and the members of the team spearheading the effort.

History

This project is part of a TIRZ Board Initiative.





**Goals of the Public Input Session:**

The ultimate goals of the public input session were:

**Goal 1: Educate the community about the Eastside Historical Markers Project.**

The most important first step of the public input session was to inform the public about the Eastside Historical Markers Project - how it will actually be done, and what it will mean for those in the community. It is important to inform the public about who will be conducting the process (SAGE through approval from the TIRZ department, Neighborhood and Housing Services Department, Office of Historic Preservation, and Arts & Culture Department), what that process looks like, and to communicate the initiation of historic landmark or district designation. The public input session provided recommendations for potential historic designations and preservation priorities. Educating the community about the public about the Eastside Historical Markers Project will answer questions, clarify misconceptions, and ensure transparency throughout the project.

**Goal 2: Garner public interest in the culture of Eastside history and identify potential monumentalizations.**

In addition to educating the public, a significant component of the public involvement process is stimulating interest, enthusiasm, and support from the community for the Eastside Historical Markers Project.



FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



TIRZ Boundaries:

All historical markers identified through this Eastside Historical Markers Project must be located within the TIRZ boundaries, San Antonio, TX.

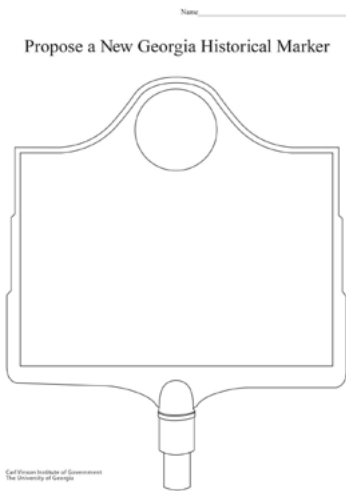
Funding:

Discussion of \$100,000 in TIRZ funding allotted for this Eastside Historical Markers Project (anticipated to include thirteen markers). Participants were explained that SAGE is managing the Eastside Historical Markers Project.

Age/Historical Significance:

- 1. Subject markers must date back at least 50 years, historic events may be marked after 30 years, and individuals may be marked or mentioned in a historical marker text after they have been deceased for 10 years.
- 2. Historical significance: A topic is considered to have historical significance if it had influence, effect or impact on the course of history or cultural development; age alone does not determine significance. Age alone is not sufficient for marker eligibility.

Types/styles of markers: Markers size, cost, and design



This project is an excellent way to share information regarding the architectural and cultural significance of the Eastside. The public was asked to share and shed light on overlooked areas/significant people within the Eastside community.

There is a strong need to preserve and protect Eastside history, which in turn, should generate a greater pride of place and a sense of connectivity to the community.

**Goal 3: Determine from the public the historical and cultural significance within nearby neighborhoods and their importance.** After educating the public for the reason of the public input session, the goal was to then determine which areas, corridors, individuals, buildings, structures, sites and objects are most significant to their community and share its importance. This information plays a pertinent role in determining the historical significance.

**Goal 4: Provide the public with a platform for sharing significant information about their community's history.** The final goal of the public input session was to provide a mechanism for the community to adequately share information about their communities with the SAGE staff. Each public input session attendee provided their contact information for further input and follow-up. SAGE may opt to continue some of the public input sessions to continue to gather information about the historical narrative of the Eastside areas at hand for discussion.

List of Locations & Time Line  
Phase 1 and TBD

Phase 1

Sept. - Dec. 2020	Dec. 2020	Jan. - March 2020
Site 1 - The Cameo Theater		
Site 5 - Black Commerce Street		
Site 12 - G. W. Bouldin Newspaper		
Site 13 - The SNCC Legacy Project		
Site 14 - John Inman, Fighter for Human Rights		
DESIGN	PERMIT	INSTALL

There are fourteen sites that have been considered for this project, many of which were identified at the East Side Markers meeting.

This packet included the details the first - Phase 1 set of markers and illustrates five locations, Site 1, Site 5, Site 12, Site 13 and Site 14 which are shown in green at left.

Phase 2

5 Sites to be Determined		
DESIGN	PERMIT	INSTALL

The remaining sites will be included in a future Phase 2 and Phase 3, and will need to be illustrated and detailed in the same manner, once they are decided and funding is available to construct them.

Phase 3

5 Sites to be Determined		
DESIGN	PERMIT	INSTALL

The locations noted with a green bullet are included in Phase 1. Locations noted with a blue bullet are sites to be determined (TBD).

Location List of Monuments

- 1

The Cameo Theater, 1123 E. Commerce St.
- 2

Walking Bridge Over Commerce, 1149 E. Commerce St.
- 3

The Deluxe Hotel, N. Hoefgen Ave. & E. Commerce St.
- 4

The Manhattan Hotel, Cherry & E. Commerce St.
- 5

Black Commerce Street, 1416 E. Commerce St.
- 6

Charles Bellinger Gas Station, N. Swiss St. & E. Commerce St.
- 7

Homer Rodgers Office, E. Commerce St.
- 8

The Lifesaver Grill, N. Swiss St. & E. Commerce St.
- 9

Reus Liquor Store, S. Hackberry and E. Commerce St.
- 10

Sunset Station, 1174 E. Commerce St.
- 11

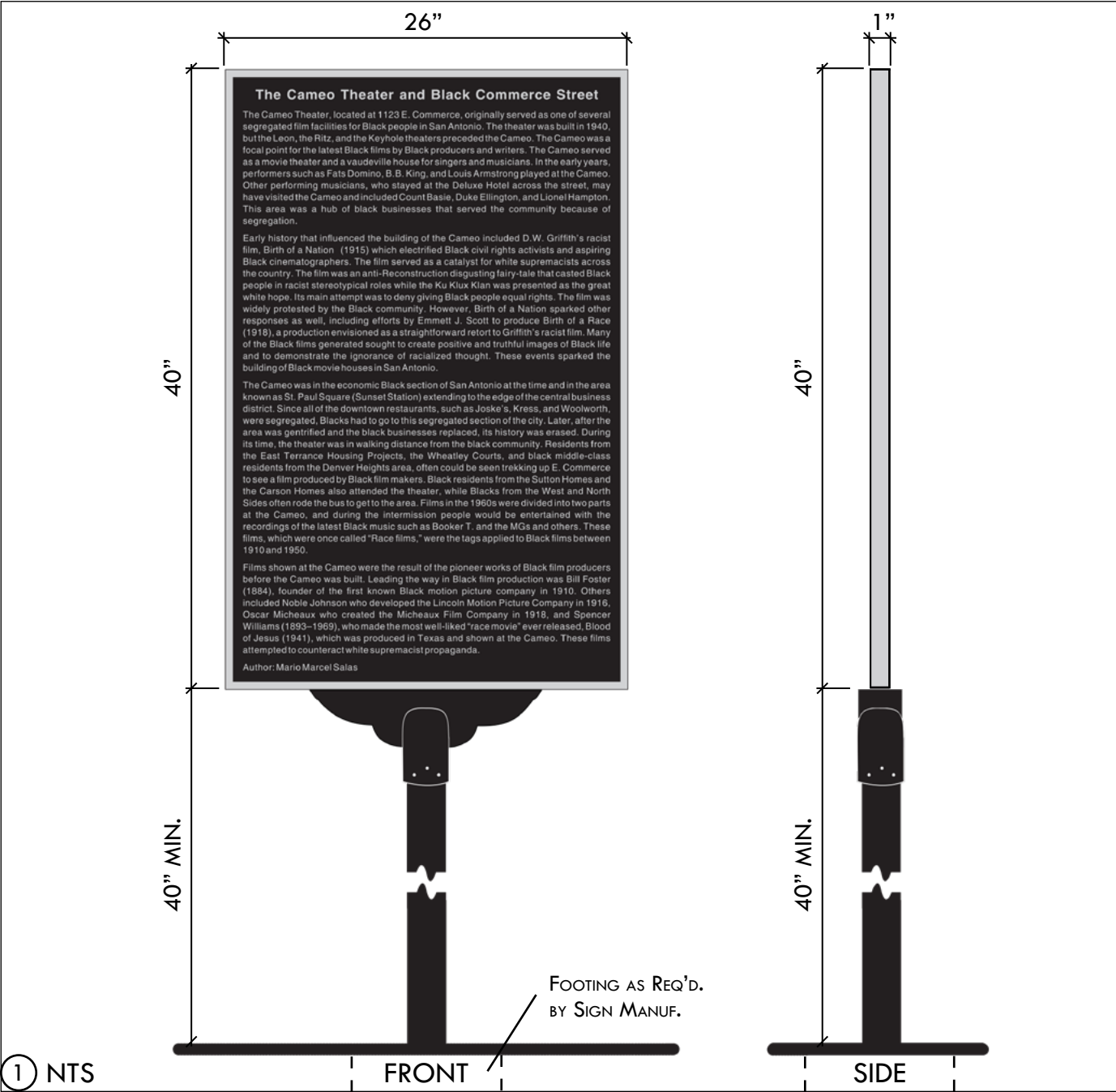
Macedonia Baptist Church, Center St. & Chestnut St.
- 12

G. W. Bouldin Newspaper, 207 N. Center St.
- 13

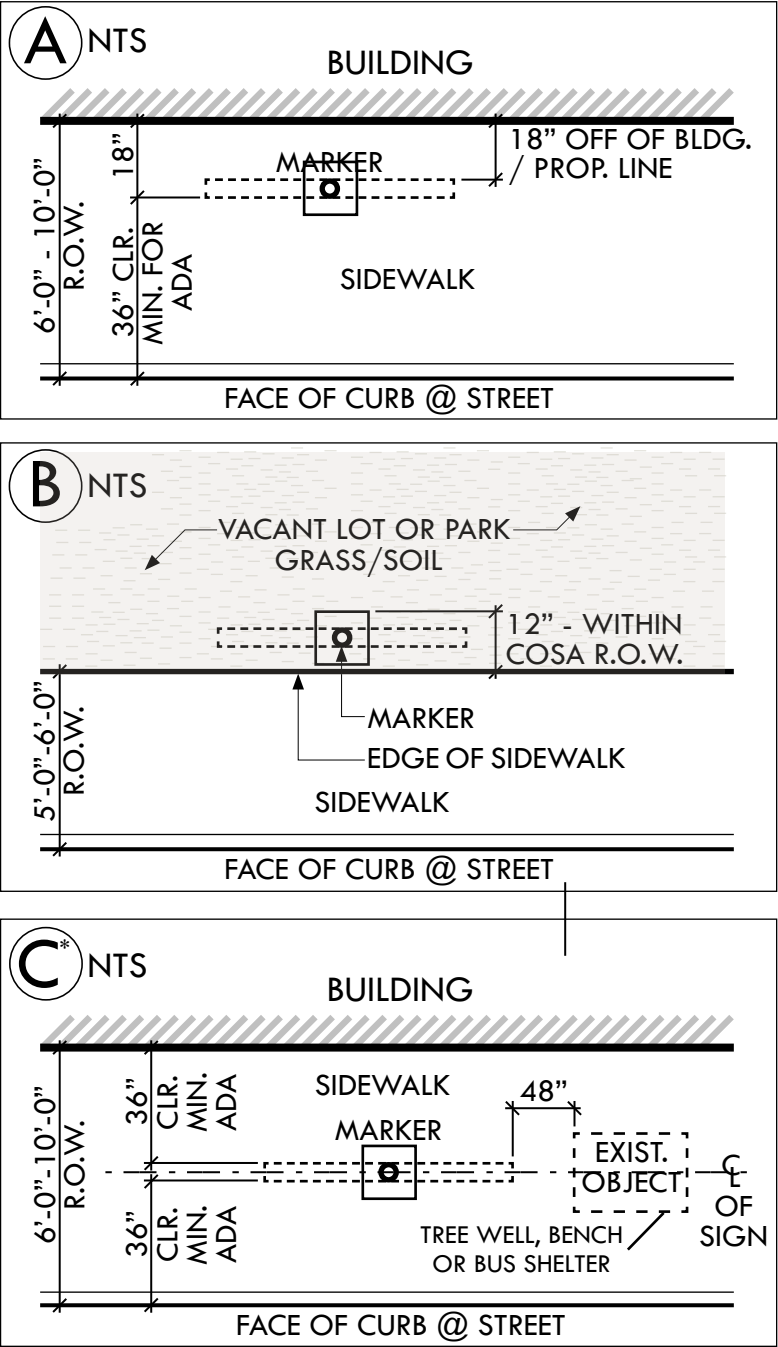
The SNCC Legacy Project, 709 S. Pine St.
- 14

John Inman, Fighter for Human Rights, 333 Martin Luther King Dr.

