

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL REGISTER SERVICEDEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL REGISTER SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FEDERAL ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Main and Military Plazas Historic District # 300027

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

20

STATE

Texas

CODE
048COUNTY
BexarCODE
029**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME see continuation sheet

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bexar County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Main Plaza

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

STATE
Texas**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1977

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Texas Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE
Texas

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
Bexar County Bexar Co. Courthouse Main Plaza San Antonio, TX 78205	12, 40, parking lots
Parking Inc. A Texas Corp. 825 Mellie Esperson Bldg. Houston, TX 78242	Parking lot
Jennie E. Simmang 8830 FM 1560 West San Antonio, TX 78228	Parking lot
Ernest Hoenig 8038 Broadway, apt. 206F San Antonio, TX 78209	Parking lot
Manuel Davila 226½ Dolorosa San Antonio, TX 78204	42
A. N. Zupan 220 Dolorosa San Antonio, TX 78205	41
Barrett Investment Co. P. O. Box 21070 San Antonio, TX 78221	41 & Parking lot
Estate of Ethel F. Kincaid 1914 Alamo National Bldg. San Antonio, TX 78205	43

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
City of San Antonio City Hall Military Plaza San Antonio, TX 78205	6, 29, 32, 34, 48
San Antonio Savings Assoc. 111 Soledad San Antonio, TX 78205	21, 33, & Parking lots
Alamo National Bank of S. A. c/o John Ferrell Co. 154 E. Commerce San Antonio, TX 78205	Parking lot
Daughters of St. Paul Inc. 114 E. Main Ave. San Antonio, Tx 78205	33
The Lexington Co. 801 N. St. Mary's St. San Antonio, TX 78205	27, 28
Frost National Bank c/o John L. Ferrell Co. 1117 Milam Bldg. San Antonio, Tx 78205	11, 17, 25, 27, 30, Parking lot
Groos National Bank Trustee Laura Wise National Trust P. O. Box 1300 San Antonio, TX 78205	28

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
Edith Liebmann 417 Ridgemont San Antonio, TX 78209	26
William W. Atwell 306 N. Presa San Antonio, TX 78205	25
Donald B. & Betsy Harrell, trustees 801 N. St. Mary's San Antonio, TX 78205	26, Parking lot
Leah Brenner 104 Shook, apt. 145 San Antonio, TX 78212	25
John Carson 1408 Wiltshire San Antonio, TX 78209	24
Brenner, Trust 2099 & 2100 c/o Frost National Bank exc. P. O. Box 1600 San Antonio, TX 78206	23, 24
Morris Adelman 101 W. Commerce St. San Antonio, TX 78205	18
Perry Kallison P. O. Box 9303 San Antonio, TX 78205	35, 44, 46, 47, Parking lot

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
E. E. & Virginia Shiner 1919 N. Flores San Antonio, TX 78202	44, 45, Parking lot
Isabel & Beatrice Chapa c/o 8425 Ahern, apt. 406 San Antonio, TX 78216	44
I. P. Elizondo c/o Morris Kallison 124 S. Flores San Antonio, TX 78204	Parking lot
Plaza de las Armas, Inc. 301 Skyview San Antonio, TX 78228	4, 5, 6
Urban Renewal Agency Houstin & Urban Development 410 S. Main Ave. San Antonio, TX 78205	1, 3, 6
Rosendo L. Gonzales 310 W. Commerce St. San Antonio, TX 78205	7
David P. Carter 200 Main Plaza San Antonio, TX 78205	36, Parking lot
Legal Professional Bldg. Inc. 222 Main Plaza San Antonio, TX 78205	37

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
Villita Investments c/o Travel Lodge Corp. P. O. Box 308 El Cajon, Cal. 92022	38
J. H. Toudouze Jr., et al 304 Milam Bldg. San Antonio, TX 78205	Parking lot
Toudouze Realty Co. Box 12003 San Antonio, TX 78246	Parking lot
Ornsky Co. Inc. 707 Contour San Antonio, TX 78212	Parking lot
Chee Kunh Tong Chinese Freemasons, Trustees of 117 W. Nueva San Antonio, TX 78204	39
Mrs. Sol Dalkowitz Esther K. Dalkowitz 103 Devine Rd. San Antonio, TX 78212	16
Catarino M. Reyes 113 N. Flores St. San Antonio, TX 78205	15, parking lot

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<u>OWNER</u>	<u>MAP REFERENCE</u>
Joe Centeno Super Market Inc. 1802 W. Commerce San Antonio, TX 78207	11
Arthur & Sam Sockler 143 E. Agarita Ave. San Antonio, TX 78212	Parking lot
Rosendo & Petra C. Gonzales 250 Club Dr. San Antonio, TX 78201	13, 14, Parking lot
R. L. White Co. Box 499 San Antonio, TX 78292	10
Juanita S. Garza 244 W. Houston St. San Antonio, TX 78205	11
Hyman Investment Co. 223 W. Commerce San Antonio, TX 78205	19, 20, Parking lot
Herbert Bldg. Co. c/o Joe Hyman 223 W. Commerce San Antonio, TX 78205	13
Bessie Walsh Rt. 5, Box 424 San Antonio, TX 78211	14
Main Plaza Corp. c/o John L. Ferrell Co. 1117 Milam Bldg. San Antonio, TX 78205	Parking lot

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Ferdinand P. Herff, et al c/o S. H. Kress Genesco Inc. P. O. Box 17 Nashville, Tenn. 73202	15
Rand Development Corp. 711 Navarro, Ste. 410 San Antonio, TX 78205	22
Claretian Center c/o Claretian Missionaries 1119 Westchester Los Angeles, Cal. 90019	31
J. R. Bldg. Co. P. O. Box 2727 San Antonio, TX 78229	2, Parking lot
San Fernando Cathedral Archdiocese of S. A. 9133 Lorene San Antonio, TX 78216	31

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Main and Military Plaza district is an area in downtown San Antonio comprised of thirteen whole blocks, the two plazas, and portions of two additional blocks, including 36 contributing structures, 24 compatible structures and an open green space (Main Plaza). Contributing structures include the primarily 19th and early 20th-century two- and three-story masonry structures, punctuated by the 18th century Spanish Governor's Palace (1), with the architectural focal points consisting of the 19th century City Hall (3), County Courthouse (6), and Cathedral (4). In cases where an altered structure, still in scale, is an essential element in a facade row (such as the Commercial Row at 134 Houston including the Soledad Block) with alterations consisting of removable facade elements, the altered building is included in the block as a whole contributing member. Three recent 20th-century structures (a restaurant on Commerce St., the 28-story story Frost Bank, and the new City Rail annex) that are inconsistent with the scale and architectural styles of the district are considered as intrusions. It is hoped that a district listing on the National Register will halt any additions to the numerous parking lots in the district. Individual 19th and early 20th-century structures with removable facade additions are listed as compatible to the district, in that they are in scale with the contributing structures and could feasibly be restored.

A portion of the 18th-century Pajalache Acequia (San Pedro Ditch) runs under Main Avenue and veers off under block 100, appropriated by the County to investigate and interpret the site of the acequia before building county offices and a parking garage on the site. The acequia had been covered by 1849.

A wide variety of architectural styles are represented in the district covering a time span of over 200 years. This variety illustrates through the built environment San Antonio's evolution from Spanish Presidio in the 18th century to 19th-century cow town, to solid commercial city center in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, giving the area an organic, eclectic flavor not found in many downtown areas of this size.

Representative of the Presidio period of the two plazas is the Spanish Governor's Palace (1740), a one-story Spanish Colonial town house. Originally used as the comandancia, headquarters, and residence of the captain of the presidio of San Antonio de Bexar (the ranking representative of the Spanish king in the absence of the governor), the building has continued in use for residential (19th c.) and commercial (20th c.) purposes for 238 years. The Palace is now a city museum.

The Melchoir de la Garza house (ca. 1800), a small one-story caliche block cottage, is the one remaining example of the type of homes that once ringed the two plazas during the Presidio period, through the Republic, Statehood, and the Confederacy. These houses were replaced during the post-Civil War boom in the late 19th century by the primarily two-story masonry commercial structures, such as the Vogel Belt Complex (ca. 1880), as the emphasis in the area shifted from total community functions to primarily business and local government functions. This change was intensified by the

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arrival of the railroad in 1877, further encouraging development of the cattle industry. The importance of this area as a center or hub of activity is further exemplified by the construction of the elaborate three-story Italian Renaissance Revival City Hall (1888-91), and Bexar County Courthouse (1892-96). The little parish church becoming an important Gothic Revival style cathedral (San Fernando Cathedral) with the appointment of a Catholic bishop to San Antonio after the Civil War is another indication of the importance of the area.

The next real boom period occurred from about 1915 to 1929, primarily because of the expansion of the military sector during World War I. San Antonio was also popular as a health resort at this time, with a large tourist trade from all over the country taking advantage of the pleasant climate and natural warm springs, with the cattle industry still an important factor in the economy. The Main Plaza Building (Old Frost Bank) (1922) is an excellent example of the spirit of this time period. This twelve-story Commercial style structure was San Antonio's tallest building in 1922. The bank was an outgrowth of Col. Tom Frost's wool business (built on the same location in 1867), which is symbolized in detailing on the building. Other examples of this period in the district would be the Rand Building (ca. 1920), an eight-story commercial structure showing Chicago Style influence, and the Kallison Block (ca. 1920), a two-story brick commercial row with Spanish Revival and Mission influences.

The district has continued in its importance as a commercial and governmental core area with the alteration and re-use of some of the older buildings, and the destruction of some of these buildings for parking space or construction of the newer and larger commercial structures of today. The architectural importance of the area, therefore, lies not in continuity or cohesive qualities of scale, materials or design, but rather in their diversity. Examples of the many changes in these qualities through time still remain as they are woven into the animated fabric of this vigorous city center.

Contributing Structures: (Numbers in parentheses refer to district map.)

1. Spanish Governor's Palace. 1740. 105 Military Plaza. (N.R., N.H.L., 1971) (6)
2. Vogel Belt Complex. Ca. 1880. 111-121 Military Plaza. (N.R., 1975) (5)
3. City Hall. 1888-81. Center of Military Plaza. This Italian Renaissance Revival structure was built in the center of Military Plaza. Otto Kramer, prominent architect of New York, Chicago and St. Louis, originally designed it as a three-story structure topped with an octagonal clock tower 135 feet

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- high. The tower and corner turrets were removed in 1927, when a fourth floor was added. (29)
4. San Fernando Cathedral. 1738-1749 and 1868. 114 Main Plaza. (N.R., 1975) (31)
 5. Main Plaza Building (Old Frost Bank). 1922. 103 S. Main. Constructed on the site of the original (1867) Frost & Bros. location, this is a twelve-story Commercial style structure with neoclassical elements. Contractor for the bank and office building was J.P. Haynes. Coin motifs are repeated throughout, as well as ram's head and hoof motifs symbolic of Col. Tom Frost's wool business from which the banking concern developed. (30)
 6. Bexar County Courthouse. 1892-96. Main Plaza. (N.R., 1977) (40)
 7. Kallison Block. Ca. 1920. 101-125 S. Flores. This two-story brick commercial row is illustrative of the mission influence with its classical Spanish detailing at the second level window moldings, tile roof, and elaborately detailed, angled entrance. First level has been altered. (44)
 8. Kotula Building (Embassy Bar). Ca. 1870. This two-story, three-bay, stuccoed stone commercial building with crown molding at the cornice has deep apertures with double doors at the second level indicating removal of a detail, possibly a gallery. (45)
 9. Heusinger Building (Visual Display Products). Ca. 1880. 408 Dolorosa. This two-story, three-bay brick commercial structure has segmental arched 4-over-4 sash windows, with quarry faced sill course and coping at the parapet. (46)
 10. Faucett Building. Ca. 1900. 414-418 Dolorosa. This two-story brick store front building has three bays with varying fenestration in each bay. The second level openings have triple and quadruple rowlock arches and expressed extrados. The elaborate cornice includes corbeled brackets, reticulated brick panels and stone coping with modernistic stone sculpture at the parapet. (47)
 11. Arana Building. Ca. 1920. This two-story brick commercial row shows mission influence at the parapet. There are decorative brick arches over the center and end bay windows and transoms over all the first floor windows. Stone coping follows the parapet lines, with belt courses above and below the second level openings. (3)

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12. Melchoir de la Garza House. Ca. 1800. 100 S. Laredo St. This is a stuccoed caliche block cottage with a three-bay facade and shed addition at the rear. The gabled roof shows wood shingles under the newer asbestos shingles. The house, though a type that was once common, is unique to the district. (1)
13. Continental Hotel. Ca. 1900. 332 W. Commerce St. This three-story brick masonry commercial building has Italianate Victorian detailing with brick corbeling at the cornice. It is divided into bays of two and three windows, with quarry faced stone lintels over second level windows and round arches with extrados over the third floor windows. The street level has been altered. (2)
14. Central Candy Co. Building (Artes Graficas). 19th century. 113-119 Cameron. This two-story commercial structure is constructed of limestone on the ground floor with round-arched openings and of brick on the second story with segmental arches and three bays articulated by brick pilasters. The facade at both levels is plastered and scored to simulate cut stone, with brick corbeling at the cornice and a brick coping along the parapet line. (8)
15. Old Bexar County Jail (Bexar County Election Center and Archives). 1878. 120 Cameron. Originally designed by Alfred Giles as a two-story stone structure with battlemented parapet, the old jail was altered in the 1930's. It is now a five-story brick veneered structure with an arched brick west portico and Romanesque influence at the attic level. The original limestone security walls still remain. (12)
16. Moke Building (Plaza Bridal Studio). Ca. 1880. This three-story brick commercial building has been altered at ground level. Four single pane, double hung sash windows span the second level facade with stone or terra cotta panels set into the wall above each. The third level is bracketed by stone pilasters with composite capitals. Round arched openings at this level spring from stone impost blocks. A stone string course runs between each level, with a stone coping at the parapet. (13)
17. Elmendorf Building (Plaza Furniture). Ca. 1910. 223 W. Commerce. This three-story brick commercial building has been altered at ground level. Two- and three-part double hung sash windows with transoms are separated by stone or terra cotta drop ornaments at the top of the third level and stone or terra cotta blocks at the base of the second level, with stone lintels and window sills. There is a dentilled string course above

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- ground level and a stone cornice with brick parapet wall above. (14)
18. S.H. Kress & Co. Ca. 1920. 211 W. Commerce St. Pilasters separate coupled, single-pane, double-hung sash windows at the second level of this two-story brick commercial structure, with decorative brick panels above each pair of windows. Stone panels are set into the cornice line above the pilasters. (15)
19. Commercial Row. Late 19th and early 20th centuries. 134-144 W. Houston. These four late 19th and early 20th century three-story masonry commercial structures contribute to the architectural eclecticism of the district with their variety of compatible architectural details, such as the wide arches of the 20th century Book Building at 134 Houston to the narrower-arched 19th century Soledad Block structures which are thought to have been designed by Alfred Giles. (28)
20. Wolfson Building. Ca. 1880. 103 W. Commerce. This two-story Victorian stone commercial structure with elaborately bracketed eaves and segmentally arched windows at the second story has been altered at street level. It was designed by Alfred Giles for Wolfson's Department Store. (19)
21. Rand Building (Wolff & Marx Store Building). Ca. 1920. This eight-story brick and tile veneer commercial building shows Chicago Style influences in the fenestration and three-part commercial motif, with neoclassical details at the base and cornice. (22)
22. Morris Adelman Building. Early 20th Century. 101 W. Commerce. This two-story brick commercial structure with contrasting brick pilasters and cornice has been altered at ground level. It constitutes the only tie with the district in this block which is almost entirely covered by the multi-story Frost Bank Building. (18)
23. Chee Kunh Tong Chinese Free Masons, ca. 1920. 117 W. Nueva. This two-story brick structure with an A-B-A three-bay facade has decorative brick arches over end bay windows, string courses, and a corbeled brick cornice. Spanish influence is evident in the elaborate stone over-door treatment at the end bays and canales (roof drains) piercing the parapet. (39)
24. Ramsey and Ford Buildings. Late 19th century and early 20th century. 114 E. Main Plaza. This pair of two-story brick commercial buildings have been altered, but still maintain the scale of the district. Some

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of their earlier detailing at the cornice and molded window hoods at the second level remain. This was the site of the old Casas Reales in the 18th century. (33)

25. Legal Professional Building (Old City Jail and Police Building). Ca. 1915. 200 Main Plaza. This is a three-story red brick structure with raised basement and white stone or plaster detailing at arched openings, string course and parapet balustrade. Detailing indicates Renaissance Revival influences. (36)
26. Morris Hotel. Early 20th century. Dwyer Ave. at Dolorosa. This four-story brick hotel has been altered at street level. The upper three stories retain their rich architectural detailing, with a string course above second level, segmental arches above fourth floor windows of white limestone and a dentilled cornice of limestone. (35)

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Main Plaza and Military Plaza District has been the traditional hub of downtown San Antonio since the 18th century. Military Plaza was first established in 1722 as a parade ground and market square for the Spanish soldiers garrisoned there. While this plaza is associated with early Spanish colonialism, retaining to this day the 1749 Spanish Governor's Palace, it evolved over the years from a community gathering place and market place into the seat of government for the city when the Italian Renaissance Revival style City Hall was built in 1888-91. Main Plaza was the site of the first authorized Texas city when it was established as the market square for the Canary Island fundadores of San Antonio March 9, 1731. These early settlers built small, primitive jacal, palisado, or caliche block residences around the square, with their village church (now San Fernando Cathedral, N.R., 1975) and the Casas Reales (now 114 E. Main Plaza), their seat of government, as their focal points. A local government structure still shares the architectural focus of Main Plaza with the Cathedral, in the form of the 1882 Romanesque Revival style County Courthouse. Through the 18th and 19th centuries the two plazas have been the scene of everyday business and social events, as well as many skirmishes and battles, with the architecture changing to late 19th and early 20th century commercial and governmental structures as these functions became more important to the area. Many of these structures and facade rows remain today, with commerce, banking, government and the historic ambiance of the area combining to make the plazas popular with natives and tourists alike.

The Main and Military Plaza area has been the scene of numerous historical events, as evidenced by the 34 commemorative markers and monuments recorded there (see Appendix 1). Eight of the structures immediately on the plazas are already on the National Register: the Spanish Governor's Palace, built 1749 (N.R. & N.H.L., 1971); the four Vogel Belt structures, built in the 1880's (N.R., 1975); San Fernando Cathedral, built as first parish church ca. 1738, rebuilt in 1868-1873 (N.R., 1975); and the Bexar County Courthouse, built in 1882 (N.R. 1977).

Military Plaza

Military Plaza (Plaza de las Armas) was established in 1722 by the Spanish Garrison which earlier had established its presidio on the site of San Pedro Park by San Pedro Springs. In 1749, the same year the Spanish Governor's Palace was built on the square, the Spaniards made peace with the Apache by burying a live horse with a tomahawk, a lance, and six arrows on

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the Plaza.

Moses Austin came here in 1820 seeking permission from the Spanish governor to settle Anglo-American colonists in Texas. In this area the bloodiest battle in the siege of Bexas (The Storming of Bexar) in Texas' War of Independence from Mexico was fought in 1835. Davy Crockett came here in 1836 prior to the Battle of the Alamo seeking help "in our common cause." For more than fifty years following removal of the presidio from Military Plaza, it was headquarters for cattlemen, cowboys, saloons, gambling casinos and dance halls. Barbed wire was first introduced to ranchers here, and the "Chili Queens," vendors of individual servings of chili from large open pots, presided over their stalls in the open market. The "Chili Queens" were a regular institution on the Plaza until 1900 when they ceased operations. They were reinstated briefly in the 1930's until the health department closed them down permanently.

Construction of the Italian Renaissance Revival style City Hall in the center of the Plaza in 1888-91, designed by prominent New York, Chicago and St. Louis architect Otto Kramer, signaled a change for Military Plaza from an open market to the center of municipal government, reinforced by the substantial masonry commercial structures now ringing the square, such as the Victorian Vogel Belt Complex, the 1870's limestone vernacular Kotula Building, the brick two-story Heusinger Building (ca. 1880), the three-story brick Moke Building (ca. 1870's), the brick Victorian Elmendorf Building (ca. 1870's) and the mid-19th century Kalteyer Complex, including brick and stone Victorian and vernacular commercial buildings and a two-story stone residence.

Main Plaza

Although the first permanent Spanish residents founded Misión San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) and the presidio of San Antonio de Bexar in 1718, the title "first settlers" was bestowed by the Spanish crown on the sixteen Canary Island families who founded Villa de San Fernando on Main Plaza, March 9, 1731. This primarily residential plaza was ringed by the settlers' primitive homes, protected by their Spanish Baroque parish church, Nuestra Señora de Candelaria y Guadalupe, 1739-1749, and the Casas Reales, their "city hall." Main Plaza is also called "Plaza de las Yslas" for these Canary Island settlers.

The Islanders, all volunteers, were brought to settle the area on the recommendation of the First Marquis de San Miguel de Aguayo, appointed Governor of Coahuila and Texas in 1719. His assertion was that one Spanish

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

family would more effectively secure the area than 100 soldiers. Native Canary Islanders were chosen on the basis of their proven work records as small farmers and due to the ease of transporting them to the area.

People from all the settlements and missions gathered here for fiestas, marriages, funerals and marketing. Santa Ana made his quarters here during San Antonio's occupation by his army. Like Military Plaza, Main Plaza gradually evolved into more of a commercial center, with the advent of permanent masonry commercial structures around the square, such as the Wolfson Building (1880's), and the Ramsey and Ford Building (ca. 1876), site of the old Casas Reales. The Wolfson Building was designed by prominent San Antonio architect Alfred Giles. Giles was prolific in designing public and commercial buildings and homes in south central Texas and northern Mexico during the last quarter of the 19th century, such as the Gillespie County Courthouse (N.R.), the Sullivan Stable and Carriage House in San Antonio (N.R.) and the Bandera County Jail (N.R. nomination in process).

By 1868, the small parish church (by now called San Fernando) was no longer large enough to accommodate the parishioners, and a new church designed by Francis Giraud was built around the walls of the original building. In 1874 the church became a cathedral, as the center of the new Diocese of San Antonio.

The Chee Kunh Tong Chinese Free Masons Building was constructed near Main Plaza to serve the Chinese population which greatly increased in San Antonio after Pershing's expedition into Mexico searching for Pancho Villa just prior to W.W. I. The Chinese railroad workers in Mexico were sympathetic to the Americans and more than 500 had to flee to safety as a result. Most remained in San Antonio's Chinese community after special citizenship was granted by Congress.

Like Military Plaza, Main Plaza also became a governmental center with the addition of the Romanesque Revival Bexar County Courthouse (1892) designed by James Riely Gordon, evolving also into a banking center after construction of the Old National Bank of Commerce (ca. 1919) and Old Frost Bank, then San Antonio's tallest structure (twelve stories, 1920). James Riely Gordon, known as the "Courthouse Architect," specialized in the use of the Romanesque Revival style and Greek Cross plan as applied in the Bexar County Courthouse, with the central stair well used to provide ventilation in the hot Texas climate. Other examples of Gordon's work still in existence include the Victoria County Courthouse (N.R.), Wise County Courthouse (N.R.),

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and Erath County Courthouse (N.R.).

The life of the city continues to center around the plazas. Business and banking, the Cathedral, County Courthouse and City Hall all continue to bring people into the old plazas where Texas' first city was founded.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries delineate the core area of the Plazas by enclosing the blocks immediately surrounding the two Plazas, with the San Pedro Creek and San Antonio River forming the natural east and west boundaries just as they did when the presidio was founded in 1722. The west boundary extends at one point past San Pedro Creek primarily to include the Melchoir de la Garza house as the only remaining example of the type of homes that were once numerous around the Plazas. While a number of parking lots in spaces which recently contained 19th century and early 20th century commercial structures are included in the district, enough of a representative sampling of the various growth periods of Main-Military still exists to warrant its nomination as a National Register District.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Appendix 1

Main-Military Plazas and the immediate area have thirty-four (34) markers and monuments commemorating historic events recorded by the State of Texas.

Included among these are the Statue of Moses Austin on City Hall Grounds, Military Plaza, which was a special Texas Centennial marker.

De Zavala and Texas Historical Commission markers commemorate the following:

J. A. de la Garza House and Garden -- Soledad Street at Veramendi, site of bank and mint where Spanish money was coined.

Residence of Governor Ramon Musquiz -- Southeast corner of Soledad and Commerce Streets, where women and children survivors of the Alamo were taken after the battle March 6, 1836.

Zero Milestone of Spanish Kings' Highway -- "Camino Real", marking center point of Spanish settlement in southwest between Atlantic and Pacific. *not correct*

Spanish Governor's Palace -- In addition to Texas State Medallion and plaque, site also has National Historic Landmarks plaque and De Zavala plaque.

San Fernando Cathedral -- National Register property, two markers noting burial site for Alamo victims; first parish church and center of old City of San Antonio marker; Battle markers for Texas Victory in December, 1835, and Santa Anna flag of "no quarter" in 1836; Texas State Medallion. In addition the Knights of Columbus have erected markers commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone, dedicated May 11, 1938.

Confederate States of America Arsenal and Hospital -- Houston at Soledad, south east side 134 Soledad, marking site of arsenal and hospital for confederate troops in Texas.

Milam Headquarters -- West side of Soledad at Veramendi, headquarters for Ben Milam on his entry into San Antonio, December 5, 1835.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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(Appendix 1 continued)

Veramendi House -- Home of Governor Veramendi where James Bowie won hand of Ursula Veramendi and where Ben Milam fell victim to a Mexican sniper on December 7, 1835.

Civil War Centennial Marker -- Main Plaza Building, commemorating the surrender of Union Troops in 1861 under command of General D. E. Twiggs to Texas.

French Building -- Main Plaza at Dwyer marking site of Old San Antonio City Hall, 1859, and Bexar County Courthouse.

Perote Prisoner's Capture -- Southeast corner of Soledad and W. Commerce Streets, site of capture of San Antonions later taken to Perote Prison in Mexico.

Woll Invasion - West Commerce at Main Plaza commemorating invasion and battle with Mexican Army in 1842 when Texans lost to invaders.

First Protestant Church Service -- 100 Soledad -- site of Old County Clerk's Office where First Protestant Church Service was held by John McCullough, Presbyterian, and John Wesley DeVilbiss, Methodist, April, 1844.

Casas Reales -- 114 Main Plaza -- Site chosen July 2, 1731, as Royal Houses of Spanish Governors and seat of Spanish Government in Texas (last walls were destroyed earlier this year by demolition of buildings on east side of Main Plaza).

Barbed wire -- Military Plaza, City Hall Grounds -- In site of first demonstration of practical use of barbed wire in United States by John "Bet-a-Million" Gates in 1870's.

Ruiz Home -- Site of home of Jose Francisco Ruiz, one of two native signers of Texas Declaration of Independence, Dolorosa Street, south side of Military Plaza. (Home was moved to Witte Museum Grounds and reconstructed there in the 1940's.)

Plaza de Armas -- Military Plaza, City Hall -- Marker commemorating arrival of Spanish Military Garrison.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

(Appendix 1 continued)

San Antonio Met Mutual Aid Assn. -- Main Plaza -- Commemorating aid program and store for families of Confederate Army.

St. Anthony de Padua -- Statue to St. Anthony on Courthouse grounds erected by the Order of Alhambra.

Canary Island Settlers -- Commemorating settlers from Canary Islands who founded Villa de San Fernando in March, 1731, Courthouse lawn.

Bexar County Government -- Courthouse, commemorating Bexar County's unique position as oldest administrative government in Texas.

Jefferson Davis Memorial Highway -- Marker at Courthouse in honor of President of the Confederacy.

American Legion Memorial -- Courthouse, dedicated during Texas Centennial to the American Legion.

Erasmus Sequin -- Courthouse, commemorating famous early settler and civic leader.