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



DESIGN INTENT, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



DESIGN INTENT, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Typical Marker Elevation

At left are front and side elevations of a typical monument showing dimensions. Footing per Manufacturer's requirements.

Installation Locations:

Location Type A:

When a monument is to be located near a building, marker should be placed in the City sidewalk ROW. A 36" clear dimension must be maintained in front of the marker. Marker to be 18" from building for building maintenance, but out of pedestrian traffic.

Location Type B:

When a monument is to be located at a vacant lot/park location, locate along the sidewalk edge, in the soil or grass and within the City's ROW area, maintaining 36" clear dimension in front of the sign.

Location Type C\*:

In cases where A and B are not possible, and if approved by the City, the sign could be mounted next to an existing tree well, fixed bench or bus shelter. Maintain 48" away from object, and maintain 36" clear walkway around sign. \*CoSA must approve.

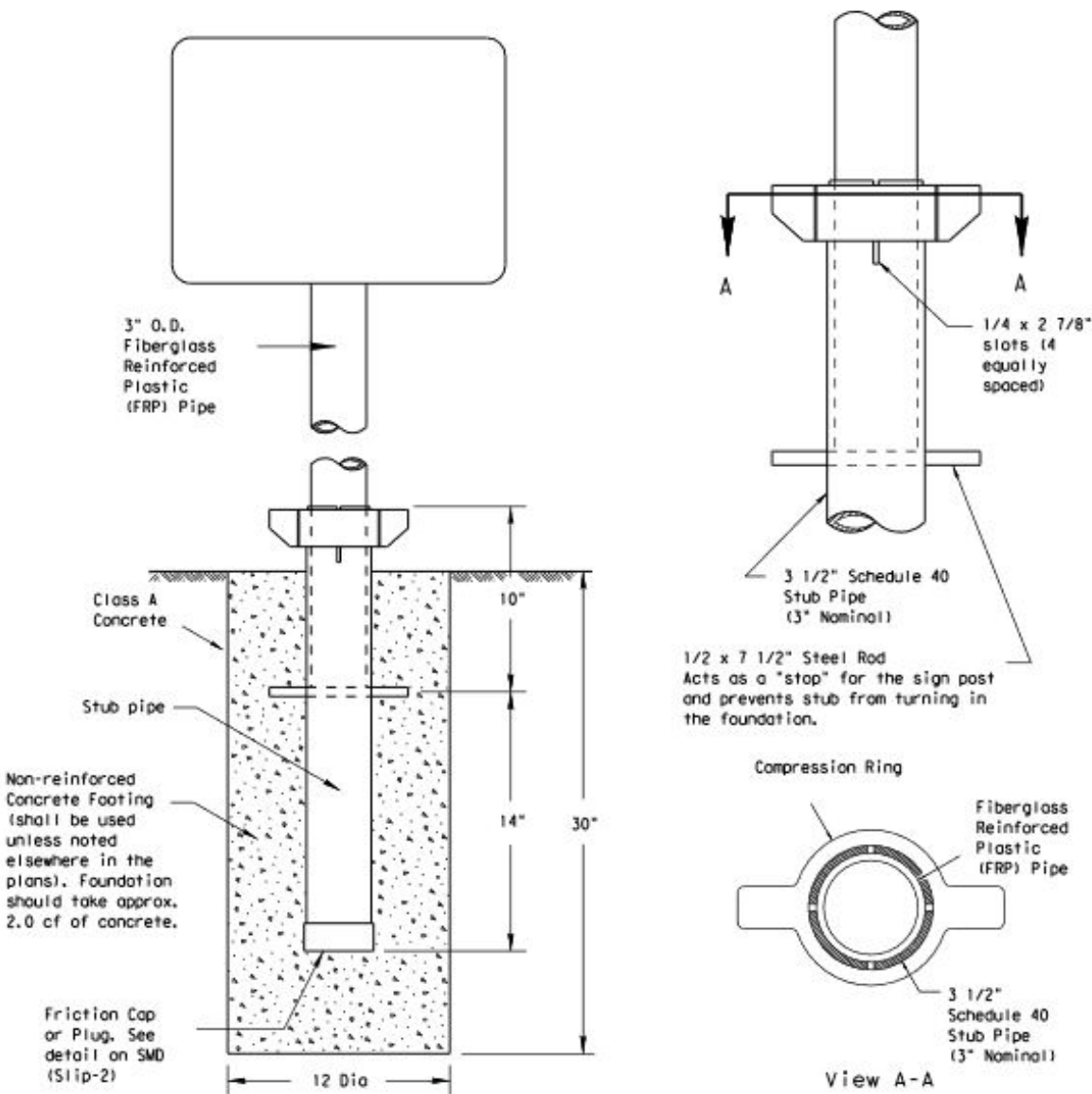
LEGEND

- ① Typical Sign Elevations
- Ⓐ Plan @ Building / Sidewalk
- Ⓑ Plan @ Vacant Lot / Park Sidewalk Edge
- Ⓒ \*Plan Near Existing Sidewalk Object

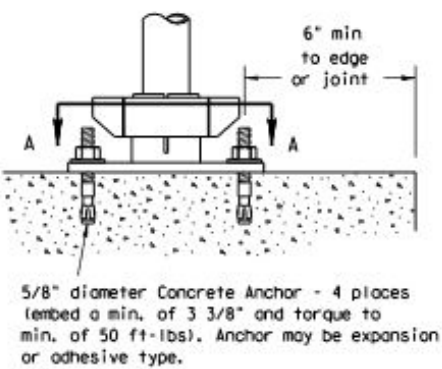
Follow Manufacturer's Mounting / Footing instructions.

Universal Anchor System

with Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic (FRP) Post

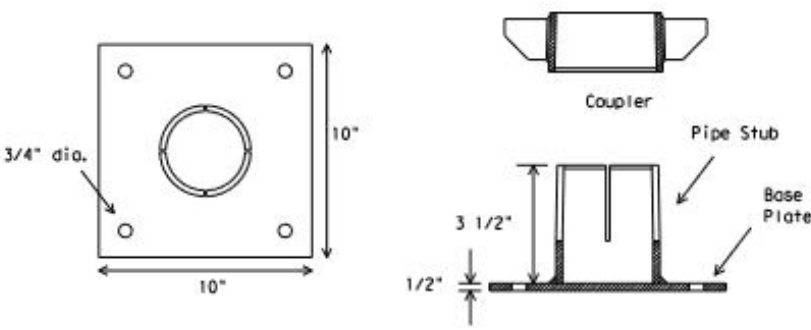


SM RD SGN ASSM TY FRP(X)UA(P) DESIGN INTENT, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



Concrete anchor consists of 5/8" diameter stud bolt with UNC series bolt threads on the upper end. A heavy hex nut per ASTM A563 and hardened washer per ASTM F436. The stud bolt shall have minimum yield and ultimate tensile strengths of 50 and 75 ksi, respectively. Nuts, bolts and washers shall be galvanized per Item 445, "Galvanizing." Top of bolt shall extend at least flush with top of nut when installed. The anchor, when installed in 4000 psi normal-weight concrete with a 3 3/8" minimum embedment, shall have a minimum allowable tension and shear of 2450 and 1525 psi, respectively. Adhesive type anchors shall have stud bolts installed with Type III epoxy per DMS-6100, "Epoxies and Adhesives." Adhesive anchors may be loaded after adequate epoxy cure time per the manufacturer's recommendations.

BOLT-DOWN DETAILS



SM RD SGN ASSM TY FRP(X)UB(P)

Each marker will need to be installed into a footing that is embedded in concrete. This detail will be provided by the signage manufacturer. The details at left are from typical signage details used by Tx-DOT for sign installation and are shown for design intent only.

It is recommended that the base be a break away type base, so that if by chance the sign is struck by a vehicle, the sign breaks away from the base.

Refer to Signage Manufacturer's Details for Specific Footing / Installation requirements.

Design Intent, Not for Construction.

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20

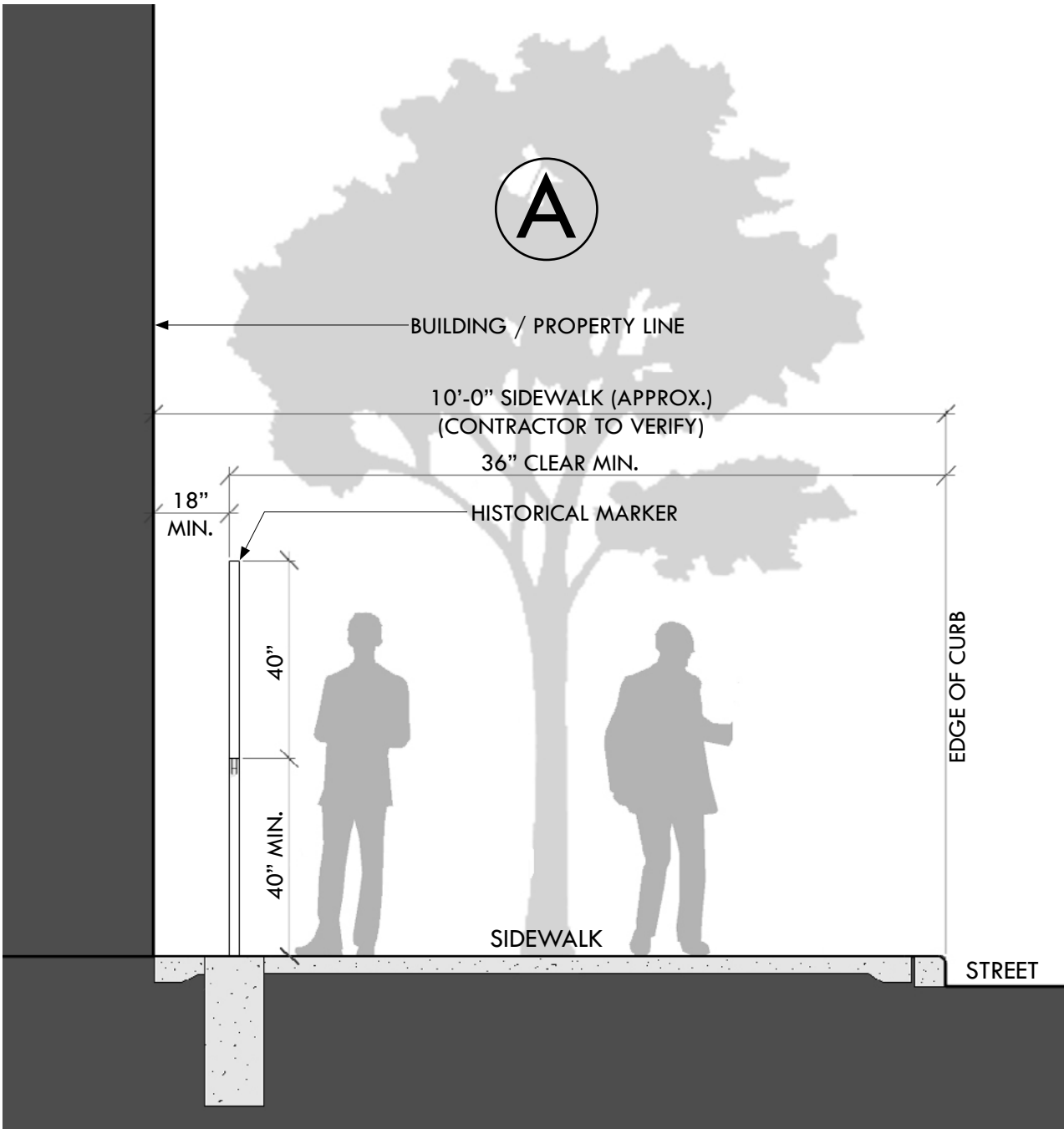


Location A & B are depicted on an approximate 10 foot wide and 5-6 foot wide sidewalk, respectively. Widths may vary by location and should be verified by Contractor / Sign Installer.

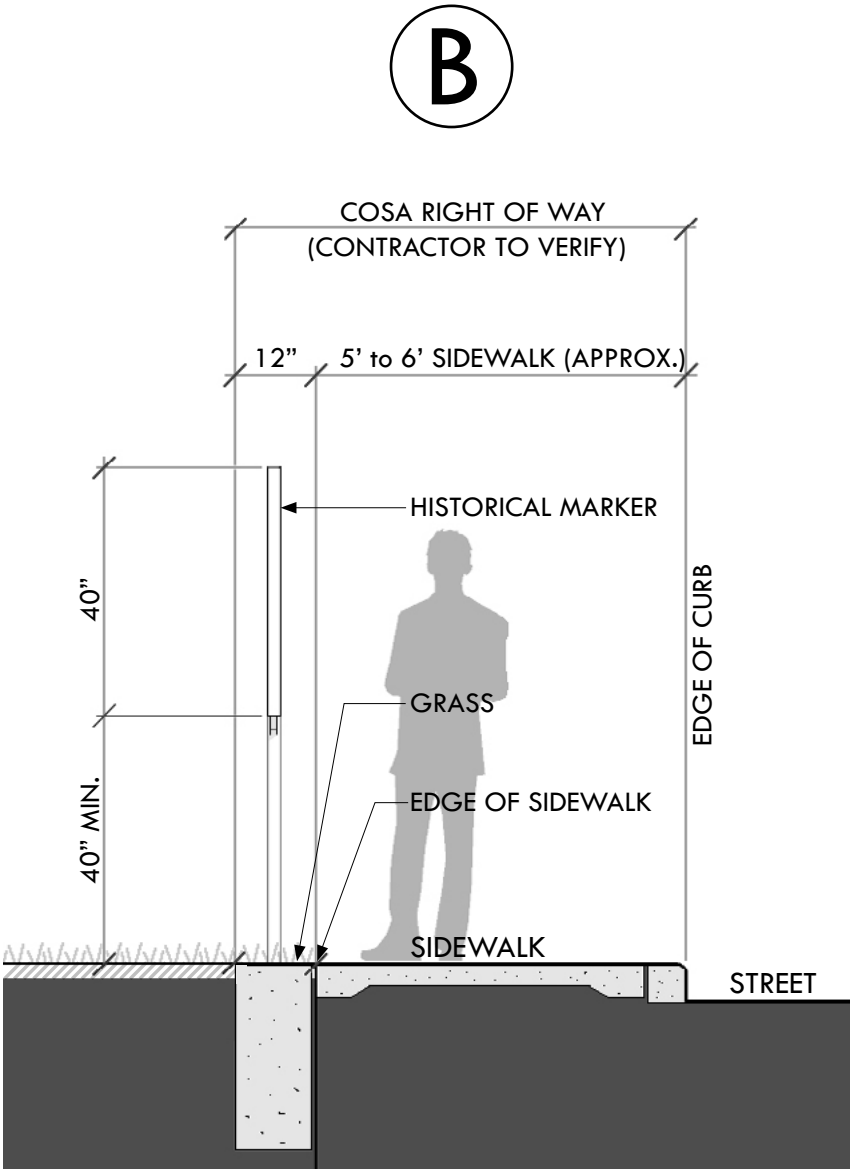
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**Location B:**  
When a monument is to be located at a vacant lot/ park location, locate along the sidewalk edge, in the soil or grass and within the City's ROW area, maintaining 36" clear dimension in front of the sign.



DESIGN INTENT, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



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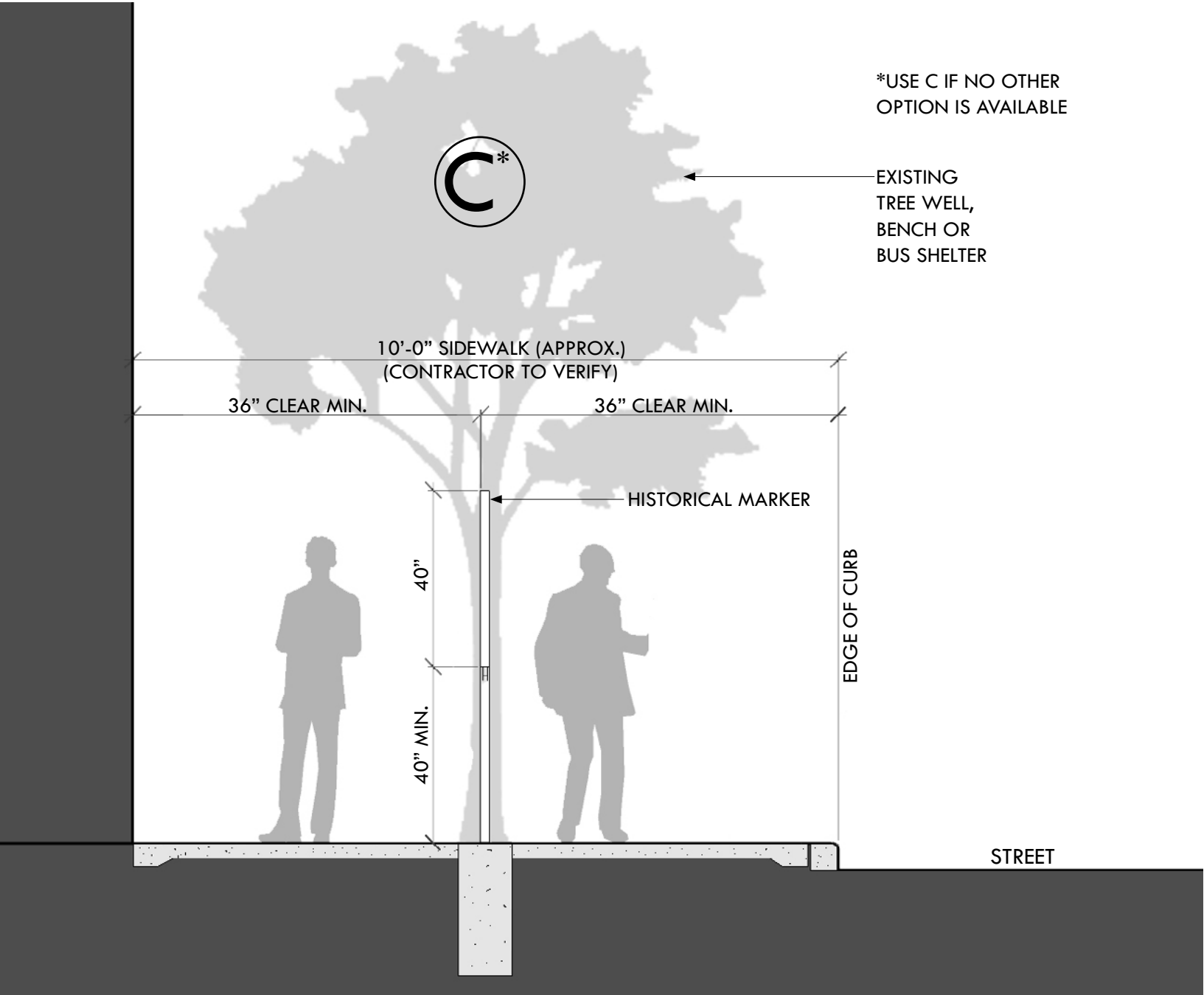
Design Intent, Not for Construction.

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20

Location C is depicted on a 10 foot Sidewalk

Installation Locations:

**Location C:**  
In cases where A and B are not possible, and if approved by the City, the sign could be mounted next to an existing tree well, fixed bench or bus shelter. Maintain 48" away from object, and maintain 36" clear walkway around sign. \*CoSA must approve.