San Jacinto Bell -- Courthouse, Bicentennial marker, with bell from U.S.S. San Jacinto.

Franklin Roosevelt Statue -- City Hall Grounds, erected in honor of late president, "The Good Neighbor", by Comite Mexicano de Accion Civica y Cultural.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 87

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,4	5,4,8	3,3,0 ⁶⁷⁰	3,2	5,4	9,4,0	B	1,4	5,4,9	0,3,0	3,2	5,5	2,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		
C	1,4	5,4,9	6,0,0	3,2	5,4	9,4,0	D	1,4	5,4,9	4,5,0 ¹⁴⁰	3,2	5,4	4,9,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the East Nueva St. crossing of the San Antonio River, a line extending north along the River to Houston St., then west along Houston St. to San Pedro Creek to Commerce St., then west along Commerce to Larado St., then south along Larado to Dolorosa St., then east along Dolorosa to San Pedro Creek, then south along the Creek to East Nueva St., then east along E. Nueva to starting point.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Binnie Hoffman Joe Williams, Project Director

ORGANIZATION Texas Historical Commission DATE March 26, 1979

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 12276 TELEPHONE 512-475-3094

CITY OR TOWN Austin STATE Texas

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Joe Williams
DATE 4-1-79

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

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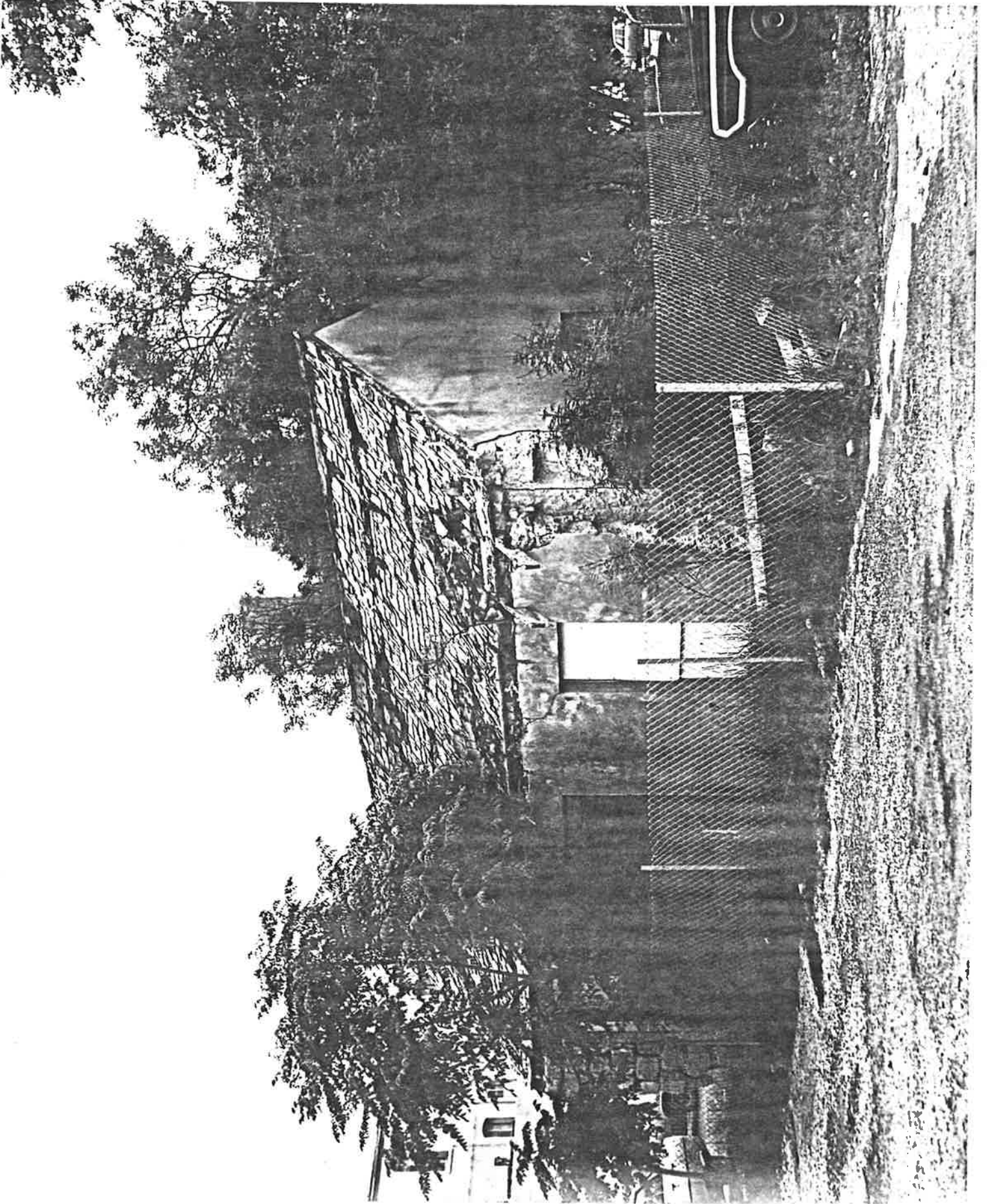
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Vol. III. Austin: The University of Texas, 1926.



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

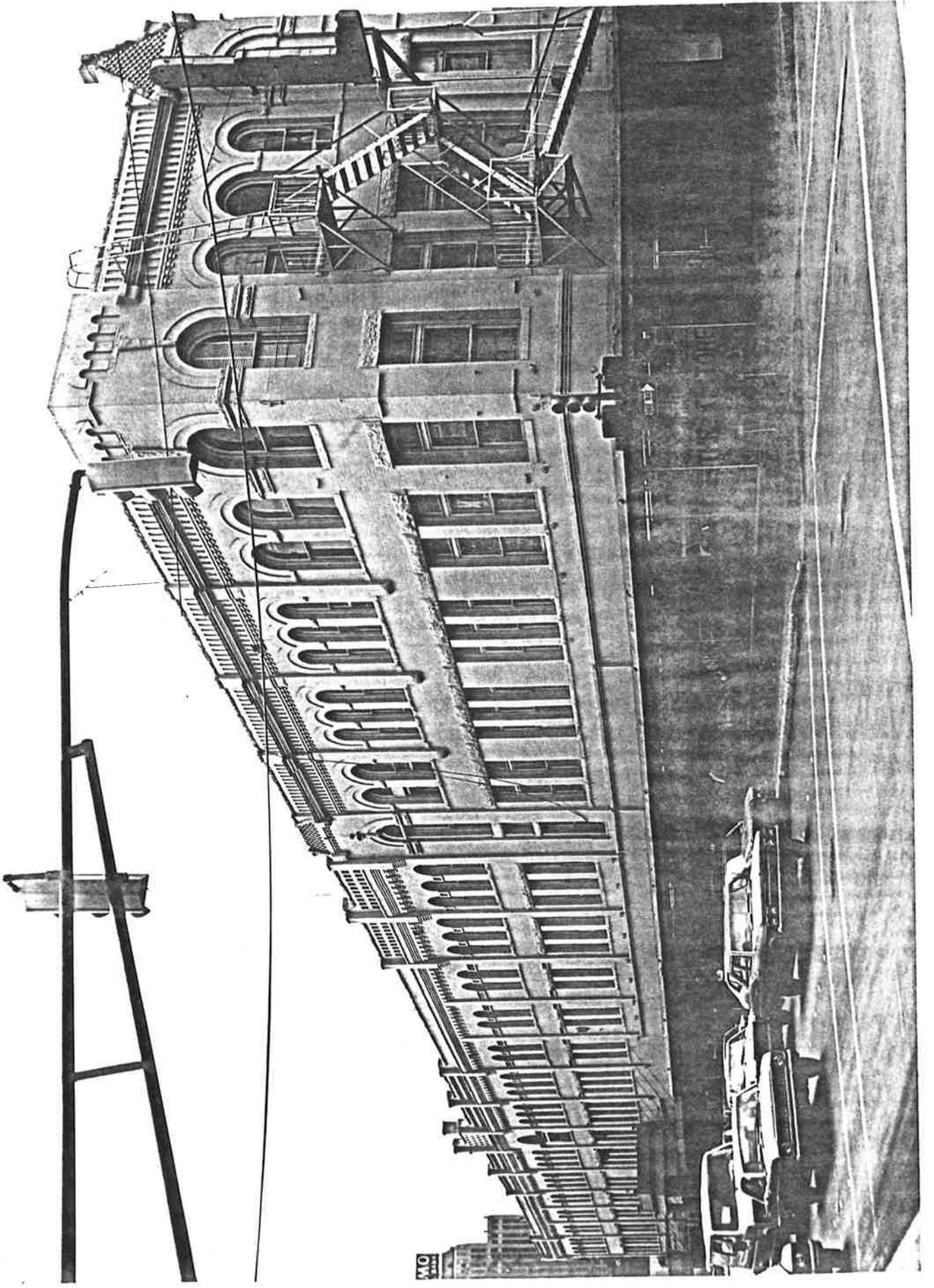
MELCHOIR DE LA GARZA HOUSE
100 S. Laredo St.
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 1

Photo # 1

Southwest Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

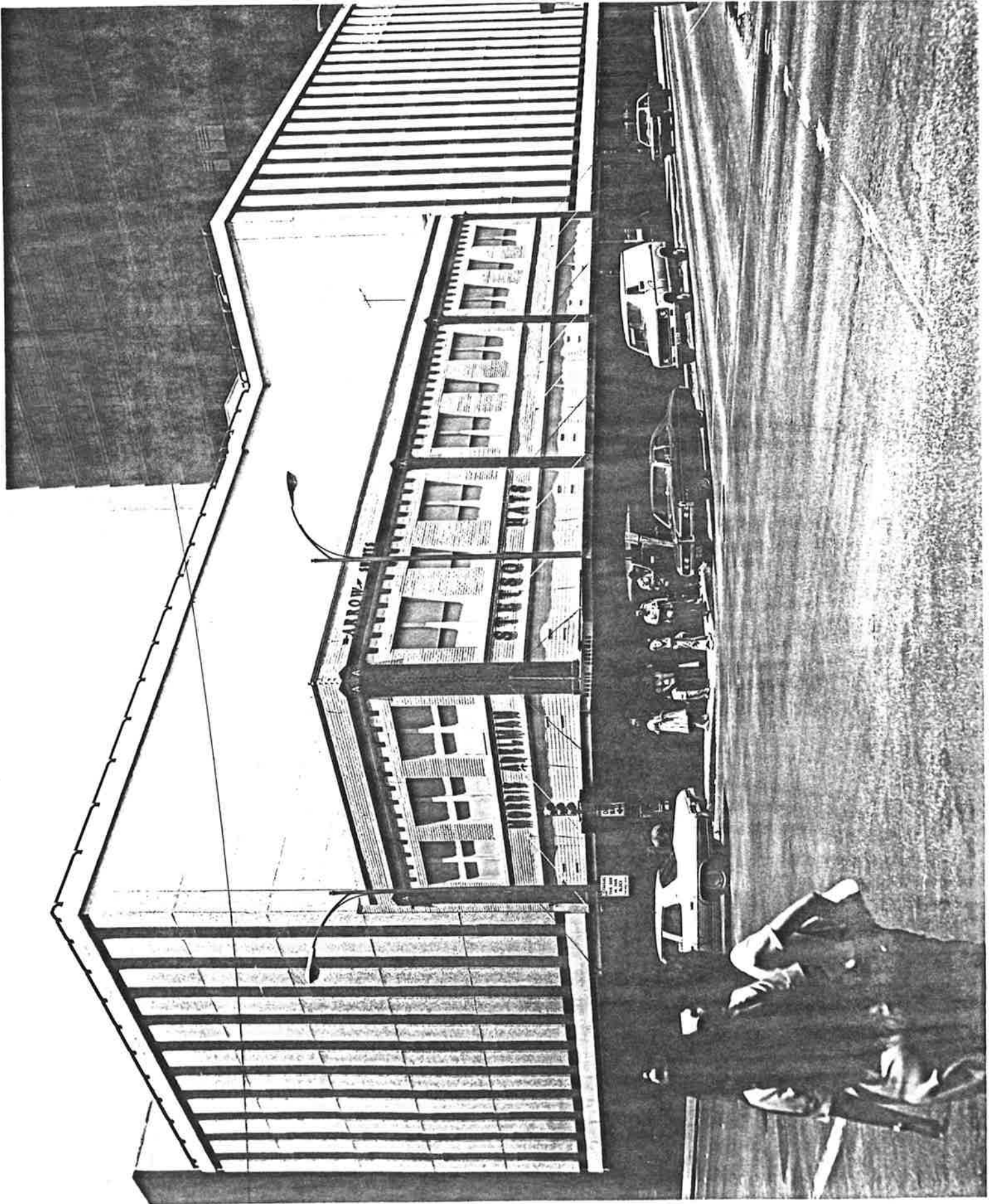


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINENTAL HOTEL (COMMERCIAL ROW)
322-338 W. Commerce
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 2
Photo # 2
Northwest Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

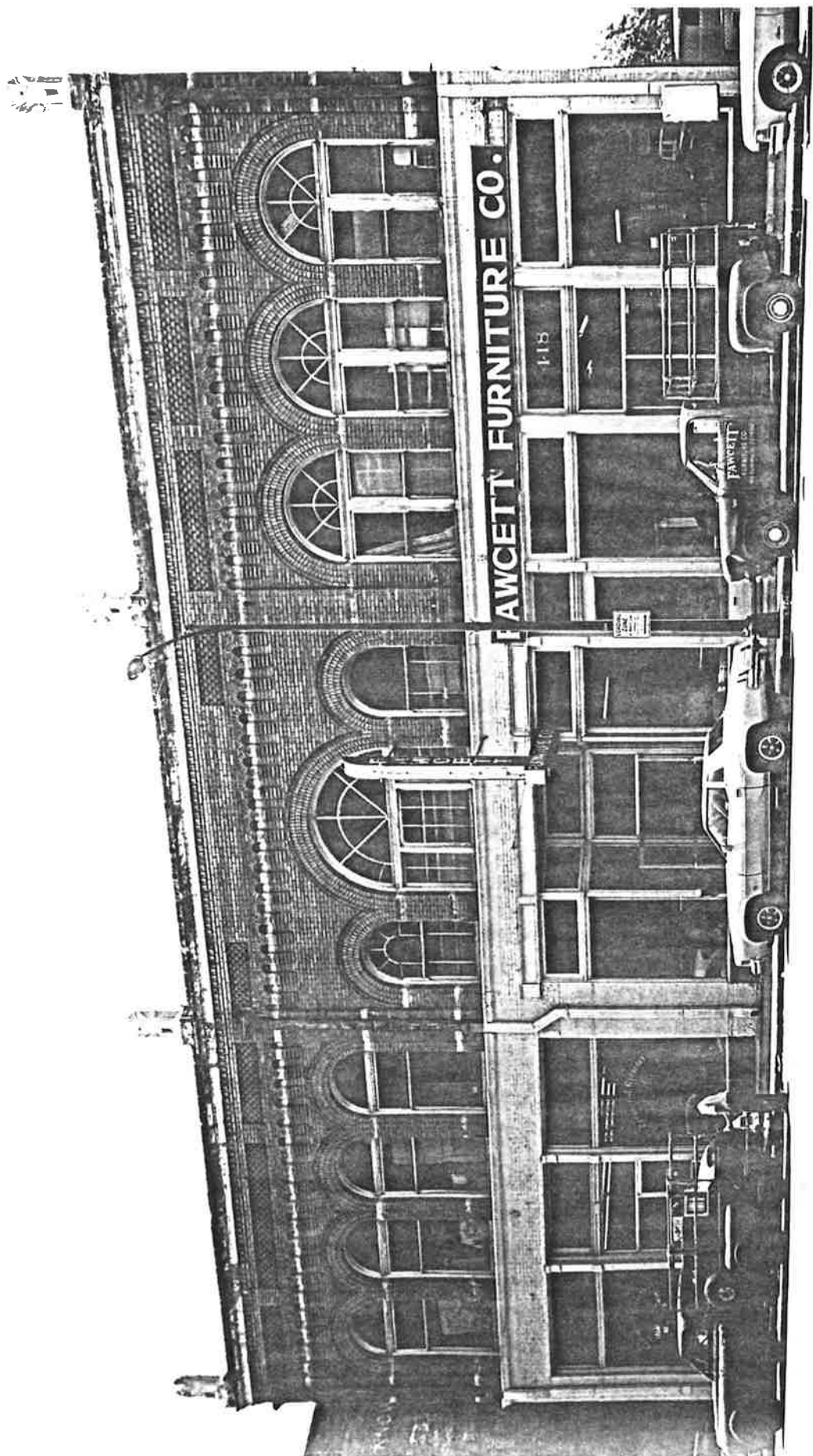


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

ADELMAN BUILDING
101 W. Commerce & Main
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 18
Photo #3
Northeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

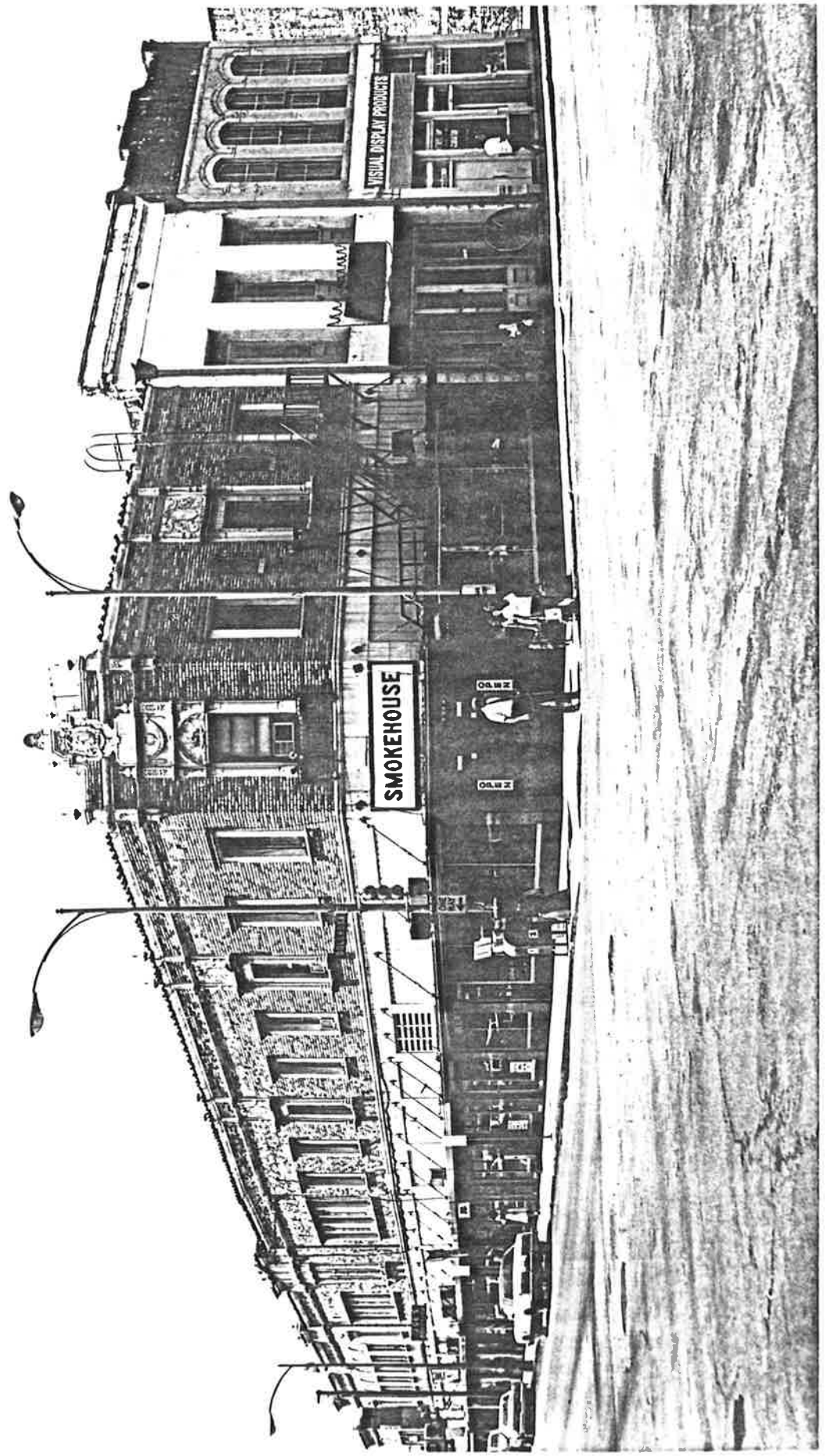


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

FAWCETT BUILDING
414-418 Dolorosa
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 47
Photo # 4
North Elevation

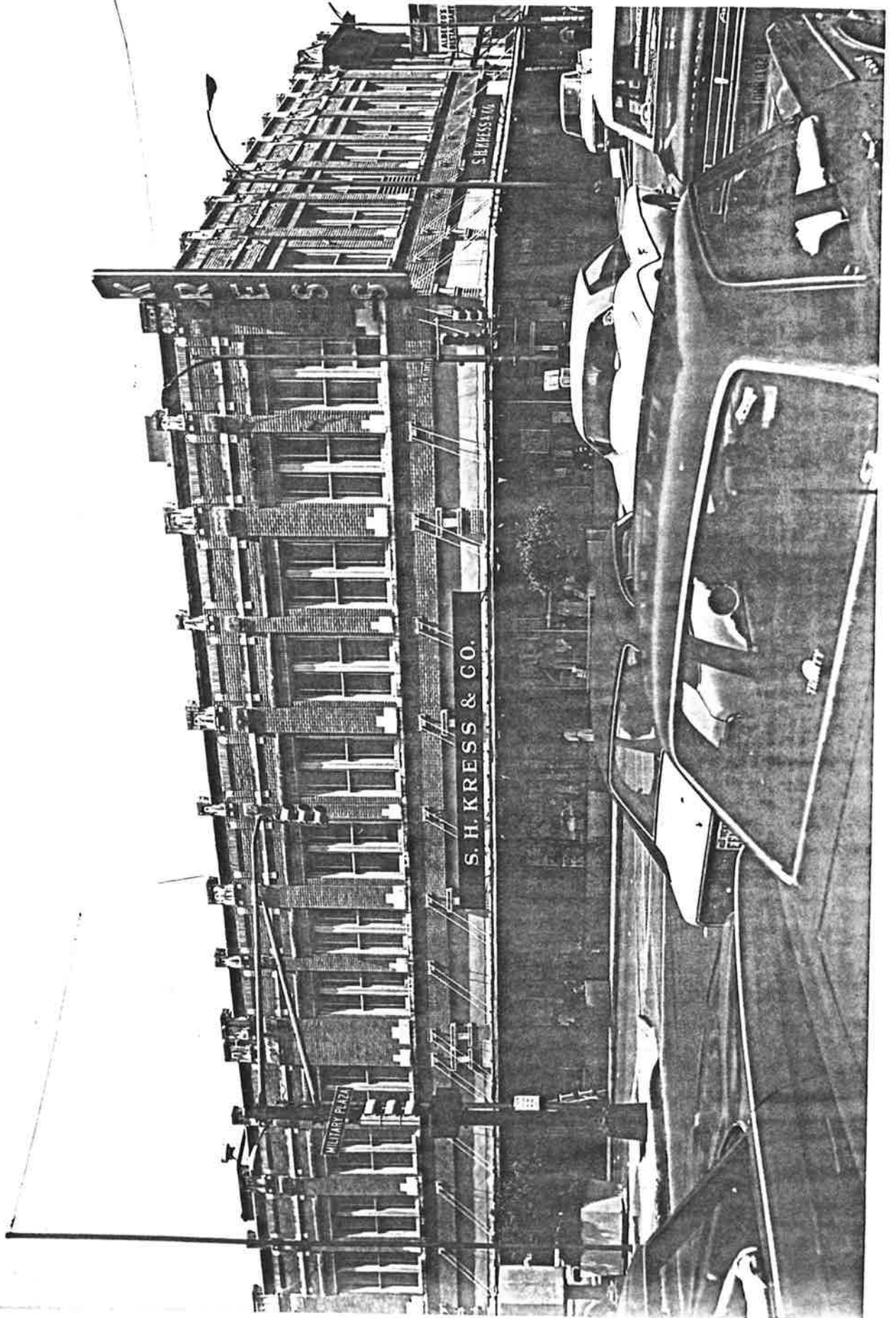
Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

KALLISON BLOCK
101-125 S. Flores
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. #44
Photo #5
Northeast Oblique
Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

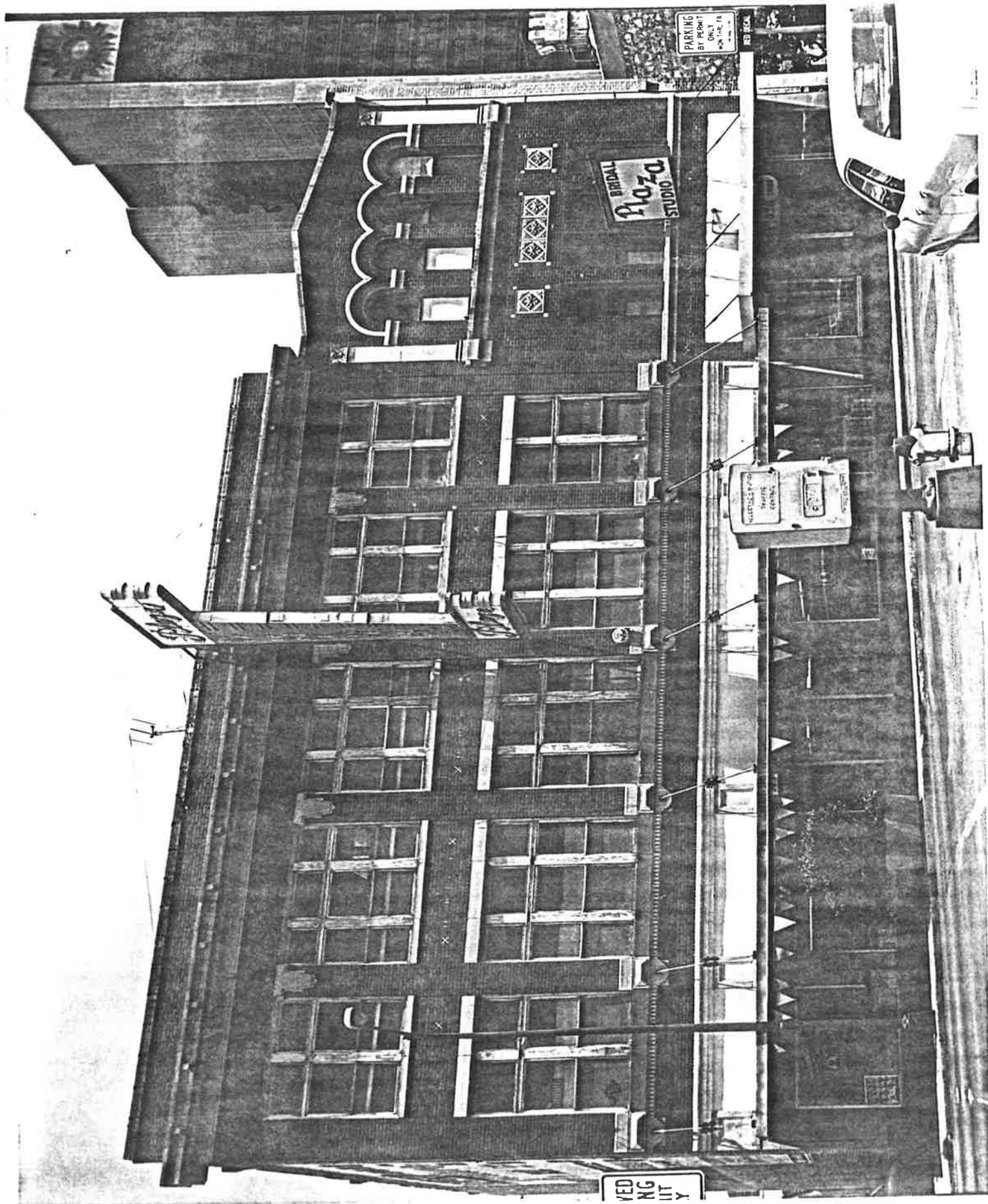


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

S. H. KRESS & CO. (KALTZEYER COMPLEX)
211 W. Commerce St.
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 15
Photo # 6
Southeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



PARKING BY PERMIT ONLY

BRIDAL Plaza STUDIO

MULTIPLY P-10
PARKING CENTER

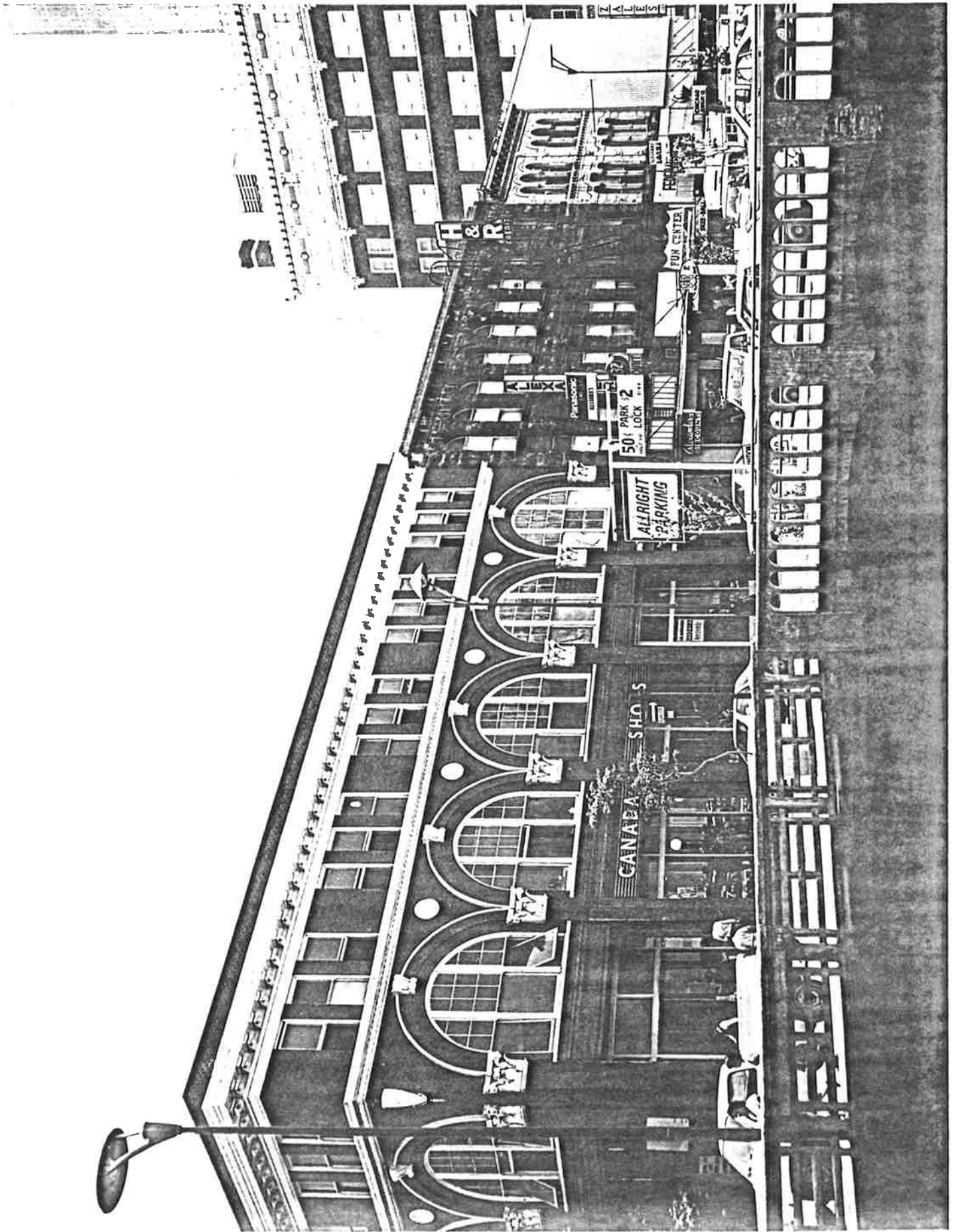
VED NG LIT Y

MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

MOKE BUILDING (PLAZA BRIDAL STUDIO) &
ELMENDORF BUILDING (PLAZA FURNITURE)
223 & 221 W. Commerce
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 13
Photo # 7
Southwest Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

COMMERCIAL ROW
134-144 Houston
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

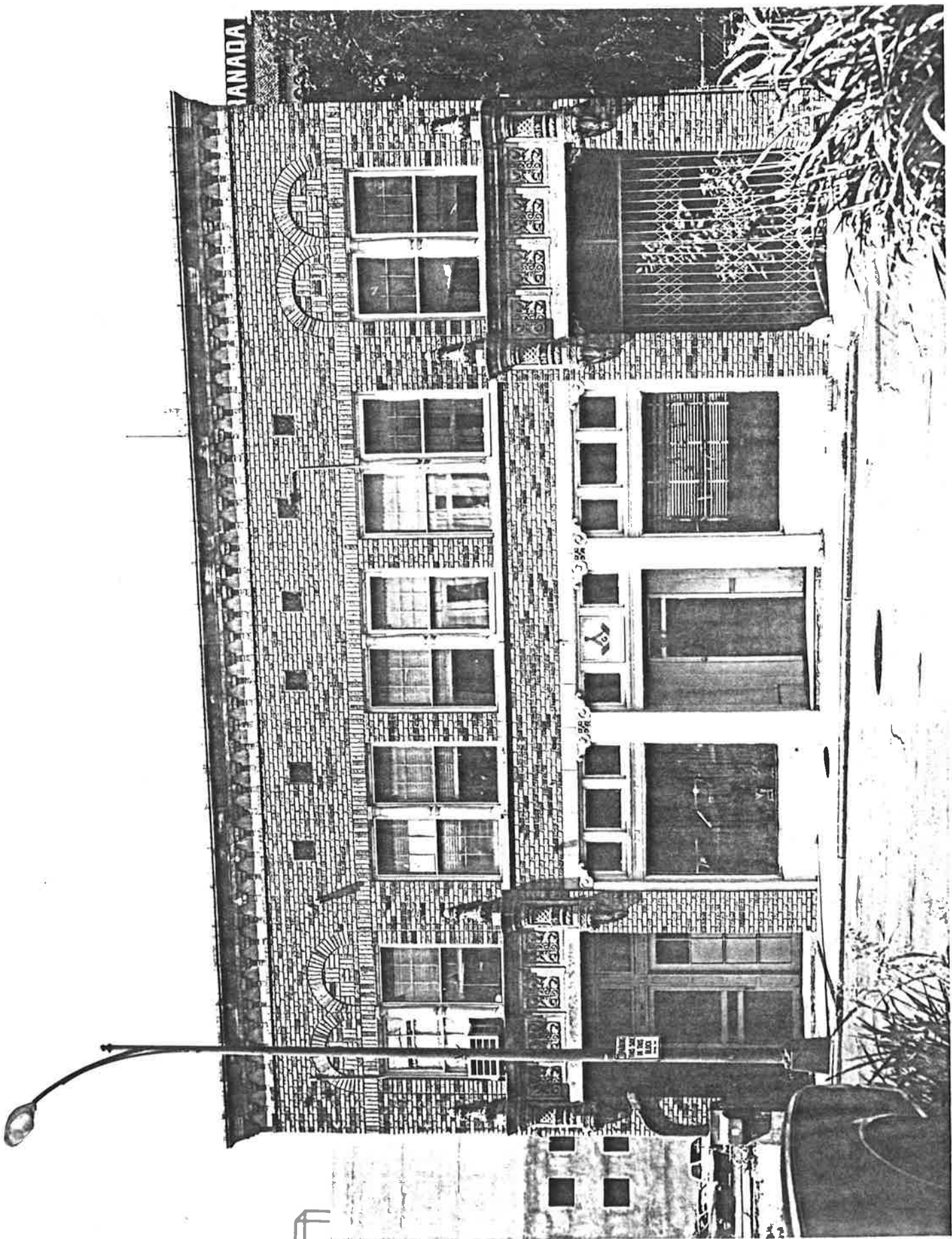
Map Ref. # 28

Photo # 8

Northeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC

May 12, 1978



CANADA

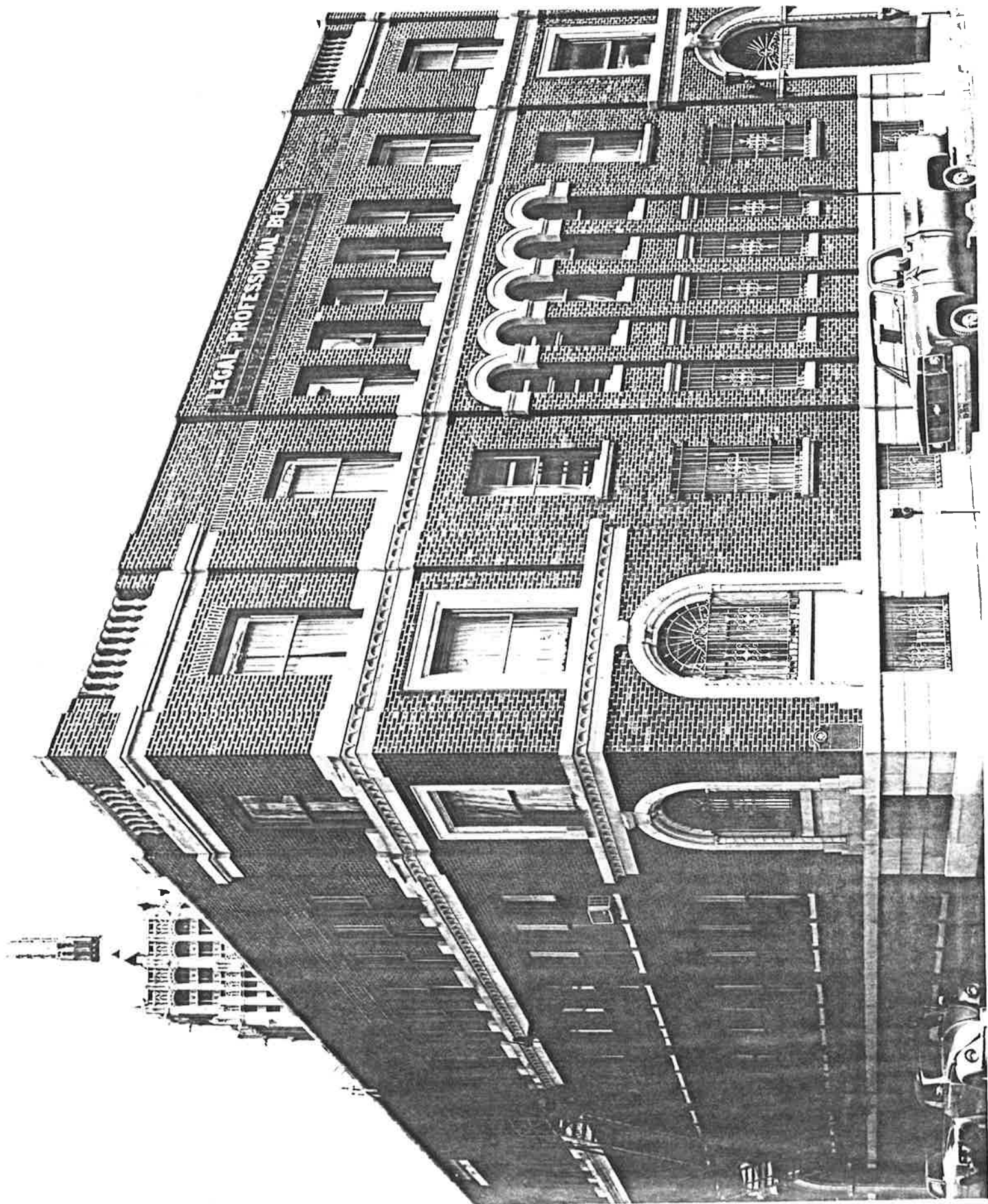
NO PARKING
EXCEPT FOR
LOADING AND UNLOADING
PASSENGERS

MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

CHINESE FREE MASON'S
117 W. Nueva
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 39
Photo # 9
South Elevation

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

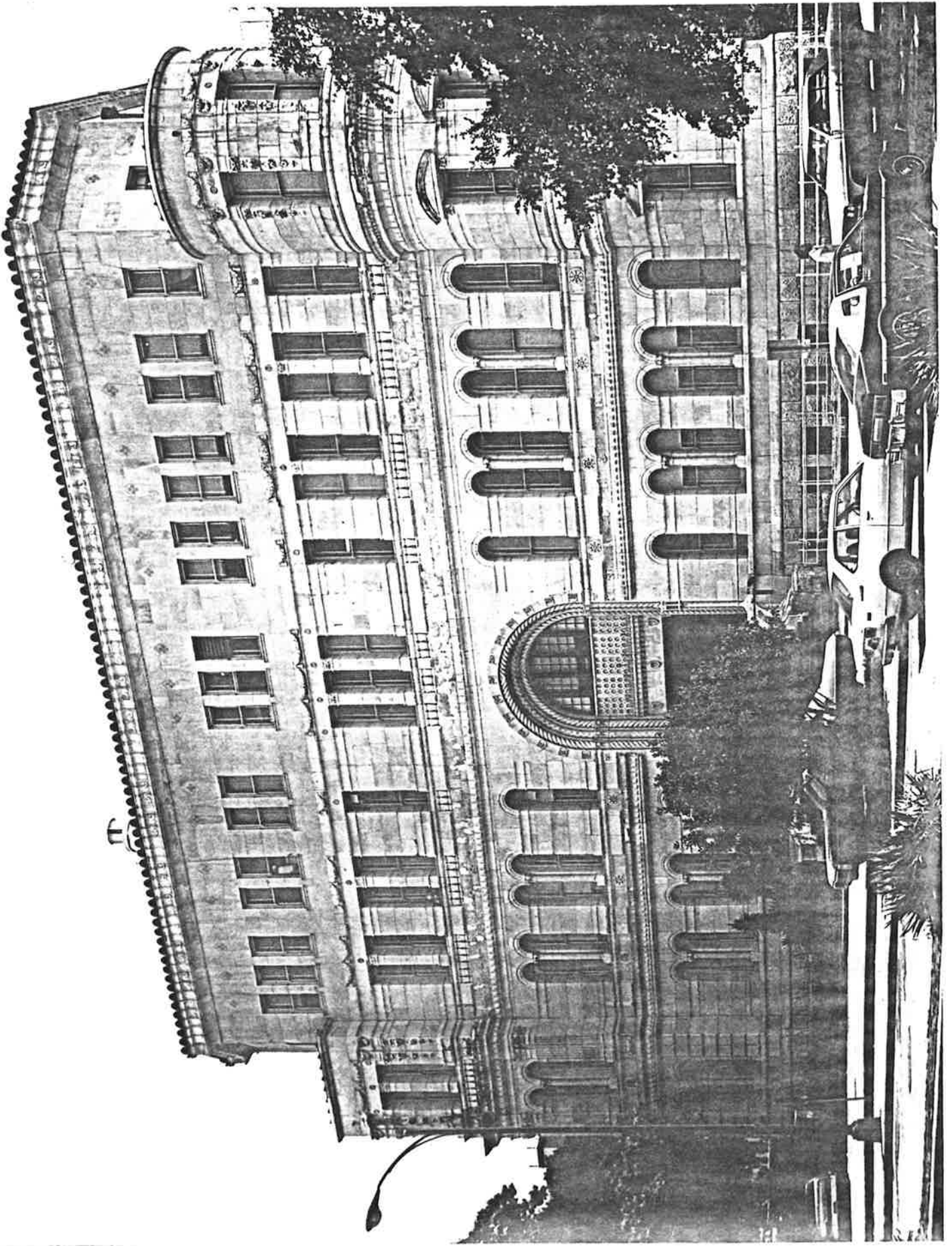


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

LEGAL PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
Dwyer & Villita
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 37
Photo # 10
Northwest oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

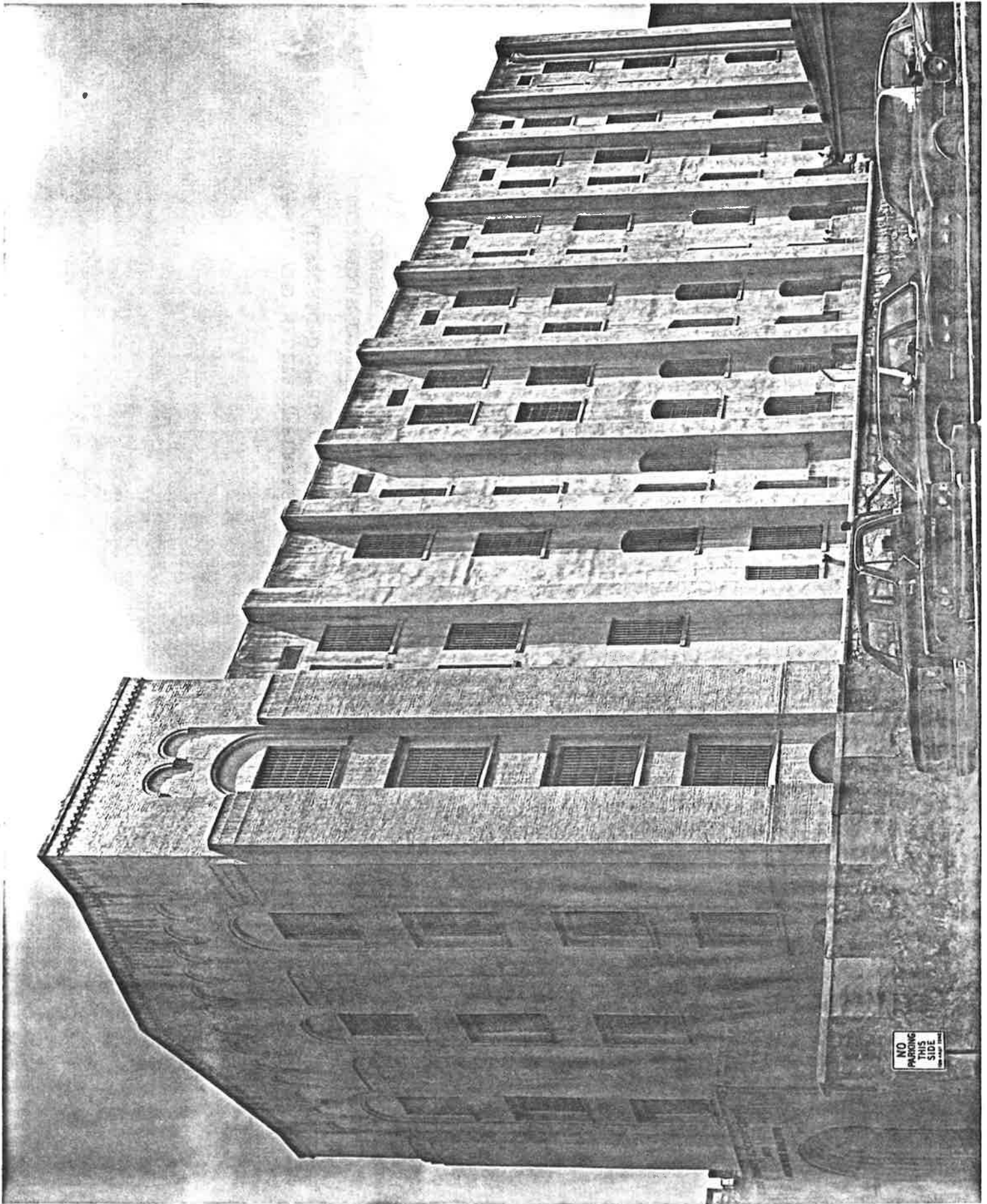


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

CITY HALL
Military Plaza
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 29
Photo # 11
West Elevation

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



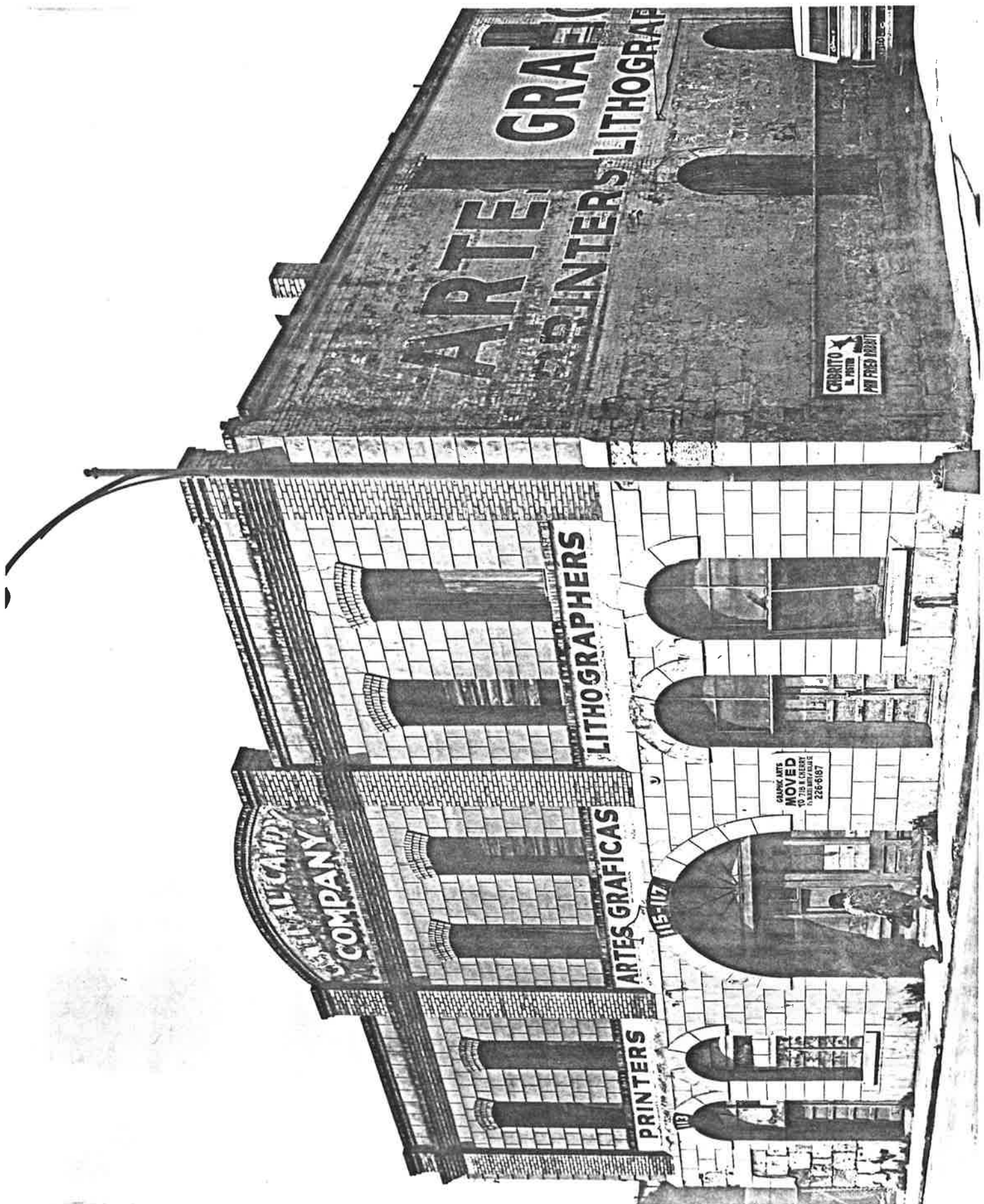
NO
PARKING
THIS
SIDE

MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
- HISTORIC DISTRICT

OLD BEXAR COUNTY JAIL (BEXAR CO. ELECTION
CENTER & ARCHIVES)
120 Cameron
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 12
Photo # 12
Southwest Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



ARTE GRAFICA
PRINTERS LITHOGRAPHERS

CARBITO
M. PINTOR
PUN PUN PUN

LITHOGRAPHERS

GRAPHIC ARTS
MOVED
137 7th & Cherry
D. BARTHOLOMEW
226-6187

ARTES GRAFICAS

115-117

PRINTERS

SWEET'S CANDY COMPANY

MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

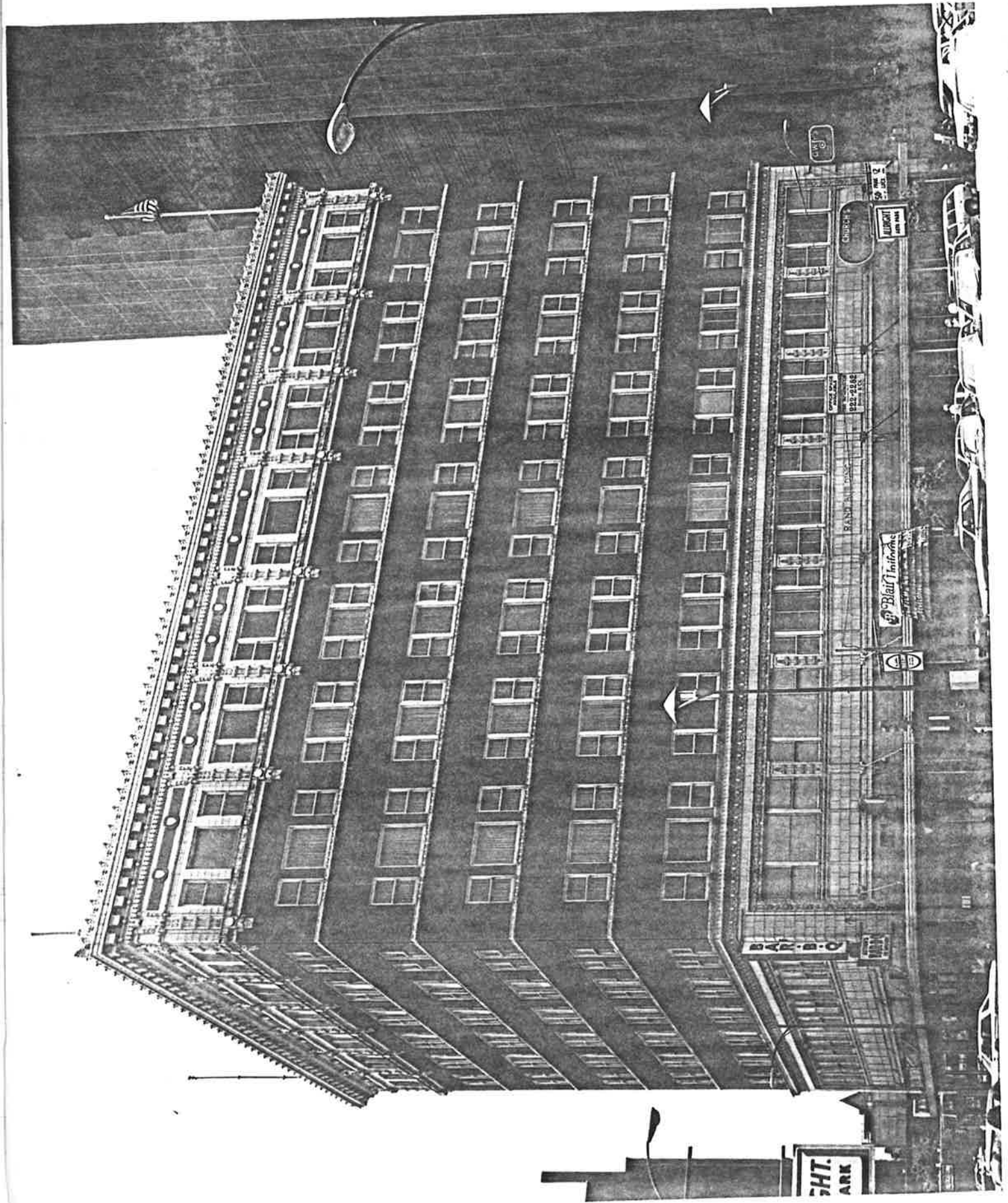
CENTRAL CANDY CO. (ARTES GRAFICAS)
113-119 Cameron
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 8