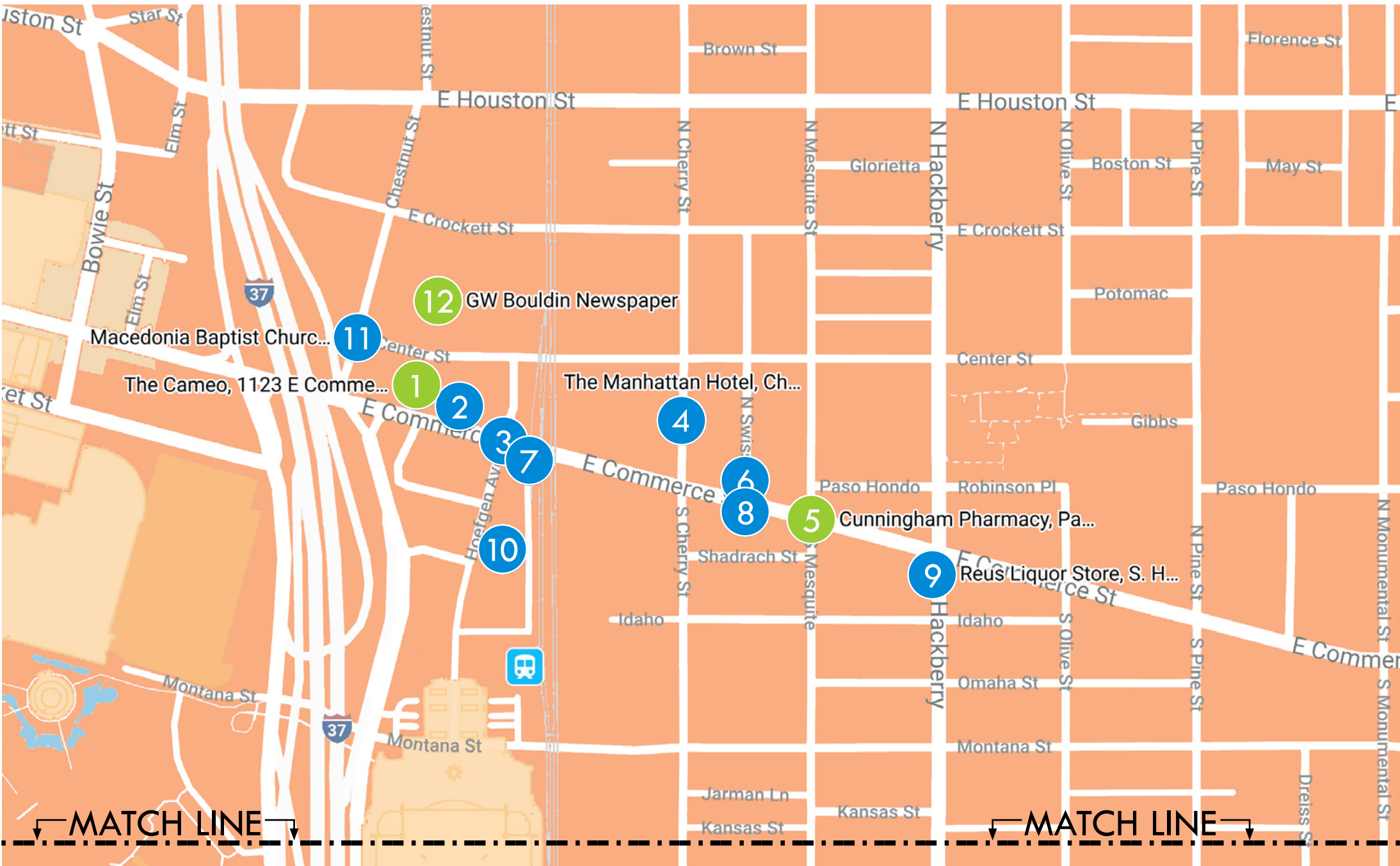


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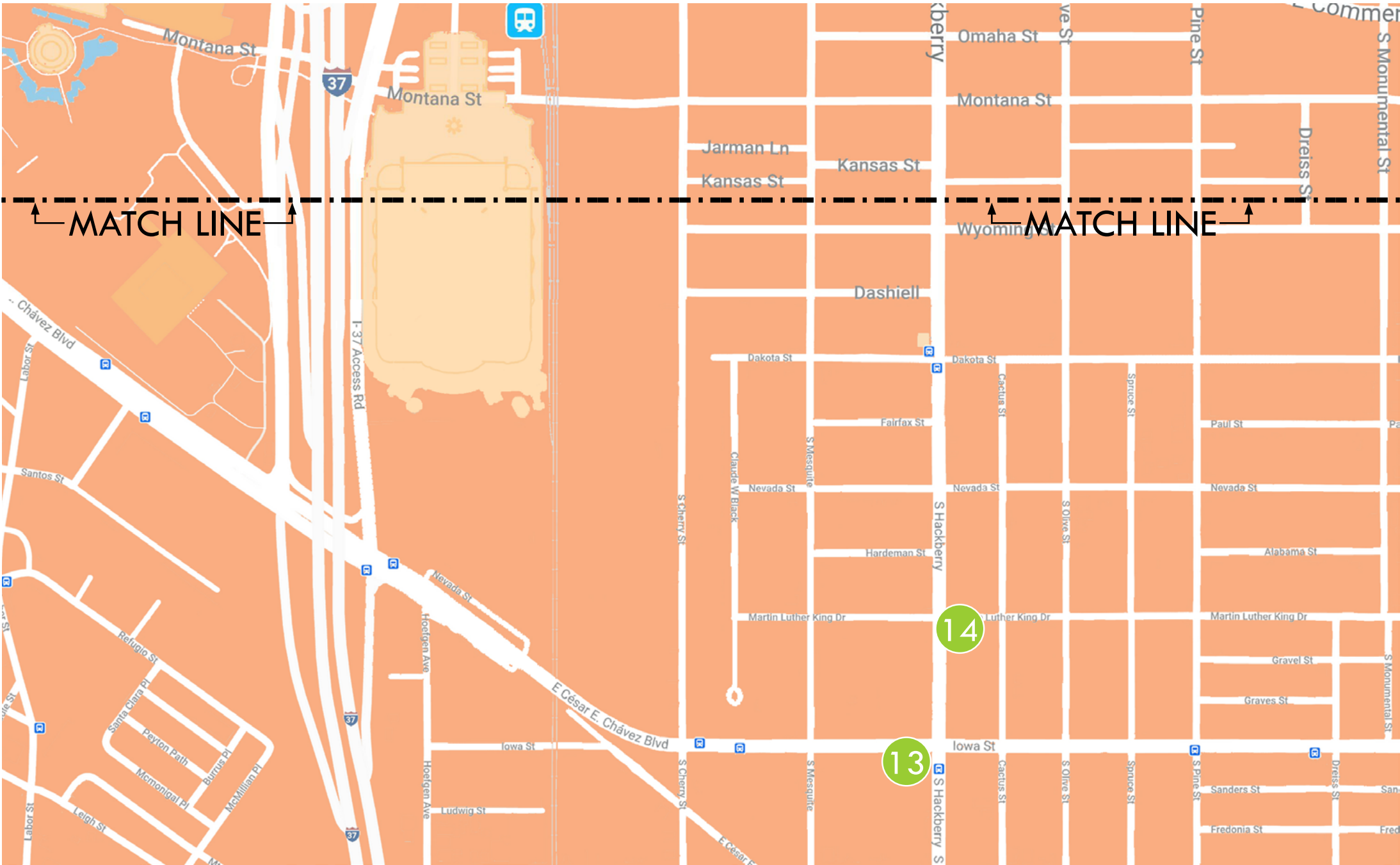
FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20





- LEGEND**
- 1 The Cameo Theater, 1123 E. Commerce St.
  - 2 Walking Bridge Over Commerce, 1149 E. Commerce St.
  - 3 The Deluxe Hotel, N. Hoefgen Ave. & E. Commerce St.
  - 4 The Manhattan Hotel, Cherry & E. Commerce St.
  - 5 Black Commerce Street, 1416 E. Commerce St.
  - 6 Charles Bellinger Gas Station, N. Swiss St. & E. Commerce St.
  - 7 Homer Rodgers Office, E. Commerce St.
  - 8 The Lifesaver Grill, N. Swiss St. & E. Commerce St.
  - 9 Reus Liquor Store, S. Hackberry and E. Commerce St.
  - 10 Sunset Station, 1174 E. Commerce St.
  - 11 Macedonia Baptist Church, Center St. & Chestnut St.
  - 12 G. W. Bouldin Newspaper, 207 N. Center St.
  - 13 The SNCC Legacy Project, 709 S. Pine St.
  - 14 John Inman, Fighter for Human Rights, 333 Martin Luther King Dr.
- COLOR KEY**
- Phase 1 Monuments
  - Phase 2-3 Monuments

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



LEGEND

- 1 The Cameo Theater, 1123 E. Commerce St.
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COLOR KEY

- Phase 1 Monuments
- Phase 2-3 Monuments

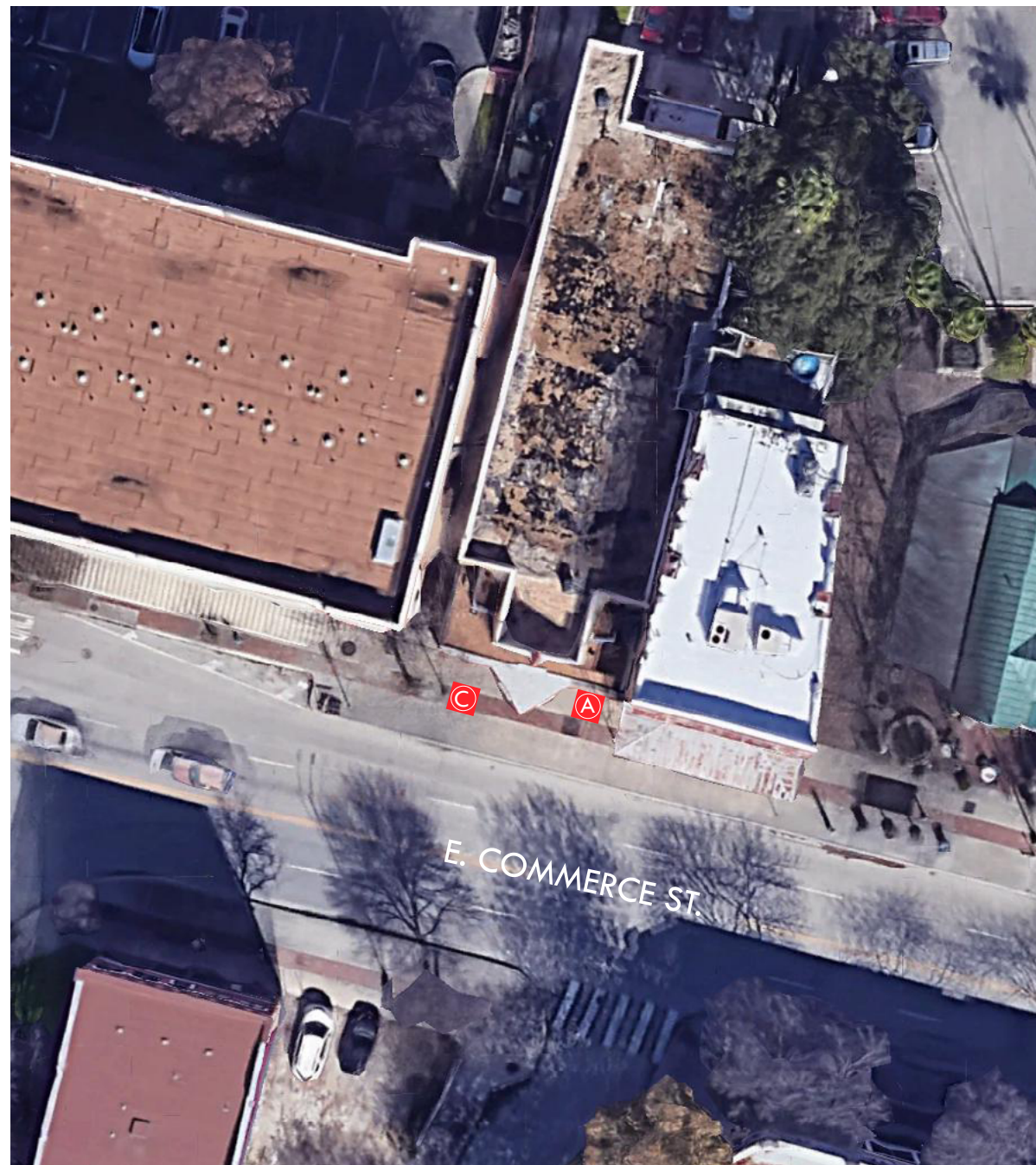
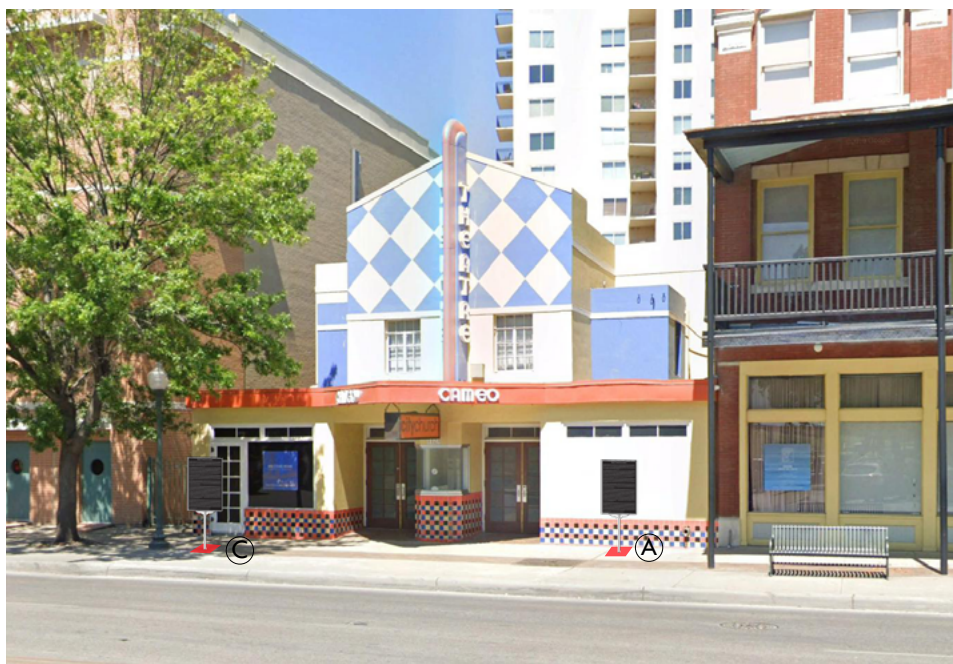
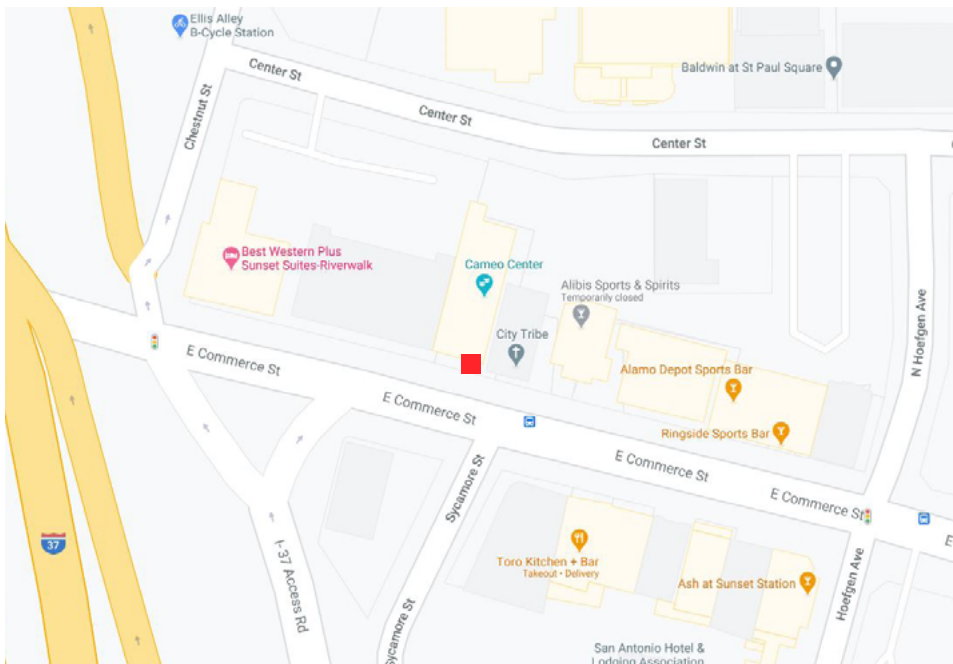
FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



## Locations & Site Data

### 1 - Cameo Theater

1123 E. Commerce St.



The first monument on the list is the Cameo Theater, located on the west end of St. Paul Square, on the north side of Commerce Street, at 1123 East Commerce. The site is next door to a hotel and across from several restaurants and shops. This building is intact and has been renovated / restored. The site visit review with SAGE and former City Councilman Mario Salas indicated that the marker would most likely be best located close to the building side (Location Type A). The second option for the markers placement would be best located next to the light post on the sidewalk (Location Type C), but would require City approval.

**Address:** 1123 E. Commerce St.

**Owner:** City Tribe

**Zoning Overlay Info:** St. Paul Square Historic District, Individual Landmark, Downtown Design Area

**Neighborhood:** St. Paul Square

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



# Locations & Site Data

## 1 - Cameo Theater

1123 E. Commerce St.

### Monument Text:

The text for the monument is shown at left.



E. COMMERCE ST. LOOKING NORTHWEST



E. COMMERCE ST. LOOKING NORTHEAST

40.00"

### The Cameo Theater and Black Commerce Street

The Cameo Theater, located at 1123 E. Commerce, originally served as one of several segregated film facilities for Black people in San Antonio. The theater was built in 1940, but the Leon, the Ritz, and the Keyhole theaters preceded the Cameo. The Cameo was a focal point for the latest Black films by Black producers and writers. The Cameo served as a movie theater and a vaudeville house for singers and musicians. In the early years, performers such as Fats Domino, B.B. King, and Louis Armstrong played at the Cameo. Other performing musicians, who stayed at the Deluxe Hotel across the street, may have visited the Cameo and included Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Lionel Hampton. This area was a hub of black businesses that served the community because of segregation.

Early history that influenced the building of the Cameo included D.W. Griffith's racist film, Birth of a Nation (1915) which electrified Black civil rights activists and aspiring Black cinematographers. The film served as a catalyst for white supremacists across the country. The film was an anti-Reconstruction disgusting fairy-tale that casted Black people in racist stereotypical roles while the Ku Klux Klan was presented as the great white hope. Its main attempt was to deny giving Black people equal rights. The film was widely protested by the Black community. However, Birth of a Nation sparked other responses as well, including efforts by Emmett J. Scott to produce Birth of a Race (1918), a production envisioned as a straightforward retort to Griffith's racist film. Many of the Black films generated sought to create positive and truthful images of Black life and to demonstrate the ignorance of racialized thought. These events sparked the building of Black movie houses in San Antonio.

The Cameo was in the economic Black section of San Antonio at the time and in the area known as St. Paul Square (Sunset Station) extending to the edge of the central business district. Since all of the downtown restaurants, such as Joske's, Kress, and Woolworth, were segregated, Blacks had to go to this segregated section of the city. Later, after the area was gentrified and the black businesses replaced, its history was erased. During its time, the theater was in walking distance from the black community. Residents from the East Terrace Housing Projects, the Wheatley Courts, and black middle-class residents from the Denver Heights area, often could be seen trekking up E. Commerce to see a film produced by Black film makers. Black residents from the Sutton Homes and the Carson Homes also attended the theater, while Blacks from the West and North Sides often rode the bus to get to the area. Films in the 1960s were divided into two parts at the Cameo, and during the intermission people would be entertained with the recordings of the latest Black music such as Booker T. and the MGs and others. These films, which were once called "Race films," were the tags applied to Black films between 1910 and 1950.

Films shown at the Cameo were the result of the pioneer works of Black film producers before the Cameo was built. Leading the way in Black film production was Bill Foster (1884), founder of the first known Black motion picture company in 1910. Others included Noble Johnson who developed the Lincoln Motion Picture Company in 1916, Oscar Micheaux who created the Micheaux Film Company in 1918, and Spencer Williams (1893-1969), who made the most well-liked "race movie" ever released, Blood of Jesus (1941), which was produced in Texas and shown at the Cameo. These films attempted to counteract white supremacist propaganda.

Author: Mario Marcel Salas

5/8"

7/16"

2.375" ID galvanized tube painted to match plaque background shipping separately

Small colonial mounting flange and cap painted black to match plaque background

(3) 1/4" set screws staggered with JB weld in screws after mounting

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20

Survey Text  
  
(This will be added surveys are completed).

SURVEY TO BE ADDED  
UPON COMPLETION



## Locations & Site Data

### 5 - Black Commerce Street

1416 E. Commerce St.

“Black Commerce Street” is a site that marks the location of several black-owned businesses that were located in the same building, along a section of East Commerce Street that had many other black-owned businesses on both sides of it. This particular building housed several professional offices and services.