Photo # 13

Northeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

RAND BUILDING

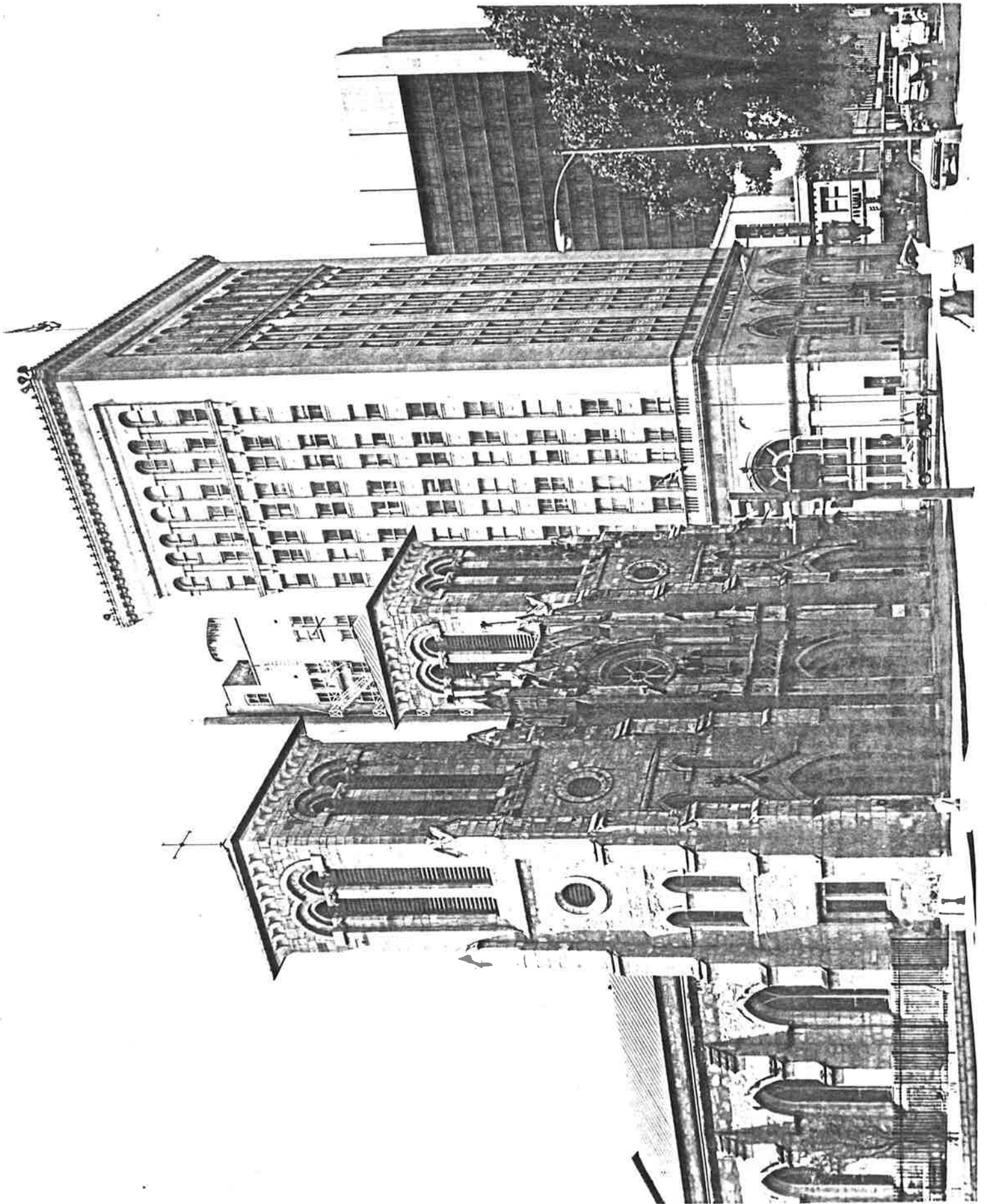
South side of Houston, bounded by
Soledad & Main
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 22

Photo # 14

Northeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

MAIN PLAZA BUILDING (behind San Fernando Cathedral)
103 S. Main
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

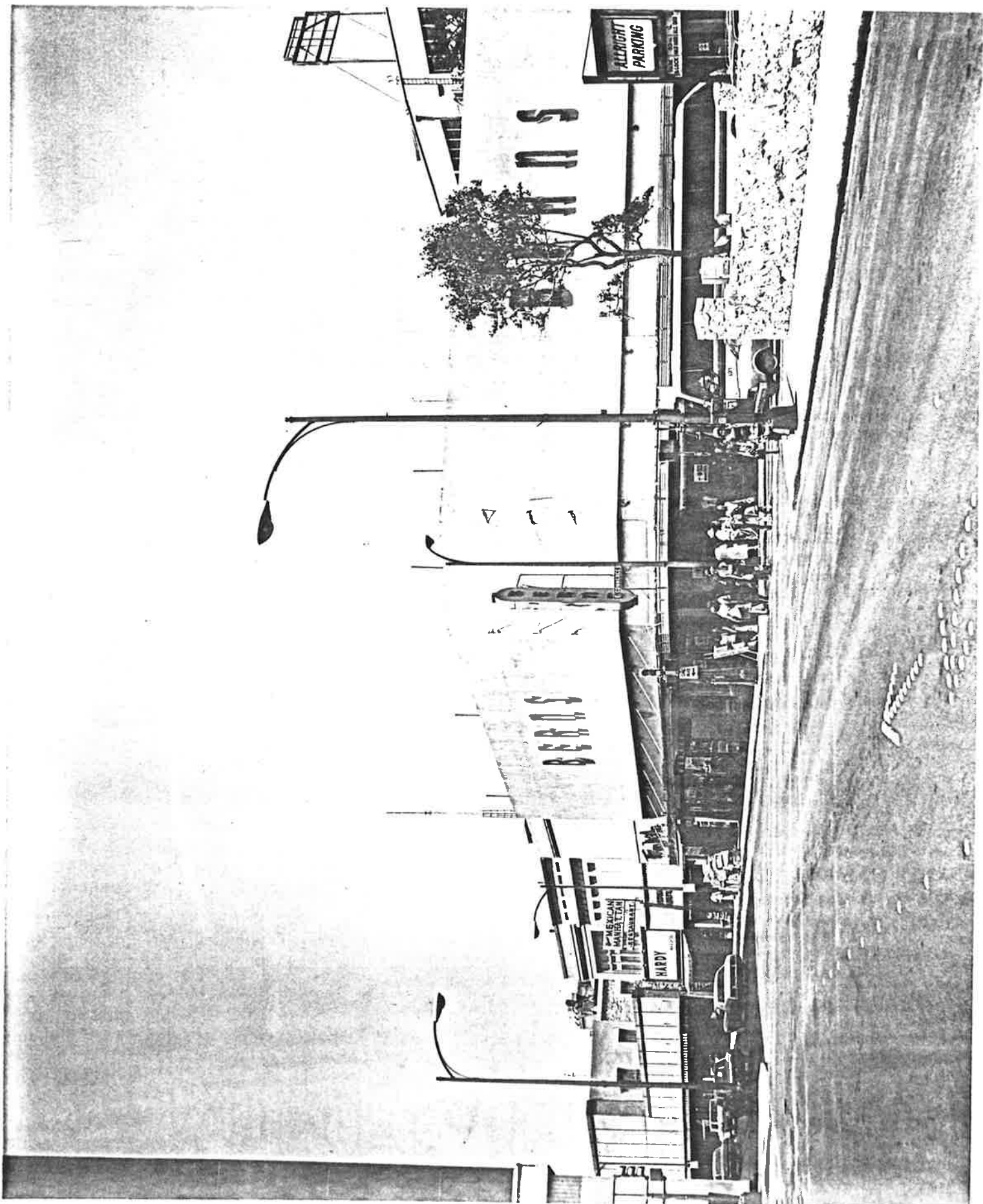
Map Ref. # 30

Photo # 15

Southeast Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC

May 12, 1978

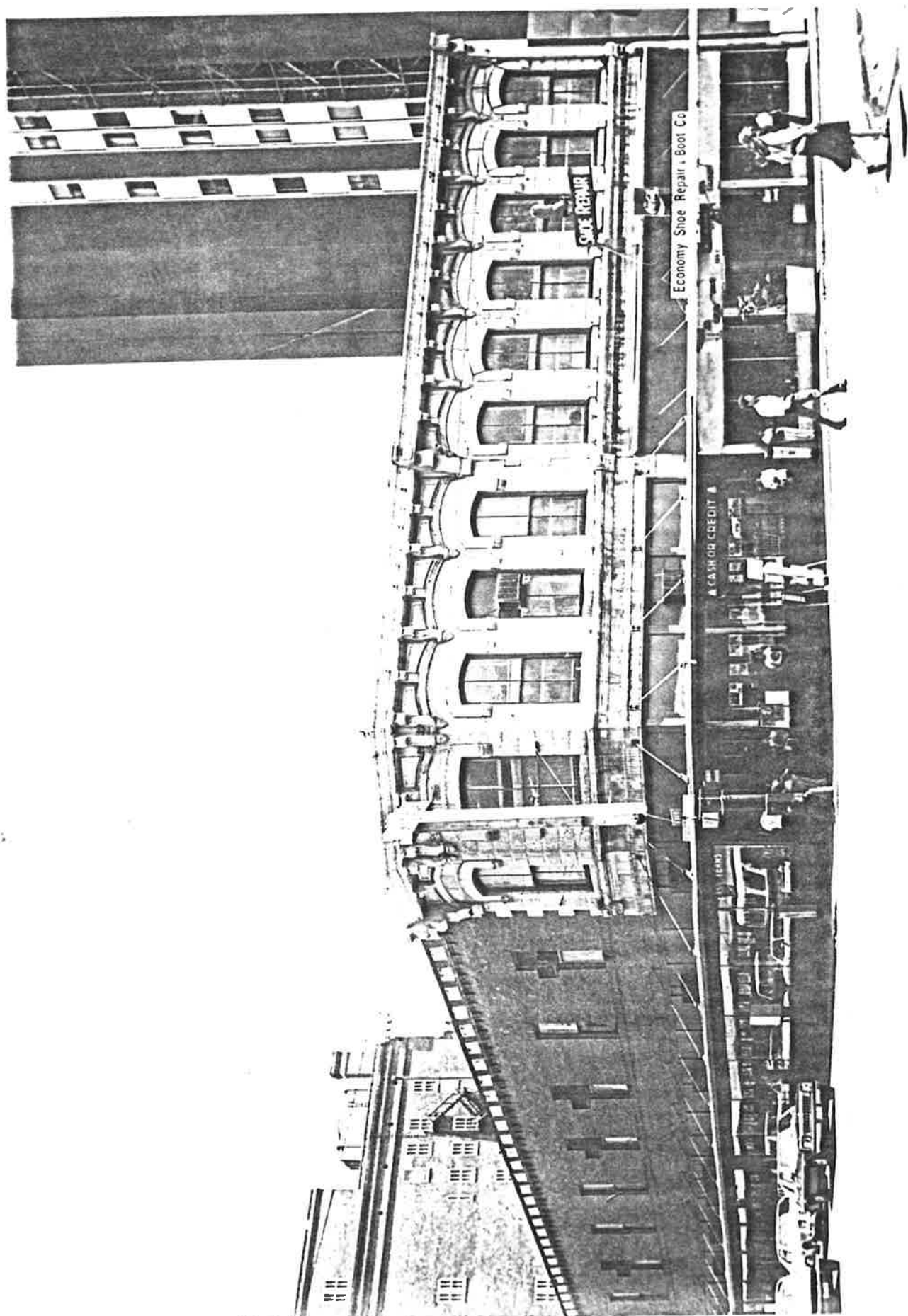


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

COMMERCIAL ROW
100-180 Soledad
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
Photo # 16
Southwest oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978

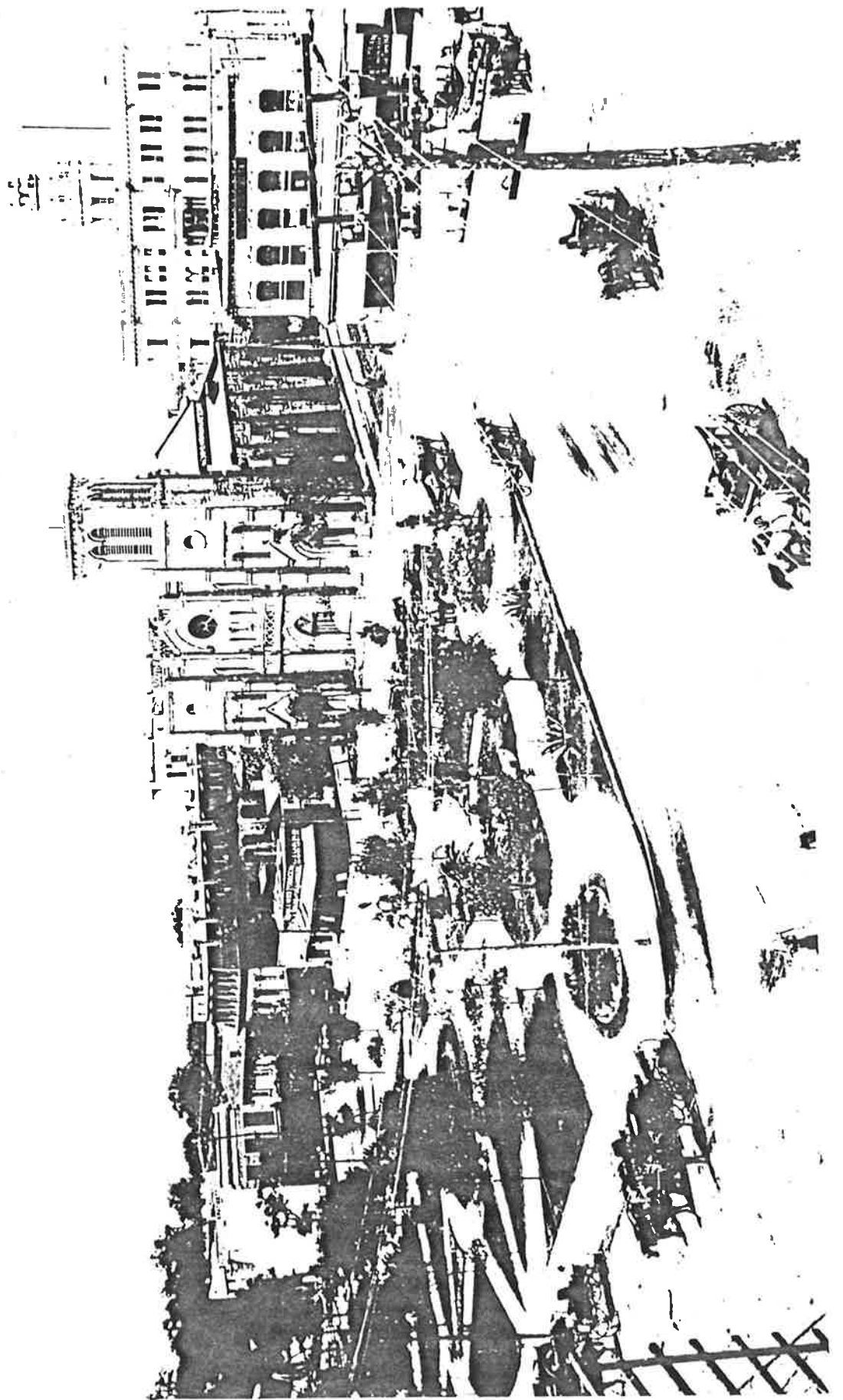


MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

WOLFSON BUILDING
103 W. Commerce
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 19
Photo # 17
Southwest Oblique

Danny Hardy, THC
May 12, 1978



MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS
HISTORIC DISTRICT

MAIN PLAZA
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Map Ref. # 32
Photo # 18
View across Plaza toward the Southwest

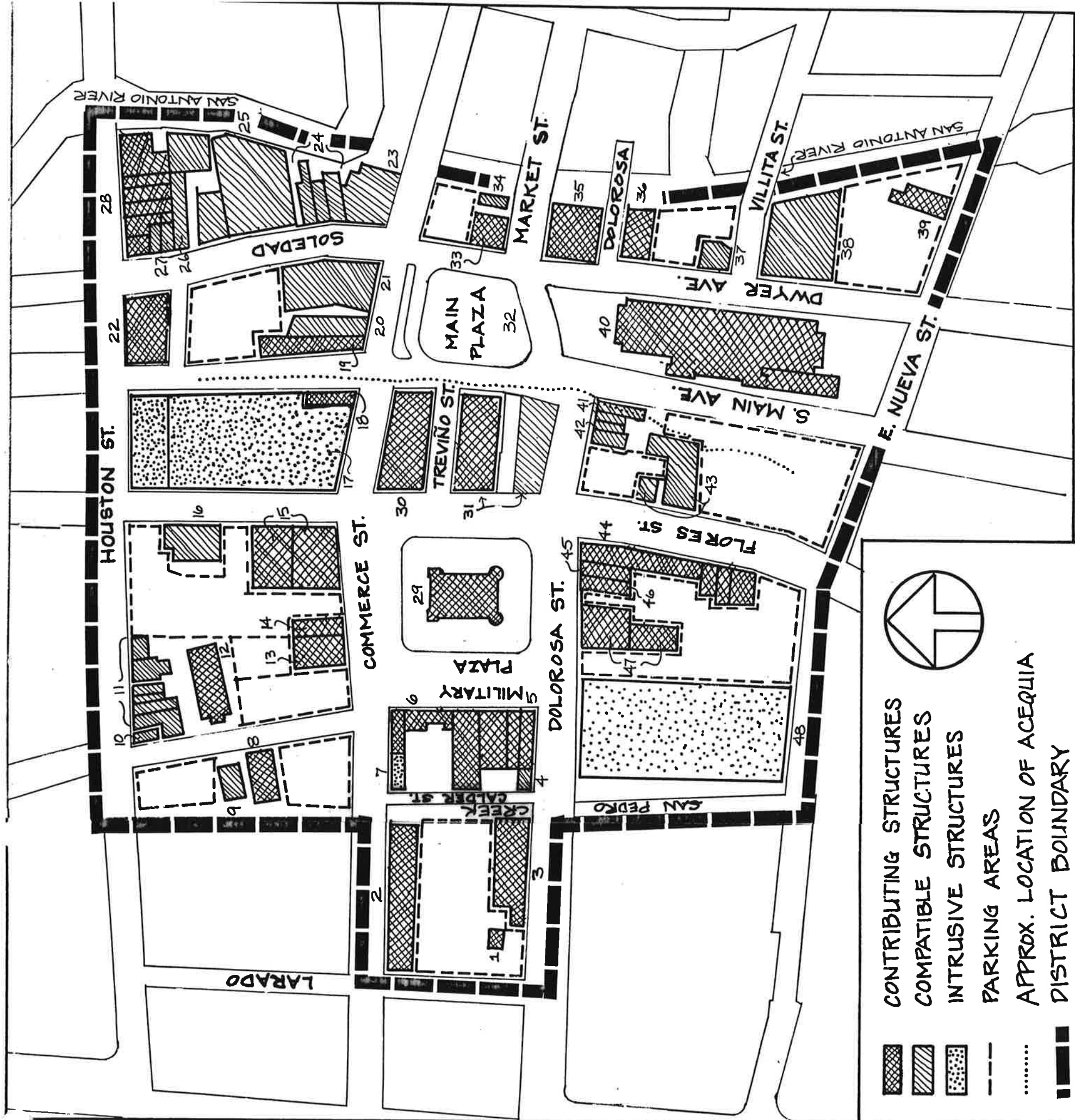
DAUGHTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS LIBRARY,
Grandjean Collection #110
1890









62421 NE
 (SAN ANTONIO WEST)

**MAIN AND MILITARY PLAZAS HISTORIC DISTRICT
 SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS**

- U.T.M. REFERENCES:
- A 14/548~~520~~/3254940
 - B 14/549030/3255280
 - C 14/549600/3254940
 - D 14/549450/3254490



-  CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES
-  COMPATIBLE STRUCTURES
-  INTRUSIVE STRUCTURES
-  PARKING AREAS
-  APPROX. LOCATION OF ACEQUIA
-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY

Main & Military Plazas Historic District San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase)
Other name/site number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by San Antonio River, and Nueva, Santa Rosa, and Houston Streets
City or town: San Antonio State: Texas County: Bexar
Not for publication: [] Vicinity: []

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[] national [] statewide [] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [] A [] B [] C [] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 8/19/19
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private; Public-local

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property

Properties in newly-added blocks only			Total in expanded boundary		
Contributing	Noncontributing		Contributing	Noncontributing	
9	3	buildings	60	16	buildings
0	0	sites	2	2	sites
0	0	structures	0	0	structures
0	0	objects	2	0	objects
9	3	total	64	18	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: **60** (reported from NPS database)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: (see continuation sheet 7)

Current Functions: (see continuation sheet 7)

7. Description

Architectural Classification: (see continuation sheet 7)

Principal Exterior Materials: (see continuation sheet 7)

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 8 through 43)

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: (Unchanged from original nomination): Commerce; Exploration/Settlement;
Politics/Government; Military; Religion; Architecture

Period of Significance: 1722-1973 (not specified in original nomination)

Significant Dates: 1722, 1731, 1749, 1949, 1965, 1973

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Giles, Alfred; Gordon, James Reily; Dielmann, Leo M. J.; Nayfach, N. Straus; Ayres, Atlee B.; Ayres, Robert M.

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 44 through 58)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 59)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: Boundary area increase for Area 1: about 3 acres
Boundary area increase for Area 2: about 1.5 acres
Revised district total area: approximately 46 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

Latitude: Longitude: (see continuation sheet 60)

Verbal Boundary Description: (see continuation sheet 60)

Boundary Justification: (see continuation sheet 60)

11. Form Prepared By

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Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 61-66)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 67-76)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 77-94)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC

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Photograph Log

Main and Military Plaza
San Antonio, Bexar, Texas

Photographed by Ann McGlone and Genie Cooper
May- July 2018

Main Plaza
100 Main Plaza
Camera facing south
Photo 1

Vogel Belt / Plaza de Armas
111, 115, 117 Military Plaza
East oblique
Camera facing west
Photo 8

San Fernando Cathedral (front)
115 Main Plaza
East façade
Camera facing west
Photo 2

Commercial Buildings on Dolorosa Street
406, 408, 414-418 Dolorosa Street
Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 9

Bexar County Courthouse
100 Main Plaza
North façade
Camera facing south
Photo 3

San Fernando Cathedral (back)
115 Main Plaza
West façade
Camera facing east
Photo 10

Municipal Building
103 or 114 S. Main
Northeast oblique
Camera facing southwest
Photo 4

Continental Hotel
332 W. Commerce Street
Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 11

City Hall
100 Military Plaza
East façade
Camera facing southeast
Photo 5

Melchoir de la Garza House
100 S. Laredo Street
West facade
Camera facing east
Photo 12

Military Plaza
100 Military Plaza
North façade
Camera facing south
Photo 6

Central Candy Co. / Artes Graficas
113-119 Cameron Street
East façade
Camera facing west
Photo 13

Spanish Governors Palace
105 Military Plaza
East façade
Camera facing west
Photo 7

Old Bexar County Jail
120 Cameron Street
West façade
Camera facing east
Photo 14

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South Flores Facades
211 W. Commerce Street, 111 & 113 N. Flores Street
Northeast oblique
Camera facing southwest
Photo 15

Frost Tower
100 Houston Street
North façade
Camera facing southeast
Photo 16

Frost Bank Parking Garage
109 N. Main, 117 W. Commerce Street
West façade
Camera facing east
Photo 17

Rand Building
110 E. Houston Street
Northeast oblique
Camera facing southwest
Photo 18

Savoy Hotel
122 W. Houston Street
North facade
Camera facing south
Photo 19

Book Building & University Block
140, 122 W. Houston Street
Northeast oblique
Camera facing southwest
Photo 20

Soledad Block
102-118 Soledad Street
Southwest oblique
Camera facing northeast
Photo 21

Alameda Theater
303-314 W. Houston Street
Northeast oblique
Camera facing southwest
Photo 22

Alameda Theater
303-314 W. Houston Street
Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 23

Alameda Theater Block
327-345 Commerce
Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 24

La Feria Block
400, 418 W. Commerce Street
Northeast façade
Camera facing southwest
Photo 25

La Feria Block
703 Dolorosa
Southeast façade
Camera facing northwest
Photo 26

La Feria Block
400-418 W. Commerce
Northwest oblique
Camera facing southeast
Photo 27

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Section 6

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, financial institution, specialty store, restaurant, warehouse
GOVERNMENT: city hall, correctional facility, government office, courthouse, public works
RELIGION: religious facility
RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater
DEFENSE: military facility
LANDSCAPE: plaza
DOMESTIC

Current Functions

DOMESTIC/hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE: business, financial institution, specialty store, restaurant
GOVERNMENT/ city hall, county courthouse, government office
RELIGION/ religious facility, church-related residence
RECREATION AND CULTURE/ museum
LANDSCAPE/ plazas
VACANT/NOT IN USE; WORK IN PROGRESS

Section 7

Architectural Classification

COLONIAL: Spanish Colonial
LATE VICTORIAN: Richardsonian Romanesque
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL: Spanish Colonial Revival; Gothic Revival
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Chicago Style; Commercial Style; Skyscraper
MODERN MOVEMENT: Corporate Modernism
NO STYLE
MIXED

Principal Exterior Materials: Stone, Brick, Concrete, Stucco, Glass, Terra Cotta, Cast Stone

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Goals of this Nomination Amendment

The purpose of this amendment to the Main and Military Plazas Historic District nomination (1979) is to extend the period of significance to 1973, reevaluate all properties within the original district boundaries, and increase the boundary area of the district with Areas 1, and 2. The original nomination did not have a specified period of significance, as the form at the time only provided spaces to indicate full centuries. The period of significance has been interpreted as beginning in 1722 (establishment of Military Plaza) and ending in 1929 (the 50-year point at the time of listing). In extending the period of significance to 1973, this amendment will address the story of the plazas beyond 1929 to include the Great Depression era, and the postwar period through the early 1970s, when interest in preserving the plazas and the district as whole increased in the face of demolition through “urban renewal” programs. Notable buildings from the extended period include the Frost Bank Tower (1973), with its accompanying “motor bank” and garage (1965), and the magnificent Alameda Theater (1949) and its accompanying four-story office complex, the Casa de Mexico International Building. Despite the architectural importance of the Alameda Theater Complex, the theater block was most likely excluded because of the narrow focus of the original nomination’s boundary justification: that of nominating the core blocks immediately surrounding the two historic plazas.

The original boundary delineated the core area of the two plazas by enclosing them with the blocks immediately surrounding the plazas. Its only extension was across San Pedro Creek to include a block containing the Melchoir de la Garza house, an early and only-remaining resource exemplifying Spanish Colonial house-type once prevalent in the district.¹ In reevaluating of district properties, several buildings are recommended as contributing and in some cases meriting individual listing, specifically the Frost complex, consisting of a bank tower and parking garage (in the original district), and the Alameda Theater and Casa de Mexico International Building (Area 1). Buildings in Area 2 also contribute because they provide depth to the story of the slightly expanded district.

In 2018, the National Park Service approved the San Antonio Downtown and River Walk Historic District, which connects three previously-listed districts (Alamo Plaza, La Villita, and Main and Military Plazas; see map on page xx). The strategy in doing so was to list new areas of downtown, then follow up with revisions and boundary increases (as applicable) of the original districts. While the Main and Military Plazas Historic District was originally conceived of as a distinct subset of downtown San Antonio, today it is part of an expansive historic area that includes four contiguous districts without clear delineations as one moves across boundary lines at street level. If nominated today, the four districts could constitute a single large district.