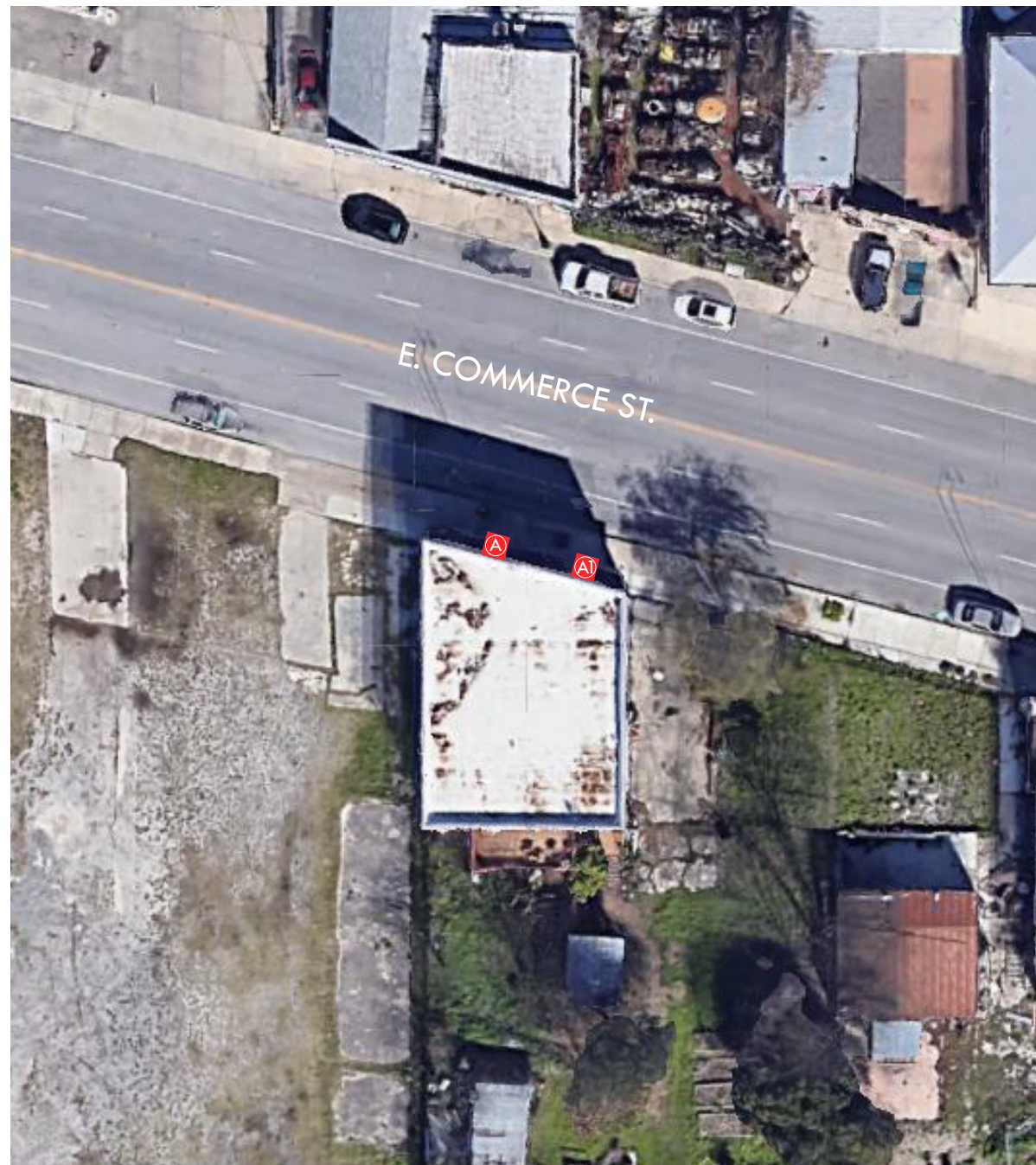
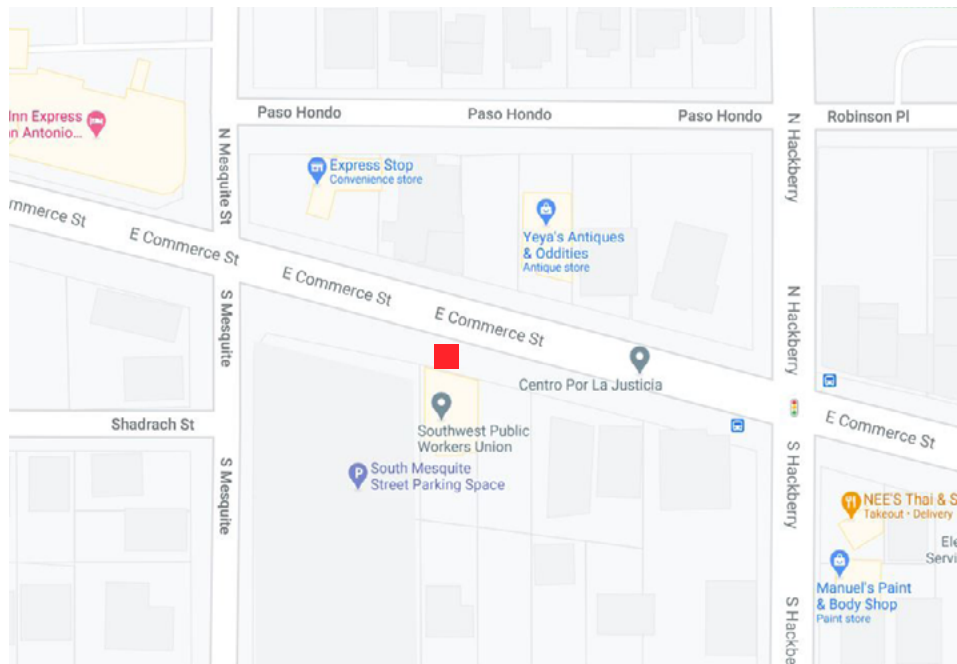
The marker could be located against the building at Locations Type A or A1.

**Address:** 1416 E. Commerce St.

**Owner:** Centro Por La Justicia

**Zoning Overlay Info:** Vacant Bldg. Program Area

**Neighborhood:** Historic Gardens



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Locations & Site Data

5 - Black Commerce Street

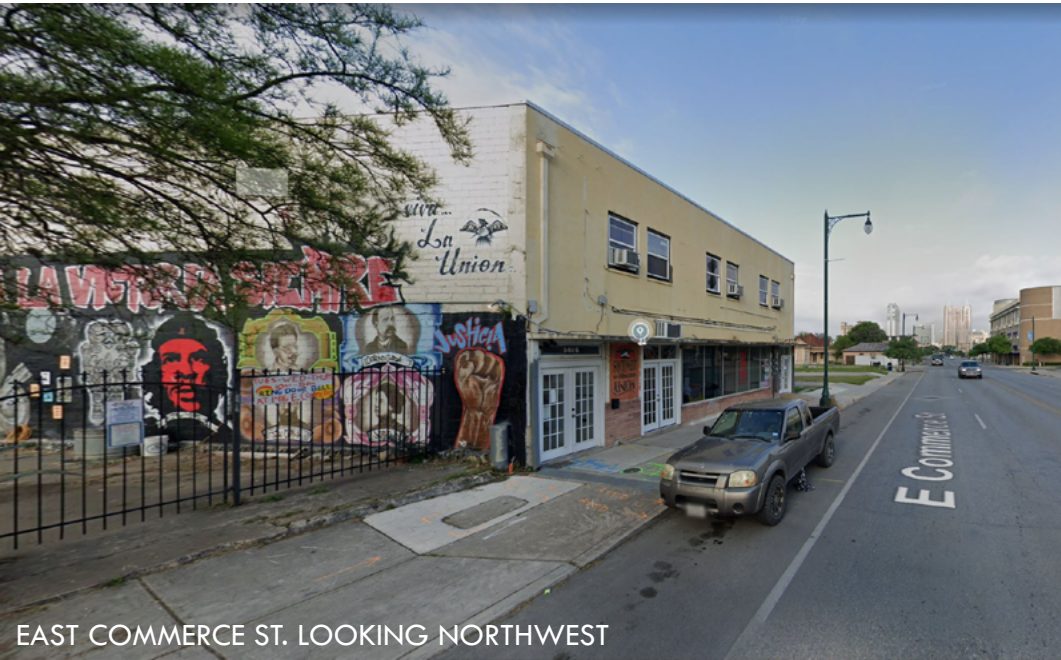
1416 E. Commerce St.

Monument Text:

The text for the monument is shown at left.



E. COMMERCE ST. LOOKING SOUTHEAST



EAST COMMERCE ST. LOOKING NORTHWEST



Black Commerce Street

At this site was the law office of Hattie Briscoe. According to documents at the UTSA Library, in the Special Collections Department of the John Peace Library, Hattie Elam Briscoe was the "First Black woman to graduate from St. Mary's University School of Law, and was the only Black woman attorney in Bexar County for the next 27 years." She was the recipient of a scholarship to attend Wiley College where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in 1937. Wiley College students launched some of the first sit-in demonstrations in Texas against segregation and were the home of the Great Debaters. Wiley College would have helped to steal Hattie's determination to break the chains of segregation.

By 1944, Hattie had become a cosmetology instructor, where she taught night classes at Hicks Beauty School. Hattie was forced to attend schools that were racially segregated in Texas, but despite the generally inferior nature of segregated education she excelled. Later she became an instructor of Cosmetology at the segregated Wheatley High School in San Antonio. Understanding the horrible nature of segregation, but yet never giving up, Hattie received a Master's degree at then segregated Prairie View A&M College in 1951. In 1952, she entered St. Mary's Law School, a Catholic institution, where she attended night classes while working in the day. It was no easy matter for Hattie to graduate from St. Mary's being 40 years old in 1956 and working to support her education. Hattie Briscoe practiced law for 42 years, serving the black community until 1998 at 1416 E. Commerce, which was an area that at one time the center of black life on the East Side.

Another important local Black leader, Paul White was one of the last participants to see the end of black businesses on E. Commerce Street. Verley Taylor, who hired Paul White after his service in the military, owed the shop. East Commerce Street had a strong history of black life and culture that once dominated the area. Most of it is now gone as the result of a racist move to eliminate black businesses by making the street one way. After the street was made one way and black businesses destroyed, it was returned to a two way street to benefit downtown business interests that wanted to expand the business corridor east and gentrify the neighborhood.

This was the world of black barber Paul White and others associated with this site. Paul White was a black barber and a fixture on the city's near East Side. He mentored and hired famous local barbers such as Charles Williams. Paul lived at a time when black businesses existed up and down East Commerce Street. (He cut hair at a time on East Commerce Street.) At 1412 East Commerce, next door to the Cunningham Pharmacy, in the same building, was Taylor's Barber Shop. Taylor's Barber Shop is where famed barber Paul White worked and gave Charles Williams his first job.

When Paul White died he was 86 years old and only John Inman, a black barber a few blocks away on South Hackberry Street was older than Paul White. Customers often noted how he was saddened at what the city had done to destroy black businesses and the cultural life that once existed on E. Commerce Street. Paul White was known to help those who could not afford a haircut and often did so for church members and strangers. He cut hair at a time on E. Commerce Street when there was a segregated Cameo theater at 1123 E. Commerce, a black owned De Luxe Hotel at the corner of E. Commerce and Sycamore Street, Homer Rodger's Acme Tailors and Hatters, the Lifesaver's Bar and Grill and Bette's Eat Shop in the 1400 Block of E. Commerce, Bellinger's Taxi Cab Company, Red Top Cab, and Fishers Cafe located on the northern side of the 1400 block of E. Commerce. Cunningham's Pharmacy and Soda Shop at 1414 E. Commerce, the Avalon Grill and the Froggie Bottom Club (also referred to as the Froggie Bottom by some) at 1131 E. Commerce, Dr. Madison Preacher's Office, one of the few black physicians in San Antonio for many years. Later, in the 1980s, the City of San Antonio dedicated the Homer Rodgers Memorial Bridge that extends over East Commerce Street to Homer Rodgers, a businessman and civil rights activist. According to Jean Rodgers-Clack, in talking about her father's business and others in St. Paul Square, "You could be suited for hand crafted silk embroidered shirts or a tailor made suit at Homer Rodger's Acme Tailors and Hatters, grab a cab at the Red Top Taxi stand or stop in at the popular grocery and bakery. . . . If you needed the services of a bail bondsman, you'd see Henry Nance or Hays Pendergraph."

When Paul White died he was 86 years old and would have many memories of the black side of town. He would have cut black soldiers hair from Fort Sam Houston and patrons from many of the black businesses and neighborhoods north and south of E. Commerce Street. Only John Inman, a black barber a few blocks away on South Hackberry Street was older than Paul White. According to many of his friends and customers, talked a lot about sports and how black businesses in the area were destroyed along Commerce Street. Customers noted that when he looked out of his window he saddened at what the city had done to destroy black businesses and the cultural life along E. Commerce Street. Many African Americans visited his barber shop and discussed the politics of that day while getting their hair cut. This was not unusual then nor now as any Saturday visit to either a black beauty salon or a black barber shop will often yield intense discussions about politics, rumors, deaths, and funerals in the community. It was no different in Paul White's shop. Even when barbers tried to put a lid on political shop talk it always found a way to erupt.

Author: Mario Marcel Salas  
Contributors: Aubry C. Lewis, Jean Rodgers-Clack & Charles Williams

Small colonial mounting flange  
and cap painted black to match  
plaque background

(3) 1/4" set screws staggered  
with JB weld in screws after mounting

2.375" ID galvanized tube  
painted to match  
plaque background  
shipping separately

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20

Survey Text  
  
(This will be added surveys are completed).

SURVEY TO BE ADDED  
UPON COMPLETION

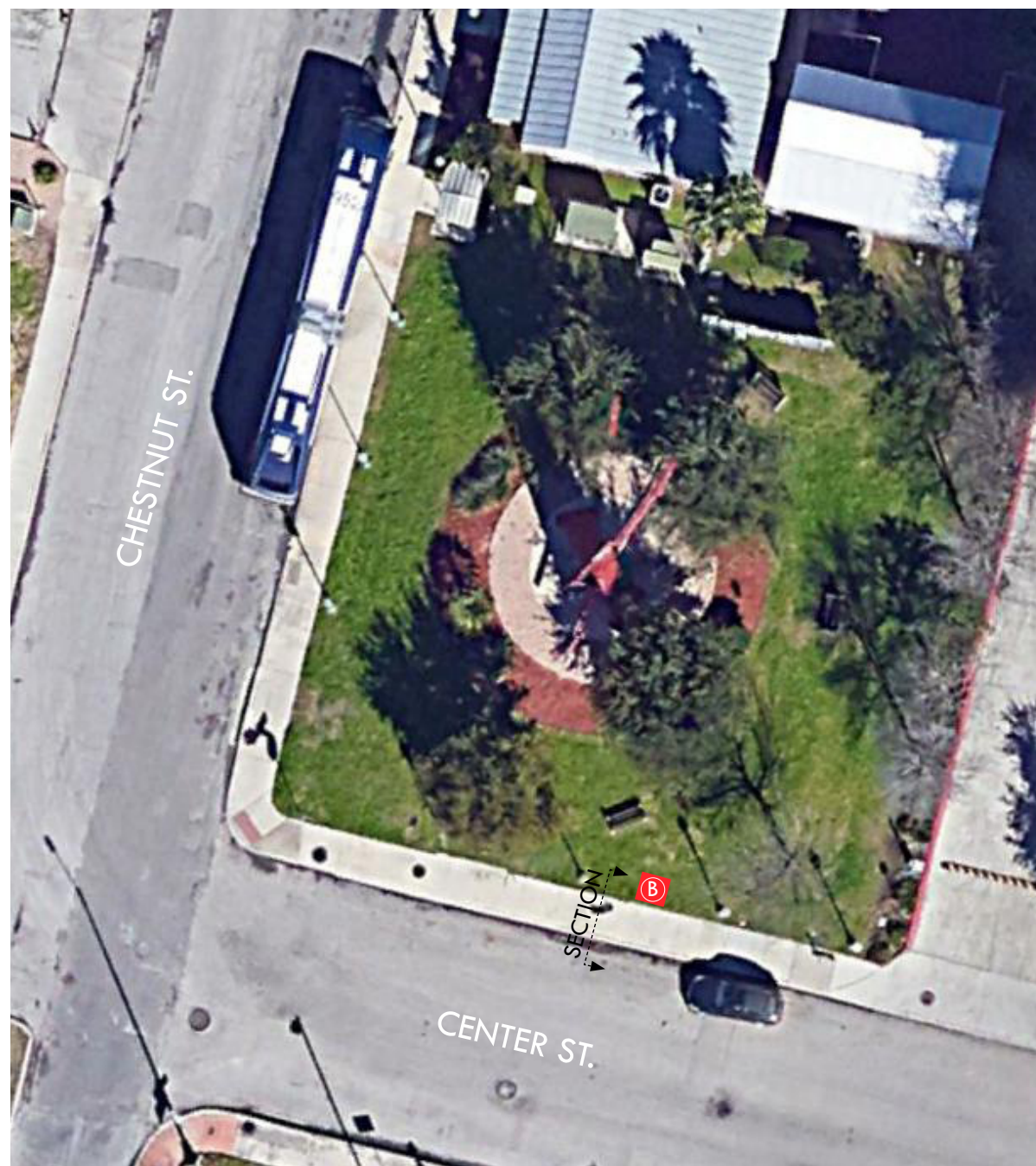
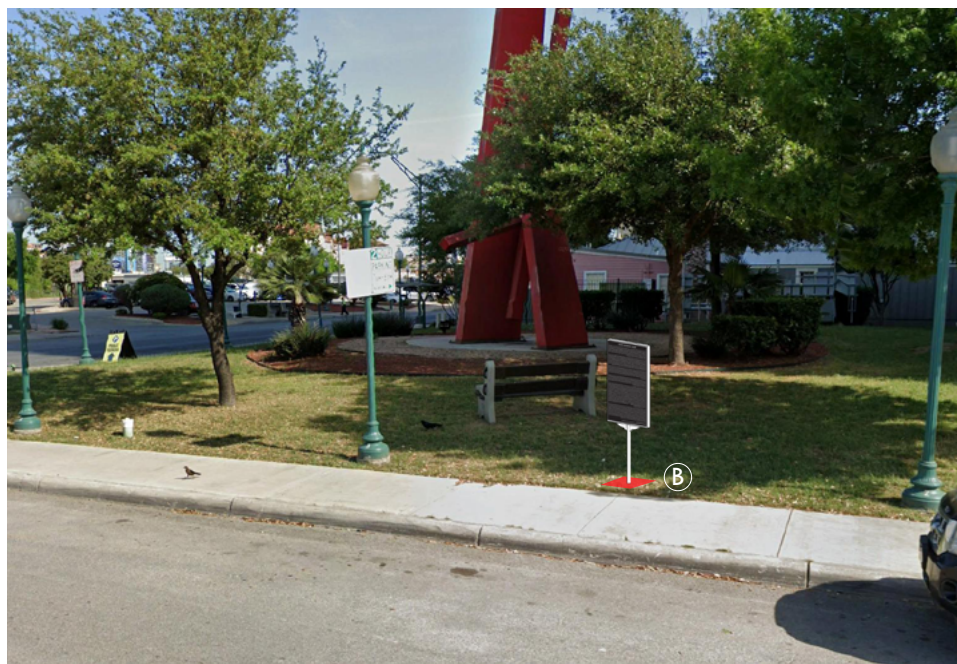
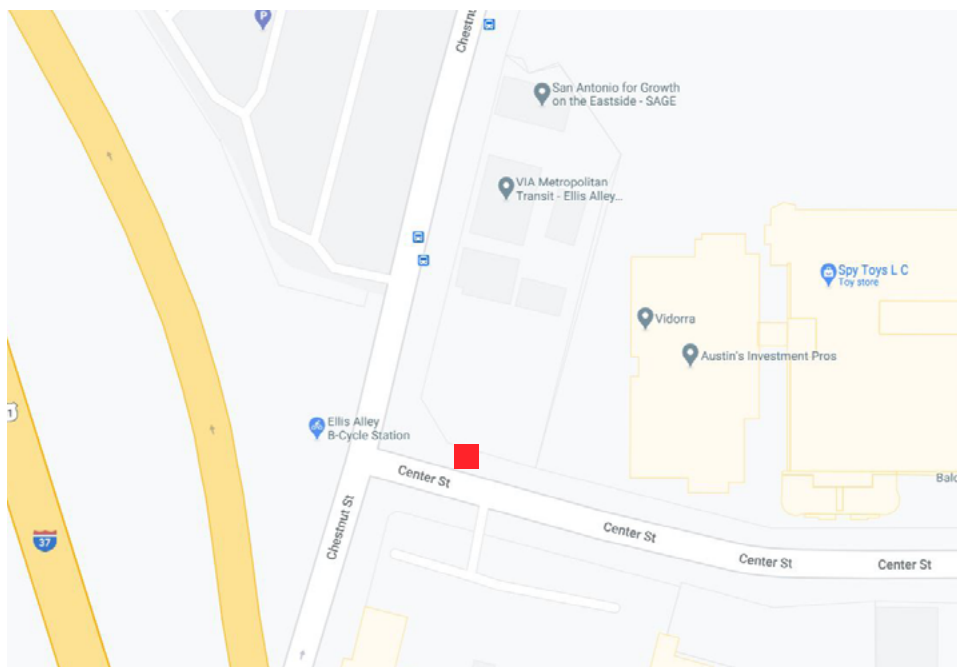
FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



## Locations & Site Data

### 12 - G. W. Bouldin Newspaper

207 N. Center St.



This site is located next to the site of what is now the Baldwin Apartments, which is privately owned. It is also one of the sites where the original building that housed the G. W. Bouldin Newspaper is no longer there, so the marker could be as shown below, in the City's sidewalk ROW, on the grass next to a small park (Location type B), or it could be located a short distance to the East, in front of some relatively new brownstone styled urban housing, (where a Location type A would be needed). These buildings are condominiums, so it may be more difficult to gain approval.

The park site is owned by VIA and is adjacent to some of the historic Ellis Alley structures, therefore, the location next to the park may be more feasible.

**Address:** 207 N. Center St.

**Owner:** VIA Metropolitan Transport

**Zoning Overlay Info:** St. Paul Sq. Historic District, Individual Landmark, Downtown Design Area, Vacant Bldg. Program Area

**Neighborhood:** St. Paul Square

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



Locations & Site Data

12 - G. W. Bouldin Newspaper

207 N. Center St.

Monument Text:

The text for the monument is shown at left.



CENTER ST. LOOKING SOUTHEAST



CENTER ST. LOOKING NORTHWEST

**G.W. Bouldin**  
**An Important African Leader in San Antonio**

This area known as St. Paul Square is steeped in history. This vicinity once teemed with black businesses, and several African American churches including 2nd Baptist Church and St. Paul's Colored Methodist. It was also the place where civil rights leader G. W. Bouldin housed several businesses and his newspaper. In 1936, G. William Bouldin once lived at 1730 East Houston Street where he would have meetings with mayors and civil rights leaders. He arrived in San Antonio in 1908 and worked as a Pullman Porter for the segregated railroad system. He was born in Hondo, Texas on June 29, 1895, and soon after coming to San Antonio established an African American newspaper called the San Antonio Inquirer which was located in this block at 207 N. Center Street. Later, the paper moved to the corner of E. Commerce and Hackberry Streets. It was while he was the editor of the paper that the Bureau of Investigation began harassing him for articles that appeared in his paper critical of the treatment of black soldiers at Fort Sam Houston who were eventually hanged on the Salado Creek for their part in protecting the black community of Houston, Texas. In a courtroom at the Fort Sam Houston Post Chapel, 19 black soldiers were racially railroaded to the gallows. This barbaric act was condemned across the country and was also spotlighted in an article in Bouldin's paper.

G. W. Bouldin was tried and convicted under the Espionage Act in 1919, at a time when the First Amendment was compromised, and sent to Leavenworth Prison for simply allowing an article critical of the mistreatment of these African Americans soldiers to be printed in his paper. Bouldin was a fighter for civil rights and black uplift, and refused to give up even after serving his time in prison. Bouldin went on to become a builder, a real estate man, a mortician, and a newspaper man. In fact, Bouldin operated and owned funeral homes throughout the state of Texas and established Mount Zion Funeral Parlor with the famous businessman Frank E. Lewis in San Antonio. This structure was formally St Paul Colored Methodist Church across the street at 230 N. Center.

According to another black newspaper, the San Antonio Register, of July 10, 1936, Bouldin established funeral homes in Hallettsville, Lockhart, Luling, Gonzales, Yoakum, San Marcos, Kenedy, Goliad, and Corpus Christi. G. W. Bouldin stood out as a light and a beacon in the African American community of San Antonio and should be honored for his contributions to San Antonio as a whole. Bouldin died on July 5, 1936 and his death certificate was signed by the famous black medical doctor, Madison L. Preacher. Bouldin was buried on July 9, 1936 and was an active member of the United Brothers of Friendship, a black lodge.