The Main and Military Plazas Historic District nomination process began in 1977 with the historic survey. The survey photos are dated 1978 and the nomination was submitted to the National Park Service in April of 1979. The specific criteria are not identified in the original nomination, but the areas of significance cited typically correlate to Criteria A, C, and D: Archeology-Historic; Architecture; Commerce; Exploration/Settlement; Military; Politics Government; and Religion. Significance in the area of Archeology is not supported in the original nomination, and this amendment will not address archeology. Of the areas of significance listed in the NRHP bulletin “How to Complete the National Register Registration Form,” the most applicable are: Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Architecture. The level of significance was not specified in the original nomination, the district is significant at the state level.

Description

The revised Main and Military Plazas Historic District contains buildings dating from the Spanish Colonial period through the mid-20th century. The district represents the continuum of development and prominence of San Antonio

¹ Main and Military Plaza National Register Historic District Nomination, 1979, Section 9-3.

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government and banking industries, as well as the proliferation of related businesses. The earliest buildings are load bearing masonry, primarily rough-cut limestone, typically one to two-stories in height. With the arrival of the railroad in 1877 brick became more prevalent. As San Antonio prospered it was common to have stone on the sides and rear of buildings with brick on the front facades. In the late 19th Century, older government and banking buildings were replaced with Victorian buildings in the Renaissance Revival and Richardsonian styles constructed with finished stone. During the late 19th and early 20th century, many single-story Spanish Colonial buildings were replaced or remodeled with two or three-story buildings in the Italianate or Commercial style. Multi-story buildings begin to appear after the turn of the century, often in the Classic Revival style. The Alameda Theater designed in the Streamlined Moderne style with exuberant Art Deco detailing was constructed from 1946-1949. During the mid-20th century Frost Bank built two significant buildings, the parking garage and motor bank in 1965 and the Frost Bank Tower in 1973, the garage in the International style and the Frost Bank Tower in the Brutalist style.

Two distinct blocks are being added to the district (one to the north, and one to the west). An inventory of the two blocks is included in the attached district survey.

2018 Resurvey of the District

In 2018, Historic Preservation Architect Ann McGlone and Historic Preservation Consultant Genie Cooper conducted a walking survey of the Main and Military Plaza Historic District in order to revise and update the National Register nomination and to determine any status change from “contributing” or “compatible” to “non-contributing” status, “compatible” or “intrusive” to “contributing” status. The original National Register nomination lacked a complete inventory, identifying only those properties considered to be contributing resources. The district map indicated contributing, compatible, and intrusive buildings, and was used to supplement information not included in the text of the nomination.

All properties in the district were reexamined to determine if any previously contributing buildings have undergone changes that adversely affect their contributing status. In addition, some of the buildings noted as compatible in the original nomination were not originally considered to be contributing only because they not 50 years old. Such buildings that fall within the revised period of significance and originally found to be intrusive are now noted as contributing. The existing numbering system from the 1979 National Register nomination was reused. This system follows a circular motion around each block in a counter-clockwise direction. Where multiple buildings exist under one number we have subdivided then with a letter suffix. For example, the Vogel Belt Complex was originally listed as “4,” but now because it actually consists of five separate buildings we have identified them as “4a, 4b, etc.” All new entries from the 2018 survey continue from the original numbering system. The 1978 survey ended with 48, so the 2018 survey of new areas begins with 49.

The architectural survey was conducted May-July 2018. The same numbering system as the 1979 nomination was maintained. In the original nomination groups of buildings were often given one number. In 2018 each building was given the original number and individual differentiated by the addition of a letter. For example, “buildings 11” became building 11, 11a, 11b, etc. Each building within the NR boundary and expanded boundary was photographed individually. If a building had been demolished, the site or new construction retained the same number in order to provide a continuum of the history of the district. The survey documents the date of demolition and the date of the new construction. The survey also documents the current use of a demolished building. The survey documents the map ID, the address, the common name, description and comments, the 1979 status (intrusive, compatible, contributing)², and 2018 status (non-contributing, contributing).³

² First number is from 1979 NP map; second number is from 2018 map.

³ First date listed reflects date given in original NR documentation.

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Table 1 – Properties added to the district in the 2018 the boundary increase

ID #	Address	Date	Status	Area
49	303-314 W. Houston Street	1949	C	1
50	318 W. Houston Street	1949	C	1
51	324-328 W. Houston Street	1949	C	1
52	332-342 W. Houston Street	1940s	C	1
53	327-331 W. Commerce	c. 1900-1920	C	1
54	337-343 W. Commerce	c. 1896	C	1
55	345 W. Commerce	c. 1890	C	1
56	124 N. Laredo	c. 1960s	NC	1
57	400 W. Commerce Street	c. 1912	C	2
58	418 W. Commerce Street	2000	NC	2
59	717 Dolorosa Street	1987	NC	2
60	703 Dolorosa Street	c. 1920	C	2

Table 2 – Contributing Buildings Demolished since 1979

ID#	Address	Demolition Date	Building Name
6a	105 Main Plaza	1973*	Building (old)/Garden by Governor’s Palace (new)
13	231 Commerce St	c. 1994	Moke Building (old) /Presidio Plaza Bldg. (new)
14	231 Commerce St	c. 1994	Elmendorf Building
19	103-109 E Commerce St	c. 2011	Bell Furniture / Wolfson Building
39	117 West Nueva	1980s	Chee Kung Tong Free Masons Building
40	100 Main Plaza	2014	Bexar County Courthouse – Gondeck Addition

* Original 1979 survey mistakenly shows garden courtyard, built as an urban renewal project in 1973, as contributing.

Original District: Change in status from “Intrusive” to “Contributing”

The Frost Bank Parking Garage and the Frost Bank Tower are exceptionally significant, merit individual listing, and are the primary reason why a second period of significance is being added to the nomination.



ID# 17
Frost Bank Parking Garage
108 N. Main and 117 W. Commerce Street
1965
Contributing
Architect: Ayres and Ayres

The Frost Bank Garage fronts Flores Street on the west, Commerce Street on the south and Main Street on the east. It occupies the entire portion of the block except for the southeast corner where an early 20th century building remains. This garage is composed of a first floor of windowless offices with four levels of covered parking plus one additional floor of uncovered parking on the roof. The ground floor is solid black granite panels except for the entrance and exit ramps to the garage, a loading dock on the west and an aluminum retail entrance on the south. There are two deeply recessed pedestrian entrances adjacent to the exit ramps on both the east and the west. The upper garage floors are clad in white concrete panels stacked vertically with open vertical spaces between the panels, slightly smaller in width than the concrete panels. This gives the upper floors a vertically striped appearance. On the west elevation, the central section is solid concrete panels to hide the up and down vehicular access ramps. This solid piece rises above the adjacent roofline and is topped by a cantilevered curved canopy that extends approximately fifteen feet to the north over the entrance to the ramp.



ID# 17a
Frost Bank Tower 100 Houston Street
1973
Contributing
Architect: Charles Luckman and Associates with Bartlett Cocke

The Frost Bank Tower is a 22-story skyscraper in the brutalist style. The structure is defined by parallel exposed aggregate concrete frames that extend up the corners of the buildings and across the top, on the north and south facades forming two inverted “U” shapes. An exposed steel structure at the floor lines and column grid links the frames on the east and west, and spans between the frames on the north and south. At each floor line the steel frame is cantilevered outward beyond the column grid. Recessed between the column grid is a plate glass wall. Hanging off each cantilevered floor beam is an open steel grid of three louvers that serve as a sun awning to the glass facade behind. The ground floor height is approximately twice that of the upper floors. The ground floor on the north face is recessed between the flanking concrete frames. The column grid from above extends downward to become free standing columns at the front of the entrance. The bronze aluminum and glass storefront extends the length of the front façade. A pair of revolving doors is centered on this façade.

Original District: Change in status from “Compatible” to “Contributing”



ID# 4
Vogel Belt Annex
121 Military Plaza Contributing

This two-part commercial stucco building was added on to the rear an earlier brick structure facing Military Plaza. As early as 1888 the Sanborn map shows a wooden addition with the same footprint. The stucco façade, and red barrel tile on the top of the parapet, suggest a ca. 1920’s remodel. The scale and detailing of the addition contribute to the character of the block.



ID# 10
El Tanampa Bar
244 W. Houston Street 1870
Contributing

This one-story painted brick building is located at the corner of West Houston and Cameron Street. There is an angled corner entrance with a raised pediment parapet above. A cornice continues across the top of both street facades. The cornice is made of heavy wood pieces along the top, then a gap and another wood piece approximately two feet below. Between the top and bottom pieces of the cornice the brick is laid with soldier bricks staggered in an in-and-out checkerboard pattern. Star tie-rods can be seen below the cornice on the west. There is a recessed entrance on Houston Street that features a pair of single light doors. Above these doors and the corner door are transom windows. There is another pair of doors facing Cameron towards the rear. Located above the transom windows are non-historic metal canopies fronting on Houston Street, at the corner entrance, and above the Cameron Street doors. The building is one of two left on this block of Houston Street and reflects a time when Houston was an important retail center.



ID# 11
Domino’s Pizza
250 W. Houston Street 1920
Contributing

This one-story, one-part commercial building has been modified and remodeled over the years. The basic structure including the columns, façade heights, window openings and entrances of the building remain. Although not original

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the storefront windows and doors existed during a 1997 remodel that added a new canopy. The building is one of two left on this block of Houston Street and reflects a time when Houston was an important retail center.



ID# 23, 23a, 24a, 24b, 24c
Brenner, Karam, Kampmann Bank, Berns and Kampmann Buildings
112, 108-110, 102 Soledad Street, 100-119, 123 E. Commerce Street,
Contributing

These five buildings, that occupy the southern end of the commercial block bounded by Soledad on the west, Commerce Street on the south and the San Antonio Riverwalk Bypass on the east. These buildings are older than their front facades suggest, as the rear and sides of these buildings are rough-cut limestone. They are a contiguous row of 2 story buildings adjacent to the northeast corner of Main Plaza. With the widening of Soledad Street in 1914, new facades were put on most of the buildings. Some buildings on Soledad Street removed the original façade and re-assembled them on the new property line. Kampmann Bank at 102 Soledad was one of these buildings. The Karam Building (108-110) and the Brenner Building (112) facades reflect the architecture of the early 20th century, rather than the original construction date. A 1956 photo of the Berns Building (100 E. Commerce) shows the original 1893-ornamented classical façade still in place. The historic façade still exists behind the false front. Adjacent to the Berns buildings on Commerce is a small one-story, one-part structure with a non-historic storefront. This building dates from the Spanish Colonial period and is constructed of adobe. All five of these buildings are some of the earliest constructed in San Antonio. They reflect the ever-evolving retail development of Main Plaza.



ID# 25b, 26, 26a, 27a, 27b
Veramendi, Clegg, Kennedy, Little Savoy Buildings
118, 130, 134, 138 Soledad
Contributing

These five buildings were delineated on the original National Register application map as compatible structures because they were of the correct scale for the district: “Individual 19th and early 20th-century structures with removable facade additions are listed as compatible to the district, in that they are in scale with the contributing structures and could feasibly be restored.” Since then the “slip-covers” have been removed and the historic facades exposed. The Little Savoy (138 Soledad was approved as contributing to the district by NPS Technical Services in 2018). They are all undergoing renovation at this writing. They are located between Soledad Street on the west and the San Antonio River Walk on the east. With the widening of Soledad Street in 1914, new facades were put on most of the buildings. The Little Savoy could be the Asa Mitchell building from 1857; physical evidence in the building supports this claim. The Kennedy dates from 1880 and Veramendi-Clegg from 1910. The original Solo Serve building was built in 1918; the existing façade was modified in 1925 when the store was expanded. These buildings are within the period of significance, their facades are being restored to the periods of significance, and they are an excellent example of a specific period of development in the district.

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Original District: Change in status from “Compatible” to “Noncontributing”

These buildings have been severely altered since 1979. Their historic facades have been removed. They have been added on to and re-clad to be unrecognizable.



ID# 21
River View Tower
111/ 115 Commerce Street/ Soledad Street
Non-Contributing



ID# 38
Riverwalk Plaza Hotel
Main Plaza/ 100 Villita Street 1926/ ca. 1968
Non-Contributing



ID# 37
Other Legal/ Prof. Building
222 Main Plaza
Non-Contributing

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Noteworthy Properties to Be Added Through Boundary Increase

Area 1

Area 1 is bounded by San Pedro Creek on the east, Houston Street on the north, Laredo Street on the west and Commerce Street on the south. It is adjacent to the current district boundaries on the west and north. On the north side of the block is the Alameda Theater, Casa De Mexico International Office Building and Retail Center. On the south side of the block are a series of early 20th century retail buildings.



ID # 49-52
303-314, 318, 324-328, 332-342, W. Houston Street
1949
Contributing
Photo ID: #22

The Alameda Complex is composed of the Alameda Theater, the Casa de Mexico International Building and a one-story retail building. Designed in 1945 in the Streamline Moderne style with influences from the post-Mexican Revolutionary period (1910-1928) and Southwestern United States. The ground floor complex is dominated by colorful Mexican tiles in a zigzag pattern on the knee walls and columns. Large plate glass aluminum windows are at the retail spaces, and a series of aluminum glass doors mark the recessed theater entrance as well as the entrance to the Casa De Mexico building. A ticket booth is located to the right of the theater entrance. Aligned with the façade, it curves inward toward the recessed doors. It has the same Mexican tile up to counter height, topped by an aluminum ticket window that is surrounded by glass block. Above the ground floor is a continuous aluminum faced canopy. Generally, the upper three floors have ribbon windows with a terra-cotta ornamental surround, and flat stucco walls in the International style. These are interrupted by large vertical elements that identify the entrance to the theater and to the office building. Above the canopy and centered on the theater entrance are two wide pilasters that continue to the top of the fourth floor. The pilasters each have a central, slightly recessed, terra-cotta center ornamented with a flat aluminum screen element consisting of large “X” and shield motifs. They are topped with an elaborate blue and gold terra-cotta design. Between the pilasters above the fourth floor is a raised, fluted and curved terra cotta “cupola.” The most distinctive feature of the façade is an 86-foot-tall multi-colored cathode-tube blade sign centered between the pilasters and supported by the cupola. A two-part theater marquee is at the base of the blade sign, resting on the canopy. The vertical element over the entrance to the Casa de Mexico portion of the complex, features a central, vertical window strip rising to the top of the fourth floor and topped by a large observation window rising above the roof. Again, the windows have a terra-cotta surround. Attached to the west of the Casa De Mexico building is a one-story three bay retail space that continues the same design as the rest of the ground floor. Here the doors are slightly recessed, and the display windows are angled back towards the doors.

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ID #53-55
327-331, 337-343, 345, W. Commerce
c. 1890, c. 1896, c.1900-1920
Contributing
Photo ID: #24

On the north side of Commerce Street are three brick buildings that retain much of their original integrity. They form a cohesive block of one and two-story retail buildings. The massing of the three create an interesting pattern along the street front as the two end buildings are two-story, while the center building is two-story flanked by one-story portions. This forms an A-B-A-B-A pattern. All the buildings are brick. The west and east buildings are red brick and the center building is painted. The ground floors have brick columns and large plate glass windows. Door placement varies. All the buildings have non-historic, standing metal-sloped canopies above the first floor. On the western two buildings, a corbelled brick cap tops the one-story buildings, and continues at the same level across the face of the two-story buildings. On the second floor the windows are paired. The eastern-most building has three bays divided by two story pilasters topped with a terra-cotta ornament. Between these ornaments is a corbelled brick cornice with exaggerated brick dentils.

Area 2

Area 2 is bounded on the east by Laredo Street, the north by Commerce Street, the west by Santa Rosa Street and the south by Dolorosa Street. It is adjacent to the original historic district on the west and is south of Area 1. The La Feria Building on the northeast corner of the block and the building on the southeast corner are the two buildings that remained after widespread demolition during urban renewal.



ID# 57
La Feria Building 400 Commerce Street
Late 19th century
Contributing
Photo ID: #25

The La Feria building is a two-story yellow brick corner structure, with an angled corner entrance. The longer north façade features a bay on either end denoted by two pilasters flanking a curved top section at the parapet, double console brackets at the cornice, and flat lintels on the second story windows. Between the two end bays, the parapet is flat, there are no console brackets at the cornice, and there are five pairs of arched windows. The east façade has the same design, but the central portion is much shorter with only a single pair of arched windows. There is a continuous brick band at the windowsills supported by corbelled brick dentils. The ground floor has a restored wood façade with large retail windows and wooden articulated knee walls. Continuous transom windows exist above canopy that is attached to the building with tie-rods located between the first and second floors.

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ID# 60
703 Dolorosa Street
Contributing
Photo ID: #26




703 Dolorosa is a one-story building with an angled corner. The south façade is the longest façade with eight bays. The east façade has three bays. The façade is flat with no articulation; there is no cornice or other ornamentation. Columns between the storefronts define the bays. The storefronts are painted wood with two large plate glass windows with a central pair of single lite wood doors. A brick knee wall below the windows is slightly recessed from the face of the columns and features a projecting brick sill that aligns with the columns. There are transom windows above the projecting canopy that align with the windows below. There is a storefront in every bay except one on the south façade, and doors at every storefront except for the bays flanking the corner entry.

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Complete Inventory – Original and Expanded District (Includes all buildings previously listed, even if no longer extant).

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
1	100 S. Laredo St.	Melchoir de la Garza House	Property Type: Building Date: 1800 Style: Spanish Colonial Historic Information: Domestic, Single-dwelling	C	C	
1a	101 S. Laredo St.	O'Henry House	Property Type: Building Style: Spanish Colonial Historic Information: Domestic, Single-dwelling, moved to site in 1990s	Not in HD	NC	
2	332 W. Commerce St.	Continental Hotel / La Clede Hotel	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1896 Style: Italianate w/ Queen Anne Overtones Historic Information: Commerce / Trade Architect: Attributed to Alfred Giles	C	C	
3	601 Dolorosa St.	Arana Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1926 Style: Early 20th century commercial with Mission Revival influences Historic Information: Commerce/ Trade Architect: Leo M. J. Dielmann	C	C	





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Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
4	121 Military Plaza (Fronts on Dolorosa St.)	Vogel Belt Complex Annex	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1920 Style: Mission Revival, Two-part commercial Historic Information: Government, this was an addition to 121 Military Plaza.	Compatible	C	
5	111 Military Plaza	Vogel Belt Complex- Steves Building	Property Type: Building Date: c.1881-1888 Style: 19th century commercial, Italianate Historic Information: Government, NR, two-part commercial block. Constructed by Edwards Steves Architect: Renovation in 1978 by Lance, Larcade & Bechtol, Renovated in 2016 by Ford, Powell & Carson	C	C	
5a	115 Military Plaza	Vogel Belt Complex - Fest Building/ Fashion Theater	Property Type: Building Date: 1884 Style: 19th century commercial, Italianate Historic Information: NR, Renovation in 1978 by Lance, Larcade & Bechtol, renovated in 2016 by Ford, Powell & Carson.	C	C	





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Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
5b	117 Military Plaza	Vogel Belt Complex - Fest Block	Property Type: Building Date: Pre-1885 Style: 19th century commercial, Italianate Historic Information: NR, Renovation in 1978 by Lance, Larcade & Bechtol, renovated in 2016 by Ford, Powell & Carson.	C	C	
5c	121 Military Plaza	Vogel Belt Complex - Fest Block/ Basse Building	Property Type: Building Date: Pre-1885 Style: 19th century commercial, Italianate Historic Information: NR, Renovation in 1978 by Lance, Larcade & Bechtol, renovated in 2016 by Ford, Powell & Carson.	C	C	
6	105 Military Plaza	Spanish Governor's Palace	Property Type: Building Date: 1749, Restored 1930 Style: Spanish Colonial Historic Information: REC & CULTURE - Museum, NR, NHL, 1971 Architect: Restored, Harvey P. Smith	C	C	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
6a	105 Main Plaza	Courtyard by Spanish Governor's Palace	Property Type: Site Date: 1973 Style: Late 20th century landscape Historic Information: Contributing building demolished, courtyard created in 1973.	C	NC site	
7	310 W. Commerce St.	Aztec Bar	Property Type: Building Date: 2005 Style: No Style (N/A) Historic Information: Commerce/ Trade. The Aztec Bar was demolished except for two historic limestone walls on the South and East.	Intrusive	NC	
8	113-119 Cameron St.	Central Candy Co./ Artes Graficas	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1878/ c/ 1888 Style: Late 19th-century, Italianate influence Historic Information: Commerce Architect: First Floor Built before 1878 by congregation of St. Phillips AME, 2nd floor added c.1883 as ice house for brewery to northern livery stable	C	C	
8a	311 W. Commerce St.	Penner's Store	Property Type: Building Date: 1980 Style: Modified Brutalist Historic Information: Commerce/ Trade	Parking Lot	NC	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
9	Cameron St. (Demo'd)	N/A	Property Type: Parking Lot Style: N/A Historic Information: Landscape - Parking Lot, compatible building demolished. Current use - landscaped parking lot.	Compatible	Parking lot	
10	244 W. Houston St.	El Tanampa Bar	Property Type: Building Date: 1870 Style: Italianate Historic Information: Commerce/ Restaurant, Ice House for Brewery across Cameron	Compatible	C	
10a	250 W. Houston St.	Domino's Pizza	Property Type: Building Date: 1920 Style: Early 20th century commercial	Compatible	C	
10b	Cameron St.	N/A	Property Type: Site Date: 1920 Style: N/A Historic Information: This is a building ruin.	Compatible	NC site	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
11	W. Houston St. (Demo'd)	N/A	Property Type: Site Building Style: N/A Historic Information: Commerce/ Restaurant, Demolished	Compatible	Vacant lot	
12	120 Cameron St.	Old Bexar County Jail/ Hotel	Property Type: Building Date: 1878 Style: Romanesque Revival Historic Information: Domestic/ Hotel Architect: Alfred Giles	C	C	
13	W. 231 Commerce St.	Moke Building (old) Presidio Plaza (new)	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1880 Style: N/A Historic Information: Moke Building demolished in 1996, new building (Presidio Plaza) was built in 1997.	C	Current Building NC Same as #14	
14	W. 231 Commerce St.	Elmendorf Building Presidio Plaza (new)	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1910 Style: N/A Historic Information: Plaza Furniture/Elmendorf Building was demolished in 1996, new building constructed in 1997.	C	Current Building NC Same as #13	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
15	211 W. Commerce St.	Dalkowitz Bros./ S.H. Kress Co. Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1915 Style: Two-part commercial block, 20th-century commercial, Art-Deco style ground floor storefront Architect: Leo MJ Dielmann (facade)	C	C	
15a	113 N. Flores St.	Los Reyes Bar	Property Type: Building Date: late 19 th century/façade: early 20 th century Style: One-Part Victorian Commercial	C	C	
15b	111 N. Flores St.	Bee's & Sisys	Property Type: Building Style: Two-Part Victorian Commercial Historic	C	C	
16	111 N. Flores St.	House at rear of Los Reyes Bar	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1888 Style: Modified Spanish colonial	C	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
16a	111 N. Flores St.	House at rear of Los Reyes Bar	Property Type: building Date: ca. 1922 Style: Early 20th century utilitarian	C	C	
17	109 N. Main St. and 117 W. Commerce St.	Frost Bank Parking Garage	Property Type: Building Date: 1965 Style: International style Architect: Ayres & Ayres	Intrusive	C	
17a	100 W. Houston St.	Frost Bank Tower	Property Type: Building Date: 1973 Style: Brutalist style/ skyscraper Local Architect: Jones & Kell Design Architect: Charles Luckman	Intrusive	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
18	101 W. Commerce St.	Morris Adelman Building/ Bill Millers	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1910 Style: Early 20th century commercial	C	C	
19	103-109 E. Commerce St.	Bell Furniture/ Wolfson Building	Property Type: Vacant Lot Historic Information: Demolished after it burned in 2012 during renovation	C	Vacant lot	
20	W. Commerce St.	Wolfson Annex	Property Type: Vacant Lot Historic Information: Demolished after it burned in 2012 during renovation	Compatible	Vacant lot	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
21	111- 115 E. Commerce St./ Soledad St.	River View Tower	Property Type: Building Date: ca.1919 Style: Late 20th century sky scraper Historic Information: Former National Bank of Commerce building Re-Clad in 1975 by San Antonio Savings Association	Compatible	NC	
21a	131/ 121 Soledad St.	Rand Parking Garage	Property Type: Parking Lot Date: 1984 Style: Late 20th century commercial	Not Counted: Parking Lot	NC building	
22	110 E. Houston St.	Rand Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1914, Rehabilitated 1982 Style: Chicago style, Midwestern progressive composition and fenestration with New York French classical ornamentation Historic Information: NR Architect: Sanguinet & Staats	C	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
23	100/ 119 E. Commerce St.	Berns Building	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1893 Style: Was Renaissance revival Historic Information: False Facade added ca. 1960s/ 1980s updated Architect: Alfred Giles/ J.H. Kampmann	Compatible	C	
23a	123 E. Commerce St.	Adobe Commercial Building (Kampmann Building)	Property Type: Building Date: Prior to 1876 Style: Facade is 20th century commercial. Construction type: adobe and caliche stone.	Compatible	C	
24	102 Soledad St.	Kampmann Bank Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1857 Style: Mid-19th century commercial	Compatible	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
24a	108 / 110 Soledad St.	Karem Building/ Carson Building	Property Type: Building Style: Early 20th century commercial	Compatible	C	
24b	112 Soledad St.	L Brenner Building	Property Type: Building Date: Facade 1914 Style: Early 20th century commercial facade	Compatible	C	
25	N/A	Main Part Solo Serve	Property Type: Building Style: No Style Historic Information: Demolished in 2017, new construction begun in 2018	Compatible	NC new building	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
25a	118 Soledad St.	Little Solo Serve	Property Type: Building Date: 1918 Style: Art Deco Historic Information: Original building built in 1918. Connected to adjacent Solo Serve in 1925. Facade dates to 1925.	Compatible	C	
26	130 Soledad St.	Veramendi Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1910, 1926 Style: Early 20th century commercial Historic Information: Facade modified in 1914 with widening of Soledad Street. Store remodeled in 1925.	Compatible	C	
27	130 Soledad St.	Clegg Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1910, 1926 Style: Spanish revival Historic Information: Basement and 2 floors were built as the Veramendi Building. 3rd additional floors added in 1927. Porch added in 1951.	Compatible	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
27a	134 Soledad St.	Kennedy Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1880 Style: Early 20th century commercial Historic Information: Facade modified in 1914 with widening of Soledad Street.	Compatible	C	
27b	138 Soledad St.	Little Savoy	Property Type: Building Date: 1914 Style: Early 20th century commercial Historic Information: Facade modified in 1914 with widening of Soledad Street. It was built as an annex to the Savoy Hotel. This building might be the Asa Mitchell building, built in 1857.	Compatible	C	
28	140 W. Houston St.	Book Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1906 Style: Renaissance Revival Architect: Attributed to Dwight Book	C	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
28a	122 E. Houston St.	University Block/ Savoy Hotel	Property Type: Building Date: 1893 Style: Romanesque Revival Historic Information: The University Club was housed on the third floor. In 1912 it was connected to the Soledad block and became the Savoy Hotel. Architect: Alfred Giles	C	C	
28b	122 E. Houston St.	Soledad Block/ Savoy Hotel	Property Type: Building Date: 1883 Style: Italianate Historic Information: Facade modified in 1914 with the widening of Soledad Street. In 1912 it was connected to the University block and became the Savoy Hotel. Architect: Alfred Giles	C	C	
29	100 Military Plaza	Military Plaza	Property Type: Site Date: 1722 Style: No Style Historic Information: Plaza plan originally laid out as military parade ground for Spanish Colonial era presidio.	C	C site	
29a	100 Military Plaza	City Hall	Property Type: Building Date: 1888-91 Style: Second Empire/ Mediterranean Historic Information: NR Architect: Otto Kramer, St. Louis/ Chicago. 1927 renovation adding fourth floor: Adams & Adams	C	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
29b	100 Center of Military Plaza	Statue of Moses Austin	Property Type: Object Date: For Texas Centennial 1936; Dedicated 1939 Style: No Style Artist: Waldine Amanda Tauch, sculptor; Pompeo Coppini, assistant	No Status	C object	
30	103 S. Main St.	Old Frost National Bank/ Main Plaza Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1922 Renovations and Additions: 1922, 1983, 1993 Style: Renaissance revival Historic Information: The bank was converted to city council chambers in 1995. Architect: Sanguinet and Staats Renovation by Mike Beatty	C	C	
31	115 Main Plaza	San Fernando Cathedral	Property Type: Building Date: 1738-49 Renovations and additions: 1873, 1923, 1977, 2003 Style: Spanish Colonial/ Gothic Revival Historic Information: Architect: Addition by François Giraud 1873, Ford, Powell & Carson restoration in 1977	C	C	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
31a	115 Main Plaza	Rectory/ City Centre Building	Property Type: Building Date: 2003 Style: Contemporary Architect: Ford, Powell & Carson	Compatible	NC new building	
32	100 Main Plaza	Main Plaza	Property Type: Site Date: 1731-1738, 2001 Style: N/A Historic Information: Plaza plan originally laid out according to 1573 Law of the Indies as civilian plaza Architect: 2001 Renovation, Lake/Flato Landscape Architect: 2001 SWA Group	C	C site	
32a	100 Main Plaza	Stature/ Fountain of Justice	Property Type: Object Date: 1896 Style: Victorian Manufacture: J. L. Mott Company of New York Restored: 2003	C	C object	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
33	114 E. Main Plaza	Ramsey Building	Property Type: Building Date: Late 19th century Style: Victorian Historic Information: 1950's facade removed in 2018.	C	C	
33a	114 E. Main Plaza	Ford Building	Property Type: Building Date: Late 19th century Style: Early 20th century commercial Historic Information: Adjacent to the site of Casa Reales, some walls may still exist.	C	C	
34	114 E. Main Plaza	Behind Ramesey/ Ford	Property Type: Building Style: No Style Historic Information: Demolished	Compatible	Vacant lot	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
35	126 E. Main Plaza	Washer Building/ Morris Apts.	Property Type: Building Date: Late 19th century Style: Late 19th century commercial	C	C	
36	200 Main Plaza	Legal/ Prof. Building Old Police Headquarters	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1915 Style: Early 20th century commercial, with mission influences	C	C	
37	222 Main Plaza	Other Legal/ Prof. Building Old Police	Property Type: Building Style: Modified Spanish revival	Compatible	NC	
38	Main Plaza/ 100 Villita St.	Riverwalk Plaza Hotel	Property Type: Building Date: 1926/ c. 1968 Style: No Style Architect: Attributed to Atlee B. Ayres was once a garage for 1926 Plaza Hotel	Compatible	NC	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
39	117 W. Nueva St.	Chee Kung Tong Free Masons	Property Type: Building Date: 1920s Historic Information: Demolished	C	Vacant lot	
40	100 Main Plaza	Bexar County Courthouse	Property Type: Building Date: 1892-96 Renovations and Additions: 1914, 1926, 1970, 2002, 2017 Style: Romanesque revival Historic Information: NR Architect: Gordon & Laub	C	C	
40a	100 Main Plaza	1972 Gondeck Addition to Bexar County Courthouse	Property Type: Building Date: 1972 Style: Midcentury modern Historic Information: 1972 addition was demolished in 2013, 1926 facade was restored.	C	C	
41	300 Dolorosa St.	Commercial now Justice Center	Property Type: Building Style: N/A Historic Information: Demolished, new building constructed in 1990. Architect: Jones & Kell, Ford Powell and Carson, Saldana & Associates	Compatible	NC	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
42	300 Dolorosa St.	Commercial now Justice Center	Property Type: Building Style: N/A Historic Information: Demolished, new building constructed in 1990. Architect: Jones & Kell, Ford Powell and Carson, Saldana & Associates	Compatible	NC new building	
43	101 W. Nueva St.	Paul Elizondo Tower	Property Type: Building Style: N/A Historic Information: Demolished in 1990 and a new building was constructed in 2010. Architect: Munoz	Compatible	NC New building	
44	101-115 S. Flores St.	Kallison Block	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1920 Style: Early 20th century, mission influence	C	C	
44a	117 S. Flores St.	Chapa Building	Property Type: Building Style: Early 20th century commercial	C	C	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
44b	119 S. Flores St.	Shiner Building	Property Type: Building Style: Early 20th century commercial	C	C	
44c	123 S. Flores St.	Zipp Building	Property Type: Building Style: Early 20th century commercial	C	C	
45	406 Dolorosa St.	Kotula Building (Embassy Bar)	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1870 Style: Mid-19th century Historic Information: NR	C	C	





Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
46	408 Dolorosa St.	Heusinger Hardware Building	Property Type: Building Date: c. 1880 Style: Commercial, Vernacular Architect: New Facade: Leo M.J. Dielmann	C	C	
47	414 - 418 Dolorosa St.	Fawcett Furniture Building	Property Type: Building Date: c.1900 Style: Late 19th century commercial	C	C	
48	Dolorosa St.	Building Inspections/ Health Department	Property Type: Building Style: No Style Historic Information: Demolished	Intrusive	Vacant lot	
49	303 - 314 W. Houston St.	Alameda Theater	Property Type: Building Date: 1949 Style: Streamline Moderne Historic Information: It was purposely built for Spanish speaking cinema and live performances. Architect: N. Strauss Nayfach	Not Included in district	C	




Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
50	318 W. Houston St.	Case De Mexico International Building	Property Type: Building Date: 1949 Style: Streamline Moderne Historic Information: Office building served as headquarters for Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and as a consulate for several Latin American countries. Architect: N. Strauss Nayfach	Not Included in district	C	
51	324 - 328 W. Houston St.	Alameda Commercial Block	Property Type: Building Date: 1949 Style: Streamline Moderne Architect: N. Strauss Nayfach	Not Included in district	C	
52	332 - 342 W. Houston St.	Alameda Commercial Block	Property Type: Building Date: 1940's Style: Mid-20th century commercial	Not Included in district	C	
53	327 - 331 W. Commerce St.	Tuxedo/ Texas Optical Shop	Property Type: Date: c. 1900 - 1920 Style: Commercial style	Not Included in district	C	

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
54	337 - 343 W. Commerce St.	Kline's Men's Store	Property Type: Building Date: c.1896 Style: Late 19th century commercial	Not Included in district	C	
55	345 W. Commerce St.	Leed's Building	Property Type: Building Date: c.1890 Style: Early 20th century commercial Historic Information: In 1896 it was the site of the Washington Theater.	Not Included in district	C	
56	124 N. Laredo St.	Pharmacy Building	Property Type: Building Style: 1-Part commercial	Not Included in district	NC	
57	400 W. Commerce St.	La Feria Department Store/Goodwill	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1911-1912 Style: 19th century commercial, Italianate	Not Included in district	C	

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map ID	Address	Common Name	Description & Comments	1979 status	2018 status	PHOTO
58	418 W. Commerce St.	Goodwill	Property Type: Building Date: 2000 Style: Post modern Architect: Alamo Architects	Not Included in district	NC	
59	717 Dolorosa St.	N/A	Property Type: Building Date: 1987 Style: No style	Not Included in district	NC	
60	703 Dolorosa St.	N/A	Property Type: Building Date: ca. 1920 Style: Early 20 th century commercial	Not Included in district	C	

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Main and Military Plazas Historic District (1979) contains the early center of downtown San Antonio. It includes buildings and structures that date from the city's Spanish Colonial period through the twentieth century. The oldest buildings on the two plazas represent San Antonio's earliest governmental, military, commercial, financial and religious activities. The plazas were the sites of all the important public events such as fiestas, the announcing of great events elsewhere in the world, the tumults and aftermath of bloody conflicts such as the battle of Medina and the Woll Invasion. Except for the battle of the Alamo, it all happened these two plazas. However, after the Civil War, during expansion of the South Texas cattle industry in the boom times of the 1880s and 1890s, retail commercial activity shifted east, moving down Commerce Street, and towards Alamo Plaza. Commercial activity also shifted northward, during the early 20th century, toward Houston Street. Up to the Great Depression of the 1930s, San Antonio was the largest, fastest-growing, and most prosperous city in Texas.

After the Depression, commercial growth slowed around the plazas while government and religious activities accelerated. However, there were notable exceptions in this loss of commerce. The Frost banking family remained a strong presence on Main Plaza for the next one hundred and fifty years. Another bright presence was the development of the block adjacent to the district containing the Alameda Theater and Casa de Mexico International Building in the 1940s. Called amended Area 1, this Hispanic entertainment and business complex was so magnificent that it survived threats of demolition during the devastation of an urban renewal project of 1966, called the Rosa Verde Project. Because of its architectural merit and continuing symbolism in the Hispanic community, the block was retained in the face of nearby and persistent demolition activity. Adjacent to the historic district was an area called the Westside. It was once a nexus of Hispanic businesses until the 1970s. Another iconic survivor of the Rosa Verde Project is the former La Feria Department Store and its surrounding block in Area 2.

In the 1979 National Register nomination, the historic district was originally listed in the areas of: Commerce; Exploration/Settlement; Politics/Government; Military; Religion; and Architecture. In this amendment, the criteria remain identical, but the period of significance is extended to 1973, to recognize the activities of the Frost banking family and the significance of the Frost Motor Bank Building (1963-1965) as well as the Frost Bank Tower (1973). The period of significance for the district is extended to 1973 to incorporate the full extent of the post-World War II building boom and include key buildings that exemplify mid-century modern design embraced by city and business leaders in San Antonio. The period of significance represents a discrete period with the majority of the properties being more than fifty years of age. The district therefore does not have to meet Criteria Consideration G because the majority of properties in the district are over fifty years old, and the district exhibits a continuity of development and reflects the introduction and adoption of national architectural trends through the early 1970s.⁴ The level of significance was not specified in the original nomination, but the district is significant at the state level, as the historic core of one of Texas' oldest and influential cities, for the area's contributions to the commercial and civic life of the city, and as one of the state's most significant urban concentrations of high style buildings designed by prominent architects.

Spanish Colonial Period of the Plazas' Establishment

The Main and Military Plazas Historic District is located at the core of downtown San Antonio, on the west bank of the San Antonio River. The plazas were the very heart of is now recognized as the city's downtown. San Antonio was a tiny settlement founded south of Pedro Springs in 1718. In 2015, archaeological investigations conducted under the oversight of the San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation determined the probable site of the 1718 settlement to be northwest of the nominated district, near the location of the Columbus Park along the banks of the San Pedro Creek.⁵

⁴ National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 15: How To Apply the National Register Criteria For Evaluation*, 43.

⁵ *San Antonio Downtown & River Walk Historic District*, National Register Nomination (2017), 60.

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Military Plaza (*Plaza de Armas*), San Antonio's first dedicated public space, was established in 1722 as a parade ground for Spanish soldiers, when the Marques de Aguayo relocated the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar from south of San Pedro Springs to the current plaza. During that time, Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) was moved to its final location just east of the San Antonio River in 1721. The presidio was laid out in typical military grid pattern, a parade ground and surrounded by the presidio quarters for soldiers and their families.⁶ The Spanish Governor's Palace (a popular name by tradition – actually the residence for the presidio captain, the Comandancia) was built on the western edge of Military Plaza in 1749, using Spanish Colonial-style building traditions (NR, NHL, 1971). A small development emerged around it.

Main Plaza (*Plazas de las Islas*) was next established in 1731 as the civilian square located slightly east of Military Plaza, as per the Law of the Indies, the 1583 Spanish royal planning law for town planning. Main Plaza became the governmental and religious town center, as well as the public market.⁷ As per this decree, like all New World Spanish settlements, the central location was the church and required a rectangular plaza with corners at the cardinal points of the compass. In 1731, it was called Villa de San Fernando de Bexar, and was established by the fifty-six colonists from the Canary Islands, creating the first regularly organized civil government in Texas. From San Pedro Springs, the colonists expanded an *acequia* (irrigation ditch) that had been started by the military settlers to serve a large area of farmland between the river and San Pedro creek to the south. They laid out town lots and drew up plans for what became Main Plaza and the site of the San Fernando de Bexar Church.⁸ The oldest portion of the church, which would later become the San Fernando Cathedral (1874), was constructed on the western face of Main Plaza (between Main Plaza and Military Plaza) from 1731 through 1755. From 1868 through 1873, the new portion of San Fernando Cathedral was built to the east of the old church, in the Gothic Revival Style. Across the plaza from the church were other important properties. Fronting onto Main Plaza were the Royal House and three customs houses (*casas reales*), as well as the settlers' small *jacales*, *palisades*, or caliche block residences. Besides the Spanish Governor's house, the single, remaining example of this kind of house, is the Melchoir de la Garza House (c1800). The De la Garza House is located on the west side of San Pedro Creek and the district boundary was expanded one block west to include it. Over time, the Canary Islanders, whose arrival initially disrupted the existing presidio community, forged new economic and family bonds with the greater community.

The Plaza as the Public Squares in Early Texas History

Both seemingly peaceful plazas have been the site of varied pageantry and bloody events up to and past the United States Civil War. On Main Plaza, with all its dramatic history, there is little to see of that era except the Cathedral. Yet, here, the royal pavilion of Spain was set out for the annunciation of each new king of Spain, amidst celebratory fireworks and sung Te Deum's. Here, peace with the Comanche was celebrated in 1749. And here, in 1789, six Apache forced their way into the Royal Houses and tried to assassinate the governor of Texas because he had made peace with the hated Comanche. In these same offices, in 1820, Moses Austin sought permission to settle Anglo-American colonists in Texas. And in Main Plaza, in 1836, Davy Crockett stood and made a speech, asking to join "in our common cause." And in 1842, Texans fired from the roof of Samuel Maverick's house onto mercenaries and Mexican soldiers, marching into Main Plaza as part of Mexico's last foray into Texas, that of the Woll Invasion. And in this Plaza, in 1861, General D. E. Twiggs surrendered the United States troops in Texas to the Confederacy.⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *San Antonio: 300 Years of History*, Texas State Historical Association, (Austin: 2018), 3, www.tshaonline.org.

⁹ Charles Ramsdell, *San Antonio: A History and Pictorial Guide*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959) 103-105.

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Contradictorily, Military Plaza, as the Spanish garrison center and parade ground, was a somewhat less violent space, except as the site for executions, such as those that followed the disastrous battle of Medina (1813). With the advent of the Republic of Texas (1836), this place was cleared of corrals and military garrison structures in the 1840s. Commerce flourished, and Military Plaza became the city's open-air, municipal market space. It was the site of the first chili stands, famous for their beautiful, legendary, and virtuous, "Chili Queens," who served customers hot breakfast food at wooden picnic tables. Activity started at 3:30 A.M., when wagons converged, and everyone worked to set up the market. The chili stands were on the south side of the Plaza; on the east were the fresh vegetables; while eggs, poultry, and butter were sold on the northern edge of the plaza. On the west side were ranks of wagons, all bulging with hay, wool, or hides.¹⁰

In the buildings around Military Plaza, commercial activities flourished. On the north side of Main Plaza, the Kalteyer Drug Store (1857) opened to great success, and then was transformed into the Dalkowitz Dry Goods Store (1915) by local architect Leo M. J. Dielmann. By 1940, it was a Kress Store. On the south side of the Plaza, the Kotula Building (c.1870) was built; creating a row of similar buildings that included the Heusinger Hardware Store (c.1880) (modified by Leo Dielmann), and the Facett Building (1900). On the west side of the Plaza, from 1885 to 1890, the Fashion Theater flourished in what is now the Vogel Belt complex (NR, 1975). It seems the Fashion was quite fancy, as the 1888 Sanborn shows "wine rooms," although admission was only ten cents, with a "superb orchestra, complete change of program three times a week, and perfect order maintained at all times." Boys in knee pants were not admitted after the dancing started.¹¹

Reconstruction Period: Expansion of Commercial Activity Away from the Plazas

During the Reconstruction period following the Civil War, San Antonio became a center for cattle production and cattle drives to Midwestern markets. The resulting prosperity in nearby ranching communities caused significant changes in the city itself. As a result, Commerce Street was rapidly built up from houses into commercial ventures, with two and three-story hotels, shops, theaters, and bars jostling each other along the street as construction ran east and across the San Antonio River towards Alamo Plaza, which was becoming a new nexus for the city's commercial and entertainment activity. There, the Menger Hotel was built in 1859 on the site of the Menger Brewery and expanded once again in 1875. Meanwhile, a system of mule-drawn streetcars was established by the city, allowing residents to work and settle further from the plazas. Despite this, the 1870 city population was only about 12,000 people.

Houston Street Development: Texas Republic to Mid-1880s¹²

After Texas became a republic in 1836, Samuel A. Maverick started development of Houston Street by purchasing large tracts of land east of the San Antonio River. In addition to serving as an early mayor of San Antonio and a Texas legislator, Maverick was a land magnate and speculator. When Samuel Maverick died in 1870, his land empire, including his ranch lands, was estimated by some to include nearly 300,000 acres.

Upon her death in 1898, Mary Maverick, Samuel Maverick's widow, left her six surviving children a considerable estate. It had been successfully managed, after her husband's death, by her son, entrepreneur and developer George Madison Maverick (1845-1913), who was nicknamed the "President of Houston Street." During this time of development along Houston Street, the Mavericks seemed to own all of it. Apparently, it was the construction of the

¹⁰ Ibid, 108.

¹¹ Charles Ramsdell, *San Antonio: A History and Pictorial Guide*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959) 109.

¹² This section completely adapted from the author's study: *South Texas Archeological Research Services, LLC Limited Archival and Historical Background Research for Hilton Garden Inn Hotel Project, 408 E. Houston Street, San Antonio, Texas*, Imogen R. Cooper and Herbert G. Uecker, ed., (San Antonio: 2014).

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second Maverick homestead on Alamo Plaza that first spurred the development of Houston Street. In 1841, Samuel Maverick bought the north half of the western wall of the Alamo compound from María Castañeda, the widow of Lieutenant Francisco Castañeda who commanded the *Compañía Volante* during the war. The Castañedas had lived in one of the reconditioned Indian houses of the old mission since at least 1825.¹³ Lieutenant Castañeda commanded the small force sent in 1835 to Gonzales to retrieve the cannon in the hands of the colonists, an incident that had triggered the active hostilities of the Texas Revolution. The Castañeda house became the home of the Mavericks while Samuel Maverick built a new house in 1839 on the northwest corner of Alamo Plaza and Houston Street. The only other brand-new construction on the Plaza, because of its rather disreputable reputation as a battle site, was the Menger Hotel, built in 1859.¹⁴

However, before building the house on Alamo Plaza in 1839, Maverick bought two suertes of land on the east side of the San Antonio River, from Manuel Tarin.¹⁵ The property might have included the future Houston Street, but the land was used to grow vegetables and fruit for many years. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, Houston Street was known as "El Paseo" (passageway or driveway), but it was also called "Paseo Hondo" (ditch or deep gully), because in rainy weather it drained all the land east of Travis Park and north of Alamo Street. West of San Pedro Creek, the thoroughfare was called Rivas Street, and it was not until 1851 that a bridge was built across the San Antonio River and the entire length was named Houston Street.

As noted earlier, San Antonio's earliest commercial development was concentrated to the south of Houston Street, on Commerce Street. This was probably because the first crossing of the San Antonio River was at today's Commerce Street Bridge, and was the main street connecting the Plazas with Mission San Antonio de Valero (Alamo Plaza). Houston Street was not considered desirable for development until after the Civil War.

Even as late as ten years after the Civil War, Houston Street still lagged far behind other streets in development. Because that part of town was on the east side of the San Antonio River with no safe access for heavy traffic, it remained farmland. Houston Street is shown in photographs from the 1870s as only a lane extending through open land with scattered houses. Looking south, they show St. Mary's Church and St. Mary's School in the background along what would become College Street, then known as Water Street. It was extended to Losoya Street many years later when land for both the Presa Street and the College Street extensions was sold to San Antonio by the Mavericks in 1921. The sale coincided with demolition of the old Maverick Hotel in preparation for construction in 1922 of the Maverick Building on a smaller building footprint.

The 1873 Bird's Eye View map of San Antonio shows much of Houston Street as vacant. There was an iron bridge installed across the San Antonio River on Houston Street by then, but parts for metal bridges had to be hauled to San Antonio over muddy roads on specially-constructed ox carts. The railroad did not come to San Antonio until 1877. Only with the arrival of the railroad did the importation of heavy building materials, such as iron and brick, become commonplace. Before then, most buildings were made of the local soft limestone. The coming of railroads to San Antonio in the late 1870s and 1880s spurred the city's population growth and its economic importance to Texas. As noted above, George M. Maverick, the third son of Samuel Maverick, was prominent in that development.

In 1878, George Maverick built the headquarters for the United States Army on Houston Street at the corner of Houston and Presa Street. When the Army moved out to the Post San Antonio (later called Ft. Sam Houston) in 1881, Maverick had prominent San Antonio architect Alfred Giles remodel the building into the Maverick Hotel. The hotel was made of stone with a mansard roof designed in the popular Second Empire style. The Maverick Hotel reputedly

¹³ Bexar Country Deed Records [BCDR], Volume F1: 2006, A2: 415.

¹⁴ The army only repaired and added a new roof and parapet to the Alamo chapel in 1850.

¹⁵ BCDR, A2: 161.

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"spread the best tables in the state." According to William Corner's 1890 *San Antonio de Bexar: A Guide to History*, it vied with the Menger Hotel for supremacy in San Antonio.¹⁶ Other buildings constructed by the Maverick family on Houston Street, and still standing in the historic district include the Soledad Block Building (1883) and the University Block Building (1883). Elsewhere on Houston Street were the George Maverick Storehouses (demolished), the Albert Maverick building (ca. 1875; Alamo Plaza NR District, 1975), and the Maverick Bank Building (demolished). On Alamo Plaza, they built the Crockett Block Building in 1882. Alfred Giles designed all these buildings.

Commerce Street remained San Antonio's major east/west thoroughfare until the Maverick family began developing multi-story office structures along Houston Street in the 1880s. As noted, expansion of the commercial district was constrained by nonexistent or weak bridges crossing the river and creek until modern iron bridges were constructed to span the waterways in the late 1800s. With the introduction of horse-drawn streetcars in 1878, followed by electric streetcars in 1890, Houston Street, with its wider right-of-way, began to surpass narrow, congested Commerce Street as the town's premier business thoroughfare. The wider street allowed horse-drawn vehicles, and later automobiles, to mix with streetcars. These vehicles brought shoppers and office workers to Houston Street. Commerce Street, as well as the Plazas, never regained their preeminence as the city's commercial center. At this time, the government maintained its status on the Plazas as the largest employer.

Construction of Governmental Buildings in the Plazas (1880s-1890s)

Ironically, the construction of two impressive government buildings on the Plazas in the 1880s also pushed commercial activity out and down Commerce Street and towards Alamo Plaza, as well as towards Houston Street. The next forty years after the American Civil War were boom times for Alamo Plaza but less so for Main and Military Plazas, where government and religious activities took precedent with the construction of city hall, the Bexar County Courthouse, and the reconstruction of the San Fernando Cathedral.

With the building of city hall right in the middle of Military Plaza, the open-air market there was doomed. From 1888 through 1891, the City of San Antonio constructed a new city hall with prominent Second Empire features at the center of Military Plaza. The original building, designed by Otto Kramer, a prominent architect of New York, Chicago and St. Louis, was a three-story structure topped by an octagonal clock tower 135 feet high. In 1927, it was modified and made more modest, removing the tower and corner turrets, when a fourth-floor addition, featuring Mediterranean influences, was added. Meanwhile, an *Express* reporter in 1891 mourned the imminent eviction of the "pretty señoritas, huffy old mamas, lady marketers on foot or in carriages."¹⁷ The Chili Queens were exiled to Alamo Plaza.

And prior to that, in 1882, Bexar County constructed James Riely Gordon's magnificent Romanesque Revival style courthouse on the southern face of Main Plaza. With the passage of the Texas courthouse law of 1881 – allowing counties to sell bonds for new courthouses – there was a healthy and competitive climate for architects in the state and Gordon soon joined the fray. Italianate and Second Empire temples had been early favorites among county commissioners, but Gordon introduced massive Romanesque models. His standard design replaced the "dainty pressed-metal cupola" with bearing-wall masonry towers, signaling drastic changes in the plan beneath. Whereas the older wooden-frame cupola was mounted awkwardly on the ceiling of a central courtroom, Gordon's plan spun around each tower's hollow core, which acted as a circulation chimney and stairwell.¹⁸ This courthouse was listed in the National Register in 1977.

¹⁶ William Corner, *San Antonio de Bexar: A Guide and History*, (Bainbridge and Corner, 1890), 7.

¹⁷ William Corner, *San Antonio de Bexar: A Guide and History*, (Bainbridge and Corner, 1890), 7.

¹⁸ Chris Carson, AIA, *A Guide to San Antonio Architecture*, ed. William McDonald, AIA (San Antonio: AIA Press, 1988), 131.

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Several buildings were built around the plazas and dedicated to ancillary governmental use in the following decades. For example, the Old Bexar County Jail (c.1878), designed by regionally prominent architect Alfred Giles (1853-1920) as a two-story stone building with a battlemented parapet, increased in size. It grew from two stories to four (1911), and then to five (1926). The jail served the city well until a new jail was built in 1962, in a nearby block. Thereafter, the Giles-designed building served as a city records storage facility, as an archive, and finally as a voter registration headquarters. In the 1990s, it was sold into private ownership and converted to a hotel. Its surrounding security walls, made of massive stones, are still intact. On Main Plaza, at right angles to the courthouse, the city constructed the c.1915 police station and city jail (now called the Legal Professional Building), which at one time housed staff from the City Attorney's Office. East on Commerce Street, the Continental Hotel was built between c1886-1900. Attributed to Alfred Giles, it is one of the finest, surviving hotels from the exuberant 1890s. Bought by the City of San Antonio, it was converted to office space for the Metropolitan Health Department in the 1980s. In the same manner, the Vogel Belt Building Complex, across from City Hall, was converted to city offices for the City Planning Department, the Parks Department, and the Budget Department in the late 1970s. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the city developed a policy of buying or renting historic buildings near city hall and converting them to office space. This was done to protect historic buildings from demolition by neglect, as well as to conserve taxpayer money. While much of the construction of these public buildings energized the plazas with governmental activity, commercial activity was limited to banking activities, particularly that of the Frost banking family, who had its start on Main Plaza. Thomas Claiborne (or Clayborne) built a two-story bank building on Main Plaza in 1871. It is now site of the former 1922 Frost Bank building, now called the Municipal Plaza Building.

With the development boom of the 1880s and 1890s came a burgeoning real estate trade that attracted speculators who bought property in and around the city's commercial core, for short term investments, quick profits, and for subdivision. Municipal facilities and services, including the city's sewer and water systems, waste collection and disposal, city-funded fire and police forces, and telephone and electrical networks, parks and recreation department, public works and road maintenance, were developed. During this period, San Antonio's population increased nearly ten-fold. By 1900, there were over 53,000 residents in San Antonio.¹⁹

San Antonio became a significant destination for regional and international visitors and immigrants, many of which saw the city as a destination for health. As tuberculosis ravaged the country, San Antonio's many fresh water springs and its warm climate were touted for their beneficial effects. By 1911, the City Directory indicated enormous growth. Building activity had increased by 600 percent. Street improvements were calculated at 900 percent, hotels and office buildings both increased by 500 percent. In 1905, 968 building permits were issued, but by 1910 the total amount was estimated to be 3243 permits. Much of this development was occurring in the central downtown district. The directory that year proudly explains that the greatest advancement in the area were hotels, with the building of the Gunter, the St. Anthony, and the Crockett Hotel. The number of hotels rose from 22 in 1907 to 58 in 1913.