The harassment that Bouldin received at the hands of the Bureau of Investigation in the early 1900s was documented in a research book called "Investigate Everything" by Theodore Kornweibel. The legacy Bouldin left behind helped to create foundational opposition to white supremacy. Bouldin was a member of West End Baptist Church and had a large send off on the occasion of his death. Bouldin did not forget where his roots were and was not ashamed of his activities for the betterment of African Americans.

Author: Honorable Mario Marcel Salas

Sponsors: City of San Antonio, TIRZ Board 11  
San Antonio for Growth on the East Side (SAGE)

5/8"

7/16"

2.375" ID galvanized tube  
painted to match  
plaque background  
shipping separately

Elevation  
Scale: 1/2"

Small colonial mounting flange  
and cap painted black to match  
plaque background

(3) 1/4" set screws staggered  
with JB weld in screws after mounting

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20

Survey Text  
  
(This will be added surveys are completed).

SURVEY TO BE ADDED  
UPON COMPLETION

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



# Locations & Site Data

## 13 - The SNCC Legacy Project

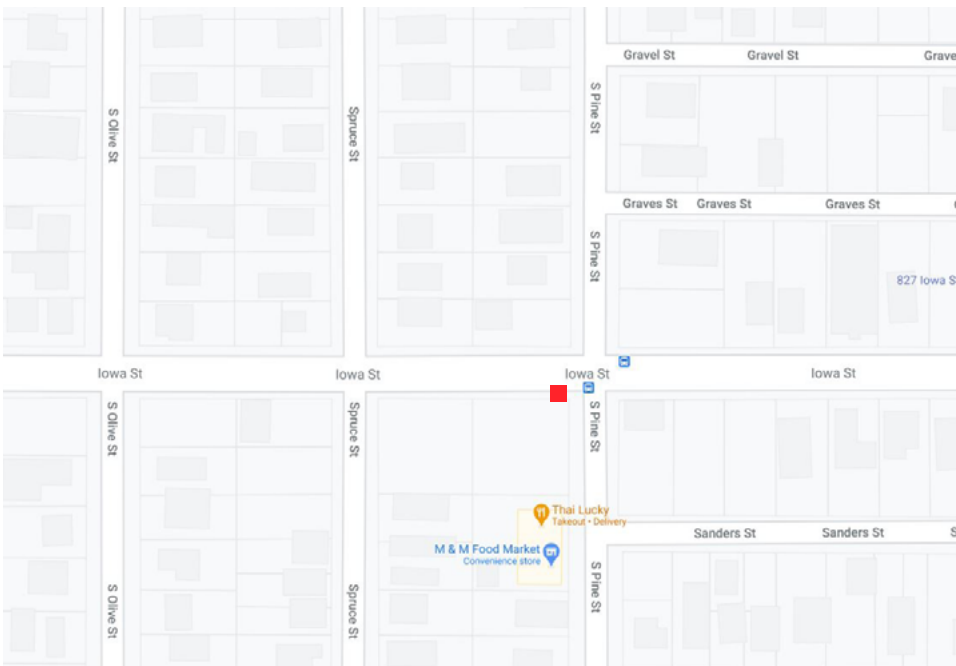
### 709 S. Pine St.

The site of the San Antonio office of the Student Non Violent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC, was located in a building located on Iowa Street and S. Pine. The block of buildings no longer remain, save the curb step for one of the buildings.

Former City Councilman Mario Salas noted where the SNCC office had stood (near where the bus shelter is currently located), which is shown roughly at the left. The sign should be placed in the City’s sidewalk ROW, since the sidewalk is minimal here, but if that is not accepted by the landowner of the property, then it might be located adjacent to an existing VIA bus shelter, and positioned 48” away from the shelter and at the edge of the sidewalk, in a modified Location Type C\*. This location also would require City approval. A survey will determine the property line and ROW.

**Address:** 709 S. Pine St.  
**Owner:** East Side Development LLC  
**Zoning Overlay Info:** Individual Landmark, Vacant Building Program Area.

**Neighborhood:** Denver Heights, Nevada St.

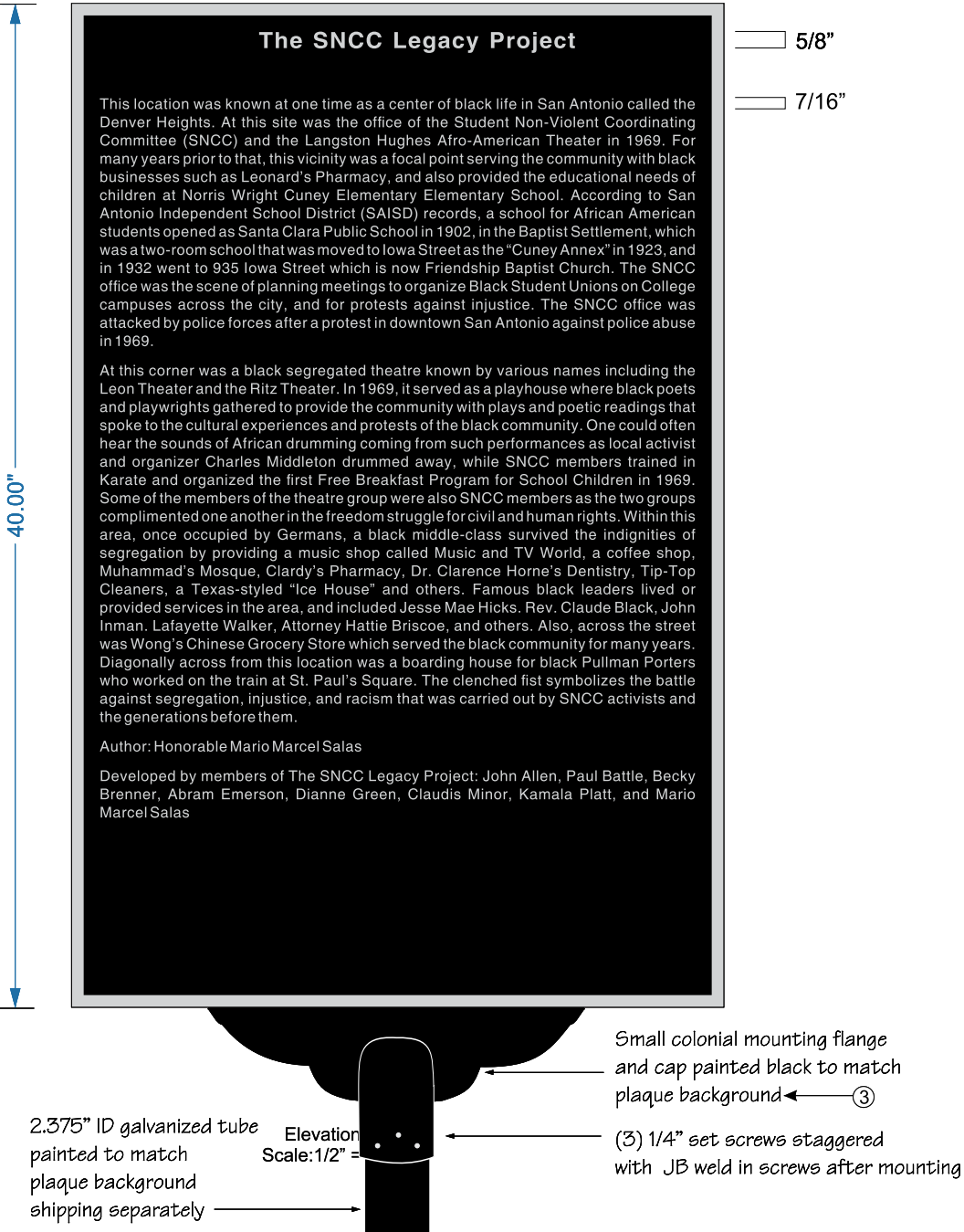


FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



Monument Text:

The text for the monument is shown at left.



Survey Text  
  
(This will be added surveys are completed).

SURVEY TO BE ADDED  
UPON COMPLETION

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



## Locations & Site Data

### 14 - John Inman Human Rights 333 Martin Luther King Dr.

This monument is to mark the home where the prominent San Antonio civil rights advocate, John Inman once lived. However, the building is no longer standing, so on the site visit with SAGE and former Councilman Mario Salas, it was determined that the monument could also be placed across the street to the northwest, along the sidewalk in front of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Mr. Inman was a long-time member of the church.

It is important to maintain a 36" minimum clear distance from any object at this location, since this sidewalk area is where many congregants enter and exit the building, the sign should be visible, but out of the pedestrian way, and far enough away to allow for building maintenance / upkeep.

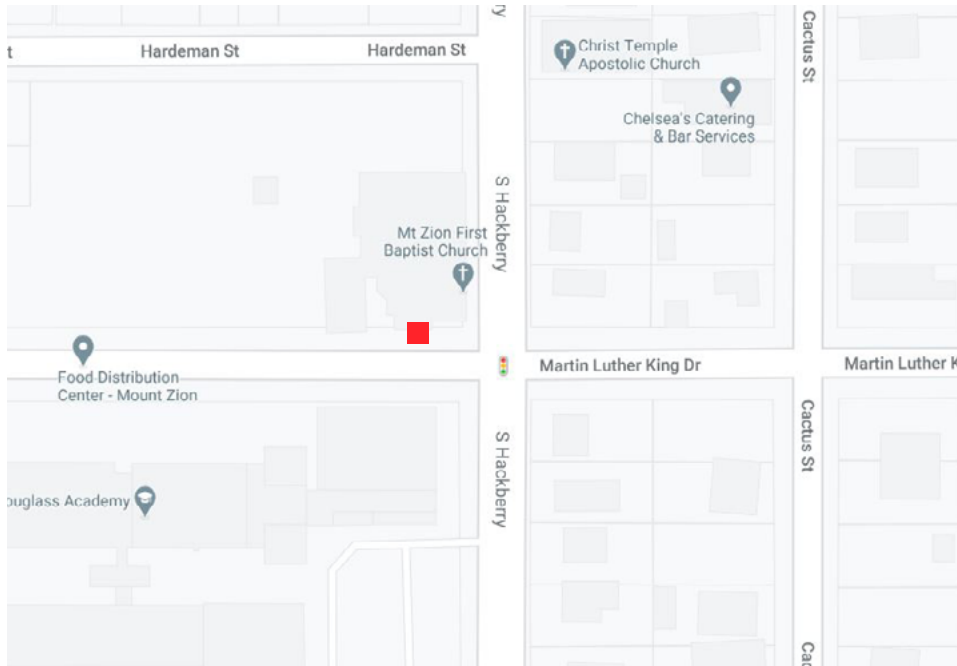
Tentative Locations A and A1 are shown in plan and in the street photos.

**Address:** 333 Martin Luther King Dr.

**Owner:** Mt. Zion First Baptist Church

**Zoning Overlay Info:** Individual Landmark, Vacant Bldg. Program Area

**Neighborhood:** Historic Gardens, Nevada St.



FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



Locations & Site Data

14 - John Inman Human Rights

333 Martin Luther King Dr.

Monument Text:

The text for the monument is shown at left.



MARTIN LUTHER KING DR. LOOKING NORTHWEST



MARTIN LUTHER KING DR. LOOKING NORTHEAST



FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20



Survey Text

(This will be added surveys are completed).

SURVEY TO BE ADDED  
UPON COMPLETION

FINAL DRAFT 10/27/20