The start of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 also attracted revolutionaries, counterrevolutionaries, and refugees from war-torn Mexico to San Antonio. Francisco Madero, President Porfirio Diaz's political opponent, wrote his fiery letter that ignited the revolution while living in downtown San Antonio. This exodus from Mexico brought many skilled artisans and workers to the city. Many settled on the near Westside, just west of the Plazas. During World War I, 70,000 World War I soldiers were stationed in the city, and through the end of the decade, the economic impact of the Mexican migration as well as the military presence created unparalleled opportunities for private enterprise.

¹⁹ Gunter House, National Register of Historic Places listing; Milam Building, National Register of Historic Places listing; Heusinger, 40-49.

1920-1940

The 1920s was the final decade during which San Antonio's population outnumbered all other Texas cities. Despite a series of droughts and floods in the 1910s, its economy had flourished, and a downtown building boom was well underway. A series of infrastructure improvements, begun in the mid-1910s, supported the growth in business. The devastating 1921 flood added new urgency to long-discussed flood control measures, and more buildings were demolished for construction of the 1930 flood bypass channel east of Main Plaza.²⁰

These infrastructure and flood control projects, coupled with the largest building boom in San Antonio's history, resulted in the demolition or alteration of many old landmarks. As a result, both the character of downtown and its skyline changed dramatically. Just as structural steel made it possible to construct multi-story buildings in the first two decades of the 1900s, reinforced concrete construction raised structures to greater heights. By the time the building boom ended with the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, San Antonio's skyline was defined by the Smith-Young Tower, Nix Hospital, Alamo National Bank, Maverick Building, Burns Building, Central Trust Company Building, Majestic Theater, Brady Building, Gunter Hotel, Robert E. Lee Hotel, Milam Building, and Travis Building, to name a few.²¹ Banking rivalries in and around the plazas were expressed through building heights. In 1922, the twelve-story, Frost National Bank was built at the northwest corner of Main Plaza on the site of the former two-story Frost National Bank. With construction of the Frost Bank, its rival, the National Bank of Commerce then added five more stories to its seven-story building. The bones of this rival bank building remain in place. In 1961, the San Antonio Savings Association bought it and later altered it.²² The Depression then brought a halt to commercial and financial construction in the downtown. Two bright points, however, were the careful and respectful preservation and construction of the River Walk and La Villita using Works Progress Administration monies. The historic first phase of the River Walk was completed in 1941.

World War II and Post-War Eras (1941-1973)

Through the early 20th century, San Antonio became a hub for military bases. Eventually, the establishment and investment in its five bases for the Army and for the Air Force carried the city's economy through the Cold War of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. However, as the city grew, much of San Antonio's commercial activity fled to the suburbs, following postwar families who could afford to buy a house in outlying areas of the city and then commute to work on the expanding freeway system. Built to encircle the downtown with various beltways, the city's freeways had a "spoke and wheel" pattern and developed quickly, due to the city's relatively flat terrain. All this caused downtown to lose preeminence as the commercial hub of the city. For example, when the Loop 410 freeway completely encircled San Antonio, in the 1960s, shopping centers, called "malls," were built at the intersections of arterials and freeways. Office development also occurred along its northern rim, which had the effect of drawing activity from downtown.

Tourism revived as well, and the seed of this tourism industry was the brilliant coupling of HemisFair '68 with the adjacent River Walk. HemisFair '68, a world's fair exposition produced to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of San Antonio, exemplified the best and worst approaches to downtown revival in the face of suburban development and its subsequent effect on downtown retail and office land use. With HemisFair, the city gained a convention center that fed the tourism economy with conventioners and visitors. The cost, however, resulted from the devastation of near-town residential and commercial neighborhoods to the east, and particularly to the west of downtown. The story of heavy-handed demolition and subsequent urban renewal is well documented for the

²⁰ Alamo National Bank Building, National Register of Historic Places listing.

²¹ Ibid.

²² It was refaced in with new brick and is noncontributing. www.mexicanmanhattan.com/resthist_three.htm, accessed June 12, 2018.

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development of HemisFair. However, the story of urban renewal of the near Westside, peculiar to this story of the plazas is less known. The Rosa Verde Urban Renewal Project cleared residential and commercial property just to the east of San Pedro Creek. It targeted houses and businesses of the Hispanic community in this area. The Alameda complex was spared, but to the north and west of it, much was demolished, making way for the Santa Rosa Hospital facilities, as well as for other large public facilities like the Downtown University of Texas of San Antonio. Only in the twenty-first century is the area filling in with new development.

The Frost banking family has been a prominent and continuing presence in Main Plaza and to the north, as the family purchased property within the district to make way for their many banking facilities. The Frost family “land banked” their properties without reliance on urban renewal. Their first warehouses and bank buildings were on the western edge of Main Plaza and then, developing northward, with construction of first the Frost Motor Bank (1965) then the 1973 Frost Bank Tower. Until the early 1970s, their investment in the plazas was one of the few large and private investments.

Notable Buildings Within Boundary Increase Area 1

Six of the seven buildings added in the boundary increase area, called Area 1, contribute to the district’s architectural and historical significance and expand the district to include more of the city’s distinctive buildings that served the Westside Hispanic community. Specifically, the Alameda Theater and adjoining Casa de Mexico International Building as well as two small commercial buildings fronting on Houston Street and adjoining the International Building. In addition to these inclusions, there is the addition of three buildings fronting on the 300 block of W. Commerce dating from c.1890. They included the Tuxedo Rental/Texas Optical Shop, the Kline’s Men’s Store, and the Rosenman’s Store. All three provide evidence of growth and commercial activity around Military Plaza in the 19th century and continued use in the early to mid-20th century, with façade alterations, made by the businesses serving the city’s Hispanic population. This was a remnant of the Westside businesses prior to vast demolitions in the late 1960s and early 1970s as part of the city’s urban renewal programs.²³ Last, is the cinderblock building at 124 N. Laredo, which is non-contributing.

The seven contributing buildings included in the boundary increase area were built between 1888 and 1949. They represent the spectrum of the Boom Years of the 19th century through to the post-World War II era, when San Antonio’s downtown lost economic and commercial momentum to outlying suburban development, typical of so many postwar American cities. This change of status also recognizes growing interest and appreciation of history contributed by the 20th century Mexican-American business and cultural community of San Antonio, as well as growing appreciation for Art Moderne architecture and the outstanding Alameda Theater.

Significance of the Alameda Theater and Casa de Mexico International Building (1946-1949)

314-318 W. Houston
Contributing

Since its construction, the Alameda Complex, consisting of the Casa de Mexico International Building and the Alameda Theater, has been a testament to Hispanic community’s contribution to entertainment and commercial development activity on the near Westside. The Complex is significant not only for its architecture (Criterion C) but also for its significance under Criterion A in community development and planning. Designed in 1945 and dedicated in 1946, the theater’s opening was delayed until 1949 because of the death of architect N. Straus Nayfach in 1948. The Complex was constructed on the former site of the San Antonio Gas Company utility buildings and is composed of a four-story office building and a five-story auditorium once seating 2,500 people with a tall, six-story stage house. The

²³ The 1966 Rosa Verde Urban Renewal Plan did rehabilitate the Market Square area. A concession to the community.

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owner and developer of the site was Gaetano A. Lucchese, son of the founder of the Lucchese Boot Company, and president of the Zaragosa Amusement Company. Lucchese owned and operated the Nacional, Guadalupe, and Zaragosa Theaters prior to construction of the Alameda. Lucchese's vision for the Alameda Complex was to create a first class, high quality amusement and business facility of a caliber higher than the existing Mexican-American venues. Thus, the Alameda Theater was purposely built for Spanish-speaking cinema and live performances. Lucchese's goal was to highlight the entire complex as a cultural, social and economic center for the local Hispanic population, many of whom had fled to South Texas in the early twentieth century due to civil unrest and 1910 revolution in Mexico. At its pinnacle, the complex served a generation of Hispanic entrepreneurs, entertainers, and civic leaders.

During the 1980s the building fell into disuse and disrepair. However, in the 1990s both civic and business leaders joined forces and began to rehabilitate the complex. The City of San Antonio purchased the building in 1994 and leased it to a non-profit, Centro Alameda, Inc., established under the vision of George Cortez and the Cortez family. Over several years the façade of the theater was repaired and the interior of Casa de Mexico International Building and the Koehler Auditorium were also repaired (as per original plans). Past tenants have been the City of San Antonio's Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Federation of Mexican Communities in San Antonio, and the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, (the Chamber was an original tenant). This followed a long tradition of historic tenants; the Consul General was the first to occupy the space in 1949, following him were the Mexican International Commerce Travel Agency, the Mexican Chamber of Commerce, the Pan American Progressive Service, the South Texas Chamber of Commerce, and the consulates of several South American countries. Radio KCOR, an early Spanish-speaking radio station also had headquarters in the International Building.²⁴

New plans for the theater surfaced in 2017 with a \$23 million public-private effort by the city, the county and Texas Public Radio, which will move its headquarters into the fairly new stage house at the back of the building, as an anchor tenant.²⁵ The Alameda Theater Conservancy, a new nonprofit, will oversee the entire endeavor. The City of San Antonio, in partnership with Bexar County, Texas Public Radio (TPR) and La Familia Cortez, has now created a conceptual plan to restore and reopen the Theater as a multi-media live performing arts and film center featuring the American Latino-Multicultural Story. The project will also include the relocation of TPR's headquarters to the newly constructed back area of the theater. The construction of the total project will be phased and includes:

- The Alameda Theater will be restored and reopened as a performing arts facility.
- The Alameda Theater capacity goal is 1,000, with a tiered floor design that can accommodate theater seats and/or event tables and chairs.
- The Alameda Theater will include a thrust stage to create a more intimate setting for performances and events.
- TPR would relocate their headquarters to the newly constructed backstage area and construct a new black box theater within the facility.²⁶

Architect N. Straus Nayfach and Contractor Victor Prassel

The architect chosen for the project was N. Straus Nayfach (1908-1948), a well-known regional architect who had experience not only as a residential architect, but also as an architect in charge of the remodeling Lucchese's Guadalupe and Nacional Theaters. Born and raised in San Antonio, Nayfach attended the UT Austin School of Architecture, and had a strong interest in Hispanic culture. To design the theater, he borrowed generously from

²⁴ Nomination application for San Antonio Conservation Society Historic Preservation Award, 1995, SACS Library files, 1-3.

²⁵ The Rovard Report, "A First Look at the Alameda Theater Renovations, TPR's New Home", *San Antonio Express News*, (April 11, 2018), www.therivardreport.com, accessed June 7, 2018.

²⁶ Alameda Theater Conservancy Mission, <http://www.alamedatheaterconservancy.org/> accessed June 8, 2018.

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Classical Moderne traditions but traveled to Mexico to gather design ideas. He considered the theater complex a design symbol embodying the rich traditions of both Mexican and American heritage.²⁷

As architect for Apache, Alazan and Victoria Courts, which were among the first public housing projects in the United States, and housing many low-income Hispanic families, Nayfach became committed to the Hispanic community in San Antonio and to fostering traditions and culture of both San Antonio and Mexico. His emphasis, however, was on the Mexican and Latin American traditions especially from the post Mexican Revolutionary period (1910-1928), an era that represents a different culture and tradition from that of the Spanish colonists who earlier settled San Antonio and the Southwest.²⁸ The design style for the complex is a hybrid, unique in the United States. Its Moderne theme has its roots in Mexico City and its variations in San Antonio with motifs influenced by both provincial Mexico and Southwestern United States.²⁹

The contracting company was the Victor Prassel Construction Company. Hans Tiechert Studio of Chicago served as interior decorator. Cost of the project was \$1.6 million. Construction began in 1945 on both the office building and theater. While Casa de Mexico International Building was dedicated in December of 1946, it was not formally opened until March 9, 1949 due to construction delays brought on by Mr. Nayfach's sudden death nine months before completion of the Alameda. At the dedication, owner G.A. Lucchese explained,

"Its construction was inspired by the great desire to create a monument that would be a symbol of good will and better understanding between Latin-Americans and Anglo-Americans and I hope that it will become a place where two cultures can be appreciated and admired in an atmosphere of beauty, of comfort, and of wholesome entertainment."³⁰

Notable Buildings Within Boundary Increase Area 2

One building in boundary increase area two, called Area 2, contributes to the district's architectural and historical significance and justifies the expansion of the historic district to include this block. Specifically, the La Feria Department Store, as it fronts onto West Commerce Street at the corner of Laredo and West Commerce, is a notable and contributing building in the block. It is significant at the local level under Criterion A. Constructed about 1911 or 1912, the building was once addressed as 802-804 West Commerce and 806 W. Commerce. At that time, the 1913 City Directory states that "Schwartz, Cohen & Franklin" ran a dry goods and clothing store at the 802-804 W. Commerce portion of the building. Next-door, at 806 W. Commerce, "Schwartz & Cohen" are listed as grocers. This may have been a year of transition for the partners, as immediately below, in the City Directory, the three partners are shown as also selling general merchandise several blocks south on S. Laredo Street. The downtown location will be remembered by many longtime San Antonians as the flagship La Feria Department Store, established in 1917 by Polish immigrant brothers Harry and Louis Eastman at 734 W. Commerce St. Louis Eastman gradually acquired the remaining businesses separating his two stores, allowing La Feria to expand along the entire block.

The business eventually expanded citywide to include five La Feria stores and two House of Brides stores that specialized in wedding and ceremonial dresses. All were family-operated until they were sold in 1988. In 1948, La Feria is listed as a department store with Henry Eastman as the manager and the property has expanded to 802-808 W. Commerce. The store also specialized in quinceanera dresses as well as baptismal and christening clothes for small children. (A "Quinceanera" is a celebration of a girl's fifteenth birthday.)

²⁷ Interview with Nayfach's widow, be Bea W.W. Avant, July, 1982.

²⁸ Grant application materials from San Antonio Conservation Society, 1992, San Antonio Conservation Library

²⁹ Research on La Feria building by Beth Standifird, archivist and librarian for the San Antonio Conservation Society Library.

³⁰ City Office of Historic Preservation archives, as prepared for designation of the Alameda Theater as a local historic landmark.

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To the west and south are the small, one-part commercial buildings fronting on Dolorosa Street that have been altered, yet still recall the scale and feel of the earlier commercial area. The Goodwill Corporation, which in 2000 rehabilitated the La Feria building, now owns all the properties in the block.

The La Feria building represents the boom times, after which San Antonio's mid-twentieth century downtown lost economic and commercial momentum to outlying suburban development, as typical of so many postwar American cities. Even without the Rosa Verde Urban Renewal Plan that eventually caused demolition of 143 properties to widen Santa Rosa Street and expand the Santa Rosa Medical Center, the loss would have happened. The extant Lion Pride mural there recalls Chapa's Drug Store, which also had a mural facing Santa Rosa Street, signifying La Botica del Leon.

Two Notable Contributing Buildings Within the Original Boundary Area (originally Noncontributing)

Two buildings within the original boundary area contribute to the district's architectural and historical significance, specifically the Frost Bank Tower (1973) and the Frost Bank Garage (1965). The change in status of the Frost Bank Tower and the Frost Bank Garage from "intrusive," or noncontributing, as shown on the 1979 nomination map, to contributing, recognizes the growing interest and appreciation of mid-century modern architecture as part of the continued history of cities and particularly downtown San Antonio.

Significance of Frost Motor Bank and Family Banking Center, 1962-1965

Frost Parking Garage
120 N. Main
Contributing

Addressing first the Frost Motor Bank and Family Banking Center, as it was called then, the Frost Parking Garage was completed and opened in 1965. The Frost Bank Parking Garage despite its prominent location in the district was not mentioned in the original nomination, except to be mapped as "intrusive." It is significant at the local level, and it merits listing in the National Register as a contributing building in the district. The building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Development and Planning for its association with continued financial activity and innovation in banking in the district by the Frost banking group. It is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture, as an excellent example of a modern multi-story, multifunctional parking and banking facility. If elegant is a word one can use for a modern, multi-story parking garage, this is it: the exterior employs, as a facing, vertical, white quartz panels, and, at street levels, dark pre-cast panels of Emerald Pearl granite from Norway. The interior finishes, including elevator cabs are wood and metal trim. The well-known and prominent San Antonio architectural firm of Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres designed the handsome six-story, L-shaped building. The firm had a long history in San Antonio, and kept current in their designs with the times, as Atlee Ayres was still a practicing architect with his son, Robert, at age ninety-six.

Now "just" a pay-parking garage for the general public, as well as for bank customers, the building was designed and built with a then novel function, that of a "motor bank." As reported in the San Antonio Express-News, in 1965, the Frost Motor Bank would be able to serve one thousand banking customers a day, as well as parking for up to 450 cars, whose owners could then walk through an underground tunnel under Commerce Street to the Old Frost Bank, (now Main Plaza Building, fronting onto Main Plaza), and complete their banking business. The building would also contain another seventy thousand square feet of banking office space, a computer room for banking, and an underground vault.³¹ The "motor banking" concept, now called "drive-through" or "drive-thru" banking is part of a type of service,

³¹ *San Antonio Express-News*, "New Bank Frame Completed," April 3, 1965.

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provided by a business, that allows customers to do business (or purchase services) without leaving their cars. Supposedly, the first recorded use of a bank using drive-up window tellers was the Grand National Bank of St. Louis in 1930, where “autoists (sic) (could) do banking from their cars.” At that time a novelty, the drive-up teller was only allowed to make deposits on behalf to the bank customer.³²

Frost’s 1965 motor banking activity as designed for bank customers (and not just for large bank transfers of cash from armored trucks) was a fairly new concept. The design of the drive-up windows and entire facility was designed to be pleasant and filled with light. In recent years, there has been a decline in drive-through banking due to increased traffic congestion and the increased availability of automated teller machines, telephone, and Internet banking with smart phones and desktop computers. However, many banks now feature drive-through ATMs, sometimes as “stand alone” structures.

In the 1990s, Frost Bank moved its downtown drive-through banking services to a large vacant block immediately north of the current Frost Bank Tower. This was a land-banking technique was designed to hold the block until 2017, when ground was broken for the site of the newest twenty-three-story Frost Bank Tower.³³ In 2019, the newest Frost Bank Tower will be complete and in a complicated leasing arrangement, the City of San Antonio will assume use of the 1973 Frost Bank Tower to provide more office space for its employees.

*Architects Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres*³⁴

Atlee Bernard Ayres (1873-1969), architect, was born in Hillsboro, Ohio, on July 12, 1873. The family moved to Texas, lived first in Houston, and then moved in 1888 to San Antonio. In 1890 Ayres went to New York to study at the Metropolitan School of Architecture, then a subsidiary of Columbia University. There he won first prize in the school's annual design competition. His teachers included William Ware, a student of Richard Morris Hunt. Ayres took drawing lessons at the Art Students League at night and studied painting under Frank Vincent Dumont on Sundays. Upon his graduation from the school of architecture in 1894 he returned to San Antonio and worked for various architects. He subsequently moved to Mexico, where he practiced until 1900. That year he moved back to San Antonio and began a partnership with Charles A. Coughlin that lasted until Coughlin's death in 1905. Ayres designed the Halff house (1908) and a villa for Col. George W. Brackenridge (date unknown) that was later was torn down.

In 1924 Ayres formed a partnership with his son, Robert M. Ayres. During the 1920s and 1930s their firm designed numerous residences in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, among them the Hogg house (1924), the Mannen house (1926), the Newton house (1927), and the Atkinson house (1928, now the Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum). The firm was also adept in using other revival modes, including the Colonial Revival of the H. Lutchter Brown residence (1936) and the English Tudor of the Jesse Oppenheimer residence (1924).

In 1915 Ayres was the state architect of Texas, a position that allowed him to design the Blind Institute (now the Texas School for the Blind), the Texas State Office Building, and other important public buildings. On the University of Texas campus, he designed Carothers Dormitory and the original Pharmacy Building. He drew plans for courthouses in Kingsville, Alice, Refugio, Del Rio, and Brownsville. In San Antonio his firm helped design the exterior of the Municipal Auditorium (1923) and the Administration Building at Randolph Air Force Base (1931), known as the "Taj Mahal," with a tower that conceals a 500,000-gallon water tank. It also designed the thirty-story Smith-Young Tower

³² *Popular Mechanics Magazine*, Vol 54, No.1, July 1930, 13. www.books.google.com accessed June 8, 2018.

³³ “\$142 M Frost Tower breaks ground, raising expectations downtown,” Richard Webner, *San Antonio Express* (mySA website) March 29, 2017, www.mysanantonio.com accessed June 8, 2018.

³⁴ This section adapted from *Handbook of Texas Online*, “Ayres, Atlee Bernard” and “Ayres, Robert Moss,” both accessed June 8, 2018, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online>.

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(1929), the Plaza Hotel (1927), and the first Federal Reserve Bank Building (1928) (now the Mexican consulate) and remodeled the Menger Hotel (1949–53).

Robert Moss Ayres (1898-1977), architect, one of two sons of Olive Moss and Atlee Bernard Ayres, was born on August 19, 1898, in San Antonio. He studied at San Antonio Academy, boarded at Haverford School, outside Philadelphia, and from 1918 until 1920 attended the School of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. There he received training in the theory and method of the École des Beaux-Arts under dean Paul Philippe Cret. After leaving the University of Pennsylvania in 1920, he worked in New York City for a year for the firm of Murchison, Lamb, and French. He returned to San Antonio in 1922 to begin working for his father. Two years later the firm becomes known as Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres, Architects.

Robert Ayres was responsible for many significant public buildings and residences in South Texas and beyond. The publication of fourteen building designs by the firm in *Pacific Coast Architect* in 1925 launched his firm's reputation beyond Texas and the central Southwest. His first major public commission was the thirty-story Smith-Young Tower (1929), a neo-Gothic skyscraper that still defines the San Antonio skyline. His residence for Mr. and Mrs. Lucher Brown (1936) in the San Antonio suburb of Terrell Hills is an outstanding suburban Neoclassical home from that era. Other projects include the Administration Building at Randolph Air Force Base, known as the "Taj Mahal" (1931), and five buildings for the University of Texas, all designed with his father. His firm was the recipient of numerous awards, including a gold medal from the AIA in 1929 for the design of the San Antonio Municipal Auditorium, done in collaboration with George R. Willis and Emmett T. Jackson. His firm remained small and ceased operation after his death in August 1977.

Significance of Frost Bank Tower (1973)

Frost Bank Tower
100 W. Houston Street
Contributing

The site of the 1973 Frost Bank Tower was once that of the c.1909 Houston Building, or Frost Building, which was another of the Frost Banking groups' buildings. The Frost Bank Tower is not mentioned in the original National Register nomination of 1979 because its completion date was well beyond the period of significance of the original nomination as well as beyond this amended nomination's period of significance. The tower was marked as an "intrusive" structure in the district. However, the building is significant at the local level for several reasons despite its recent construction date. It is eligible under Criterion A in Commerce for its association with the financial activities of the Frost banking family as the largest banking group in San Antonio and one of 50 largest banks in the United States, as discussed below, as well as for Criterion C in the area of Architecture, as a good example of a modern multi-story, multifunctional office building linked to other downtown buildings by its unique below-ground lobby, a design feature of several well-known buildings from the 1970s, but unusual in San Antonio. The building was designed by Charles Luckman of Charles Luckman Associates, of New York, with Munoz and Company (formerly Bartlett Cocke & Associates, Inc.), the local architectural firm. Designed in the Corporate Modernist architectural style, the dark exterior of the building was a complete departure from the lighter and "creamy" exterior building colors used on downtown landmarks to recall the city's Spanish Colonial heritage of whitewashed buildings. It was one of very few bold, modern buildings to be built in downtown during the city center's contraction as a place of commerce. In addition, the building's elegant wood-paneled interior, with its in-ground (or below ground) atrium design adds to its character as unique. Prominently placed escalators carry bank customers down to the belowground bank lobby, providing a grand sense of arrival that is critical to the building's place-making design. This handsome lobby is also representative of Cold War era design that stressed a "shelter in place" type of construction as well as projecting a sense of protection for important assets and paper records from nuclear attack. Across the country, the Cold War mindset seemed to inspire a number of buildings with underground lobbies, libraries, office facilities and houses.

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Architect Charles Luckman, FAIA (1909-1999) of Charles Luckman Associates³⁵

“I am firm in my belief that architecture is a business and not an art,” Charles Luckman once told a writer for *The New Yorker*. A businessman, architect, and developer, Luckman holds a distinct place in the history of historic preservation in America. He led the creation of some of the great buildings in Los Angeles, such as the Los Angeles Convention Center and the Aon Center on Wilshire Boulevard, and, along with I.M. Pei, designed the 6500 Wilshire Towner. On the East Coast, he designed the 1964 Prudential Tower in Boston. Unhappily, he also designed the notorious Madison Square Garden building that replaced New York’s Penn Station, whose demolition catalyzed historic preservation across the country. (And he also recommended the replacement of the Los Angeles Central Library in the 1970s. The successful effort to preserve that downtown icon led to the formation of the L.A. Conservancy.)

Born in Kansas City in 1909, Luckman graduated with honors from the University of Illinois School of Architecture in 1931. With few architectural positions available during the Depression, he was forced to take a job designing advertising pamphlets at the Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Company. His natural business acumen led Luckman from draftsman to salesman, then president of the Pepsodent Company, which was eventually acquired by Lever Brothers. Before he turned thirty, Luckman had graced the 1937 cover of *Time* magazine as the “Boy Wonder” of corporate America. At thirty-seven, he became president of Lever Brothers. His corporate mindset would influence his architectural designs for the duration of his career. In 1950, after hiring Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill to design Lever’s headquarters on Park Avenue, Luckman returned to practicing architecture. While contemporaries and critics often deemed his business-minded approach to architecture inartistic, he was a genuine advocate for Modern design.

With Los Angeles as his home base, Luckman would establish several firms that would produce some of the most prominent Modern structures in the city. Luckman Partnership was responsible for the Warner Bros. Office Buildings in Burbank. He partnered with renowned architect William Pereira to form Pereira and Luckman the firm responsible for creating CBS Television City and the iconic Theme Building at Los Angeles International Airport.

Chronology of the Frost Banking Family and Frost Banks in Main Plaza and Throughout Texas

Thomas Claiborne (or Clayborne) Frost (1833-1903), lawyer, merchant, and founder of Frost National Bank, was born in Belle Font, Jackson County, Alabama, on December 31, 1833, the son of Thomas C. and Crissy (Price) Frost. He graduated from Irving College in Tennessee in 1853 and was awarded a professorship in Latin for one year. In 1854 he arrived in Texas as an assistant professor of Latin at Austin College in Huntsville. He studied law in Sam Houston’s office and was admitted to the bar around 1856. Apparently, he moved to Comanche County, where he practiced law and worked as a surveyor. During this time, he also served with the Texas Rangers. In early 1861 Frost was a member of the Secession Conventions in Austin and signed the Articles of Secession. During the Civil War he served as a lieutenant colonel of the First Mounted Rifles. At the end of the war, having refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Union, Frost could no longer practice law. He established a freight business between San Antonio and the port of Indianola. Soon after, his brother John Frost asked him to join him in the mercantile and auction business in San Antonio. Together with a third partner, they successfully operated the firm Fitch, Frost and Brother. In 1868 Frost opened a general store on Main Plaza in San Antonio. Upon his brother’s death, Thomas Frost added a new dimension to his enterprise: the wool commission business. He collected and stored local wool producer’s goods until market conditions were favorable, making loans to them on the wool stock he was holding. This enterprise furnished the seeds for his banking endeavors and business philosophy: building his relationships with customers, and, in the corner of his store, opening a makeshift bank to help them out. Frost built a 2-story bank building on Main Plaza in 1871.

³⁵ This section adapted from the Los Angeles Conservancy’s website about Charles Luckman, www.laconservancy.org accessed June 8, 2018.

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On November 30, 1892, Frost purchased Messrs. Thornton, Wright and Company, a banking business. Eventually he formed a partnership with J. T. Woodhull and J. P. Barclay. The banking firm later dissolved, but on February 20, 1899, Frost National Bank received its national bank charter. Thomas C. Frost served as president until his death in San Antonio on November 21, 1903. Subsequently, three more generations of the Tom Frost family guided the bank's future, ending with the death of Tom Frost IV in 2018.

In 1922, T.C. Frost, Jr. (1879-1940), replaced the two-story structure with a 12-story building, once called the Old Frost Bank, and now called the Municipal Plaza Building. Across the street, at the corner of Soledad and Commerce, rival bank National Bank of Commerce had previously torn down the historic buildings facing Main Plaza and across Soledad Street from its four-story home. In 1919, NBC began construction on its seven-story headquarters. Three years after that, Frost National Bank removed the remaining old commercial buildings, including its own, and built their twelve-story building. The National Bank of Commerce then added five more stories.³⁶ Then, NBC relocated to north downtown at 430 Soledad Street. That building is now converted to a hotel.

T.C. "Tom" Frost III (1903-1971) took the helm in 1948 and during his tenure instituted such radical ideas as decentralization, an all-purpose credit card, and the bank's first computer. He also opened the first motor bank and parking garage in 1965. Eight years later, his son, Tom Frost IV (1927-2018), as president, built the 21-story Frost Bank Tower, located at 100 W. Houston Street. In 1977 the Frost family joined with Houston's Cullen family to form Cullen/Frost Bankers, which became one of the ten largest bank holding companies based in Texas. It was the state's only major bank holding company to survive the business downturn of the 1980s. While other Texas holding companies like First Republic Bank were acquired by out-of-state conglomerates, like NCNB (now Bank of America), Cullen/Frost held its own by focusing on existing customers instead of lending money for speculative real estate deals. The decision was key in keeping the company afloat. As of September 30, 2000, Cullen/Frost had grown to more than eighty bank locations across the state and assets of \$7.4 billion. In addition to increasing its number of branches, Cullen/Frost, now a financial holding company, has acquired three insurance agencies with offices in San Antonio, Houston, and Austin, among other places, and opened Frost Securities, an investment banking business in Dallas, which focuses on the energy and the technology sectors. Cullen/Frost Bankers, Inc. (NYSE: CFR) continues as a financial holding company, headquartered in San Antonio, with \$31.5 billion in assets as of March 31, 2018. One of the 50 largest U.S. banks, Frost provides a wide range of banking, investments and insurance services to businesses and individuals across Texas in the Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Permian Basin, Rio Grande Valley and San Antonio regions. The plan is to continue as a successful independent bank for another 150 years.

³⁶ The bones of the bank building remain in place. In the 1961, the San Antonio Savings Association acquired the building and later refaced it with new brick. www.mexicanmanhattan.com/resthist_three.htm, accessed June 12, 2018.

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Section 10

Boundary Description

The boundary increase areas consist of two discreet blocks to the west of the original district boundaries. Area 1 includes the block adjacent to and contiguous with the northwestern part of the original historic district boundary. Area 1 is bounded by San Pedro Creek on the east, Commerce Street on the south, North Laredo Street on the west, and E. Houston Street on the north. Area 2 is southwest of the of the original district. Area 2 is bounded on the north by W. Commerce Street, S. Laredo Street on the east, Dolorosa Street on the south and Santa Rosa Street on the west.

Boundary Justification

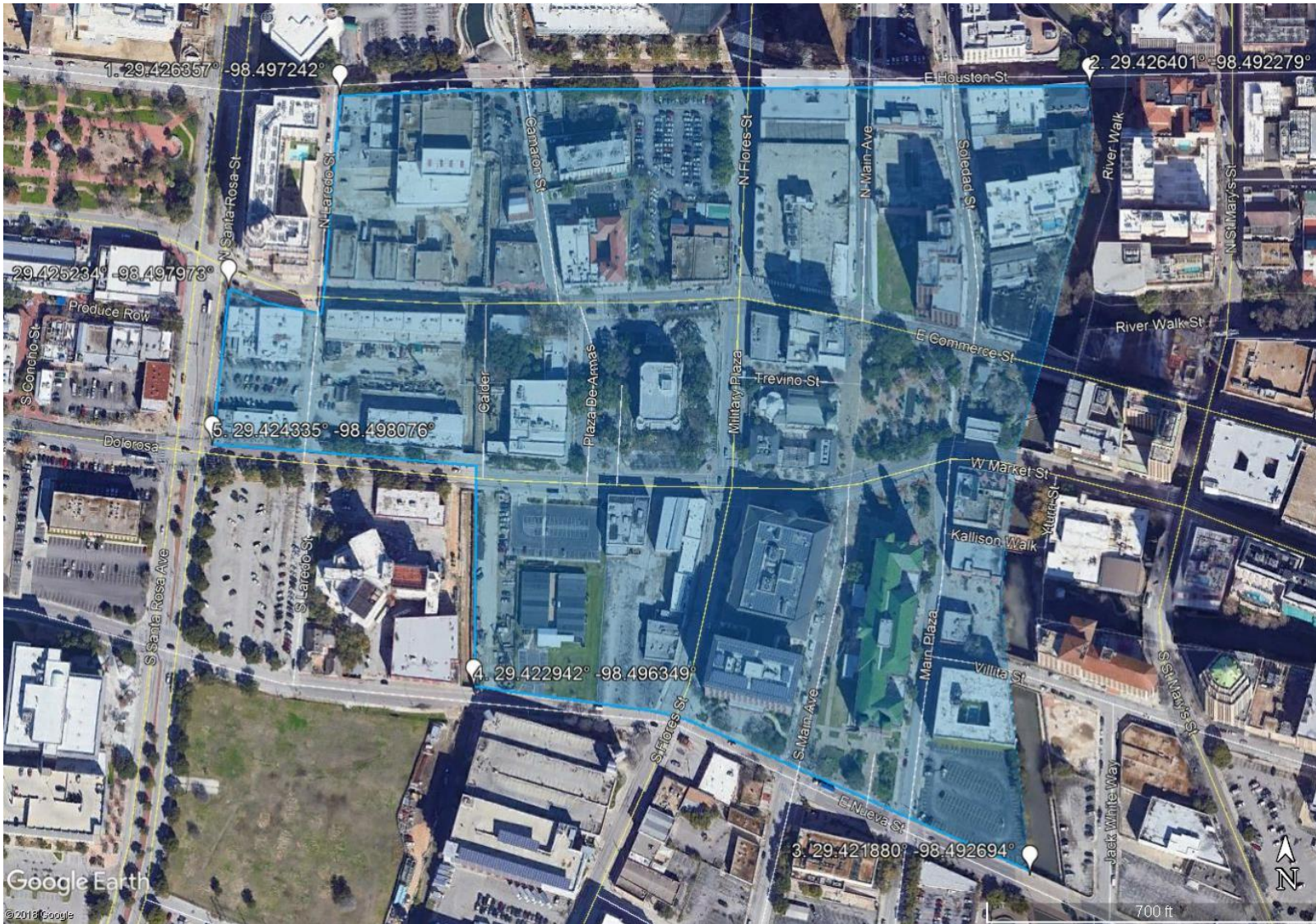
The boundary increase areas encompass remaining parts of the near Westside business and shopping district for the Hispanic community. Area 1 contains the Alameda Complex, consisting of the Alameda Theater and Casa de Mexico International Building, the five-story theater and four-story office building multiplex of exceptional significance. Because of its architectural merit and continuing symbolism in the Hispanic community, the theater block was retained and remains unaltered and much appreciated in the face of persistent demolition activity, urban renewal, and heavy-handed alteration activity around it, particularly on the near Westside. This edge of the district was once a nexus of Hispanic-owned entertainment, businesses and community life from the turn of the last century up to the early 1970s. Area 2, while not as architecturally distinguished as Area 1, once contained the very well-known La Feria Department Store and Bridal Shop, the flagship department store and bridal shop for the La Feria chain of stores throughout San Antonio. The store was “wedding central” not only for the Hispanic community but also for much of San Antonio for nearly seventy years. Surrounding demolitions and business closures during urban renewal in the late 1960s and early 1970s impacted its business and it began to falter in the early 1980s. The entire shopping district not only lost critical mass through urban renewal, it also lost out to the growth of suburban shopping centers in outlying areas of San Antonio as the city grew outward and all along Loop 410.

Coordinates (entire district, as amended)

1. 29.426357° -98.497242°
2. 29.426401° -98.492279°
3. 29.421880° -98.492694°
4. 29.422942° -98.496349°
5. 29.424335° -98.498076°
6. 29.425234° -98.497973°

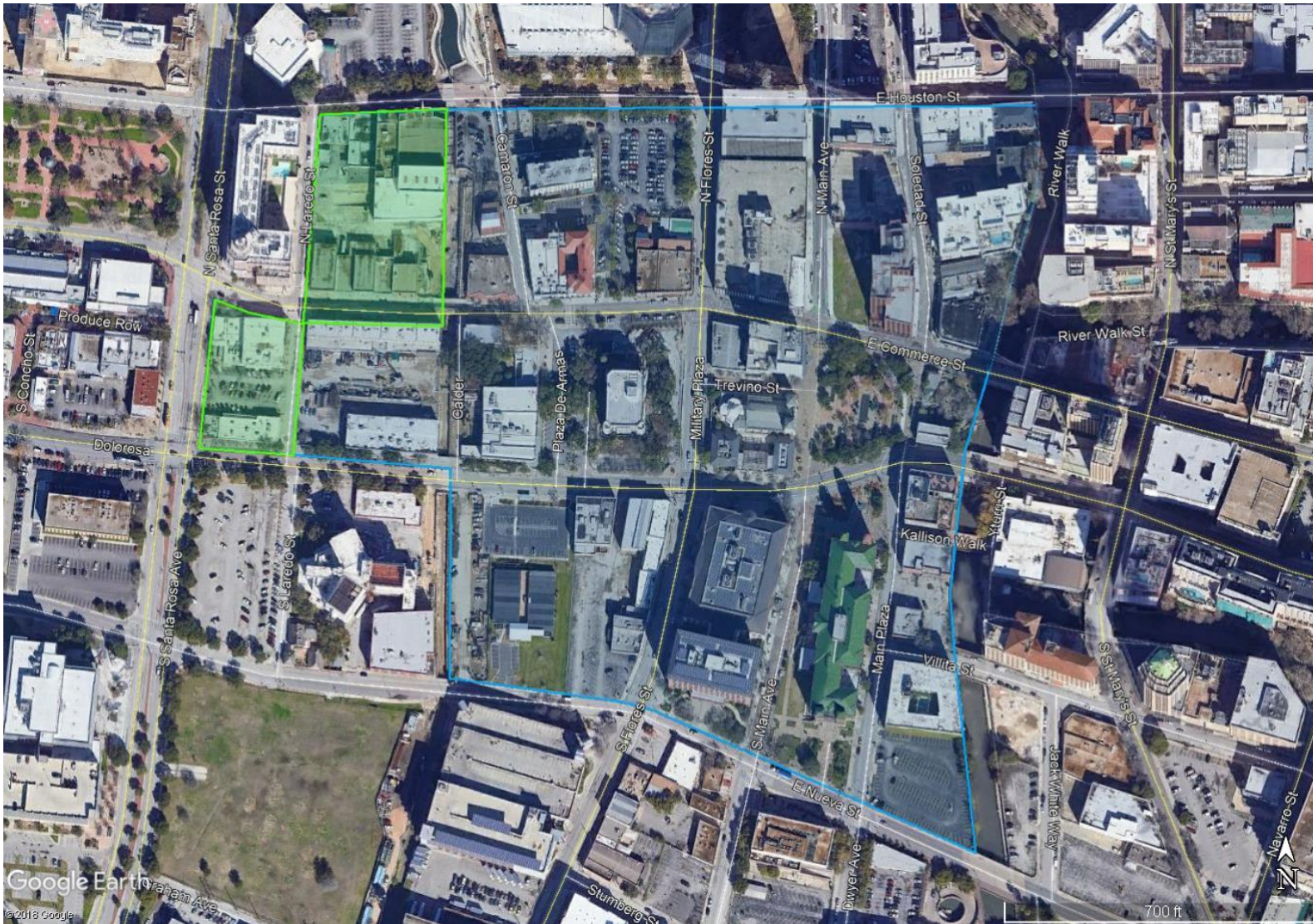
Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Revised Boundary. Source: Google Earth (accessed August 13, 2019).



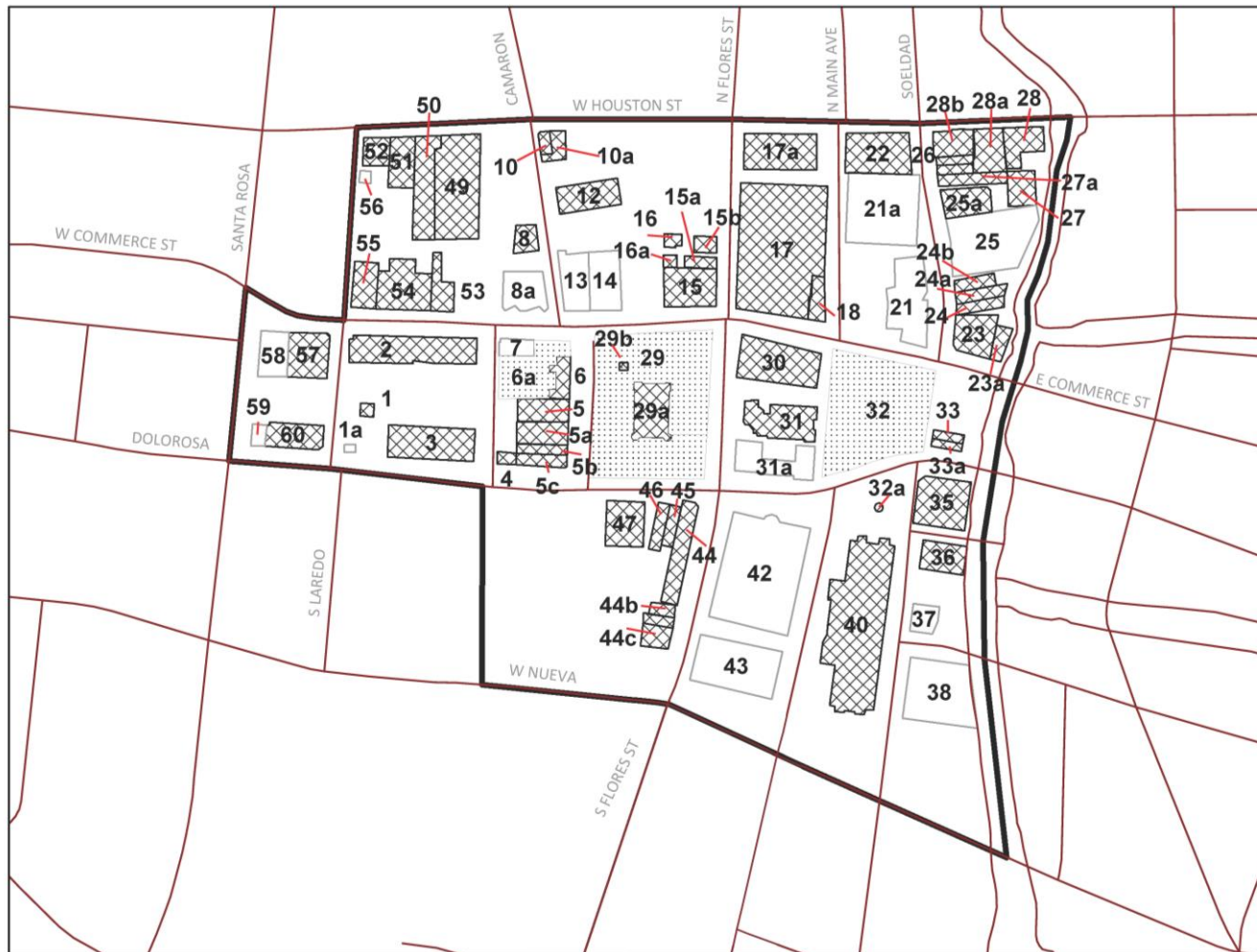
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Revised Boundary and original boundary, indicating added blocks (green) to the northwest and west. Source: Google Earth (accessed August 13, 2019).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

2019 map showing current numbering system and contributing status of each property.



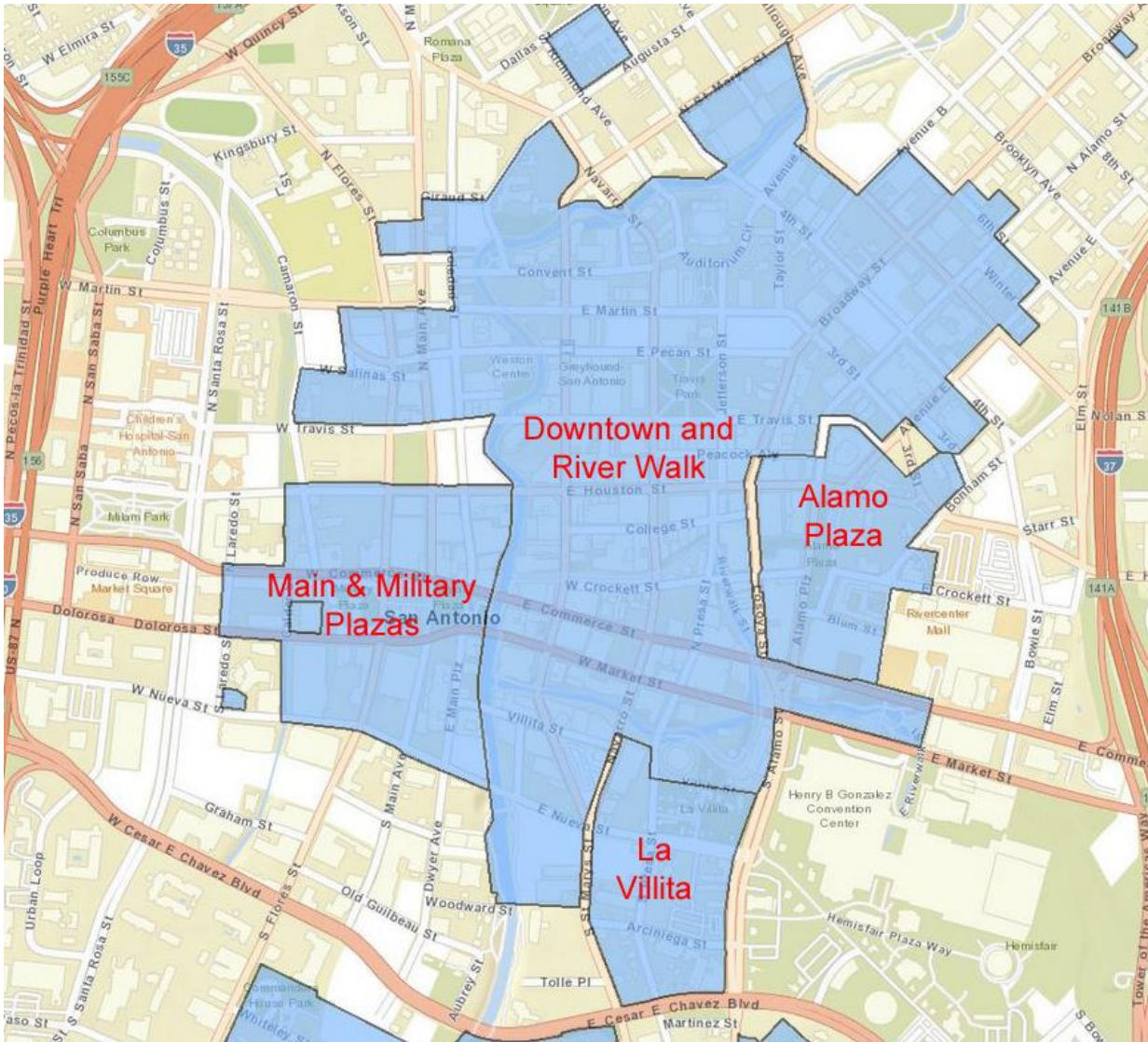
Non-contributing
Contributing
Contributing open space



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

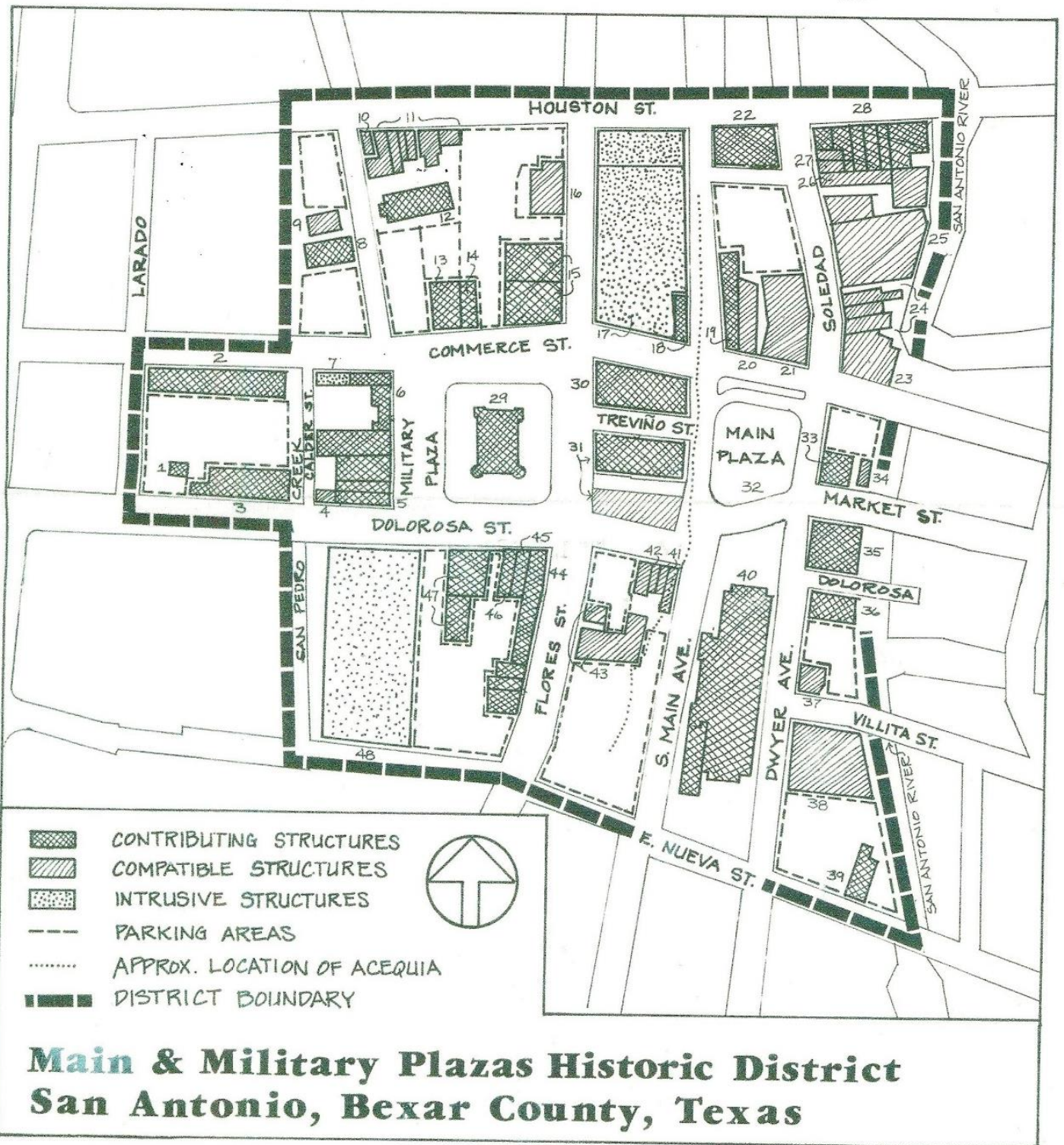
Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Historic districts in central San Antonio



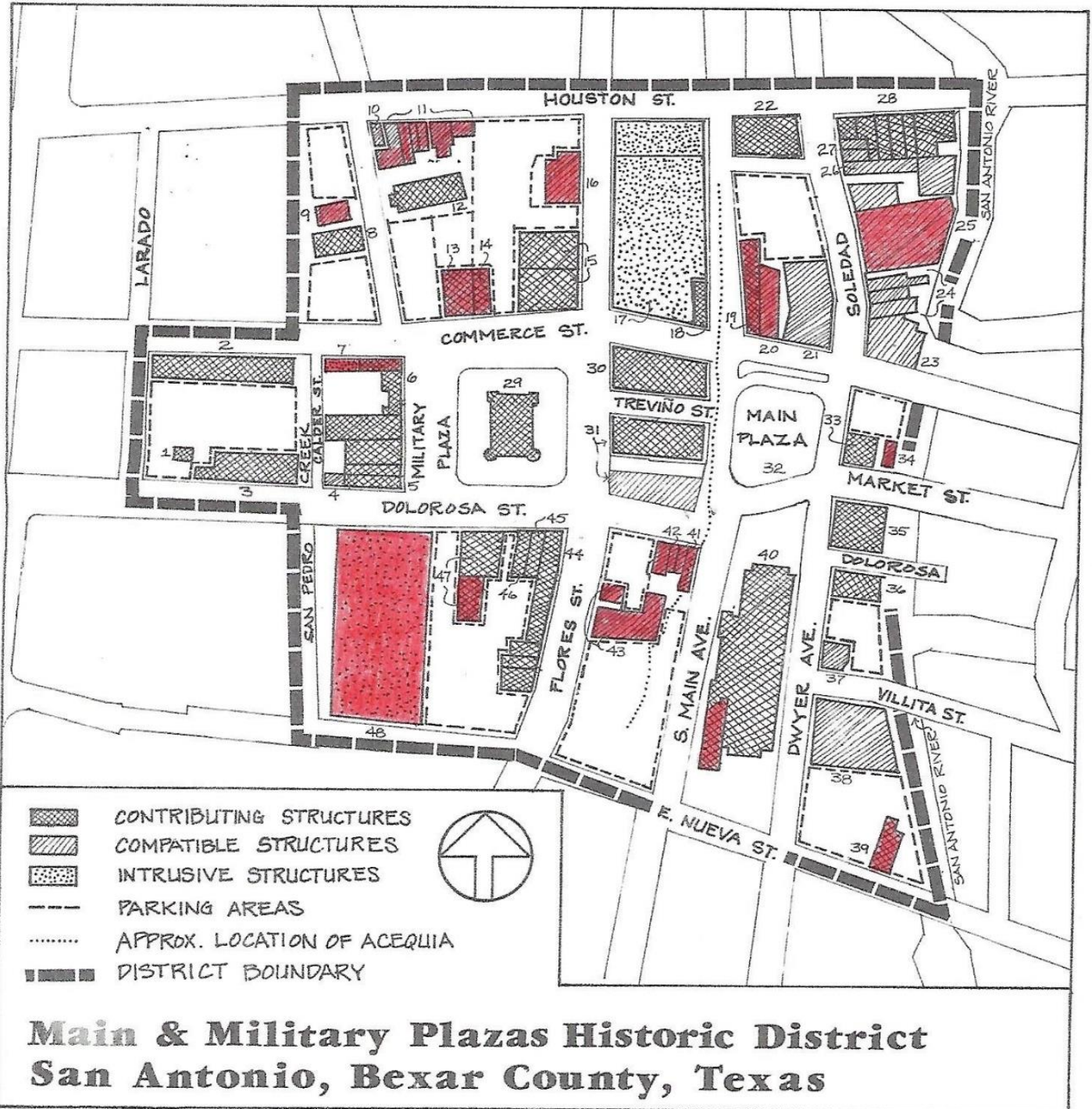
Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

1979 NR map



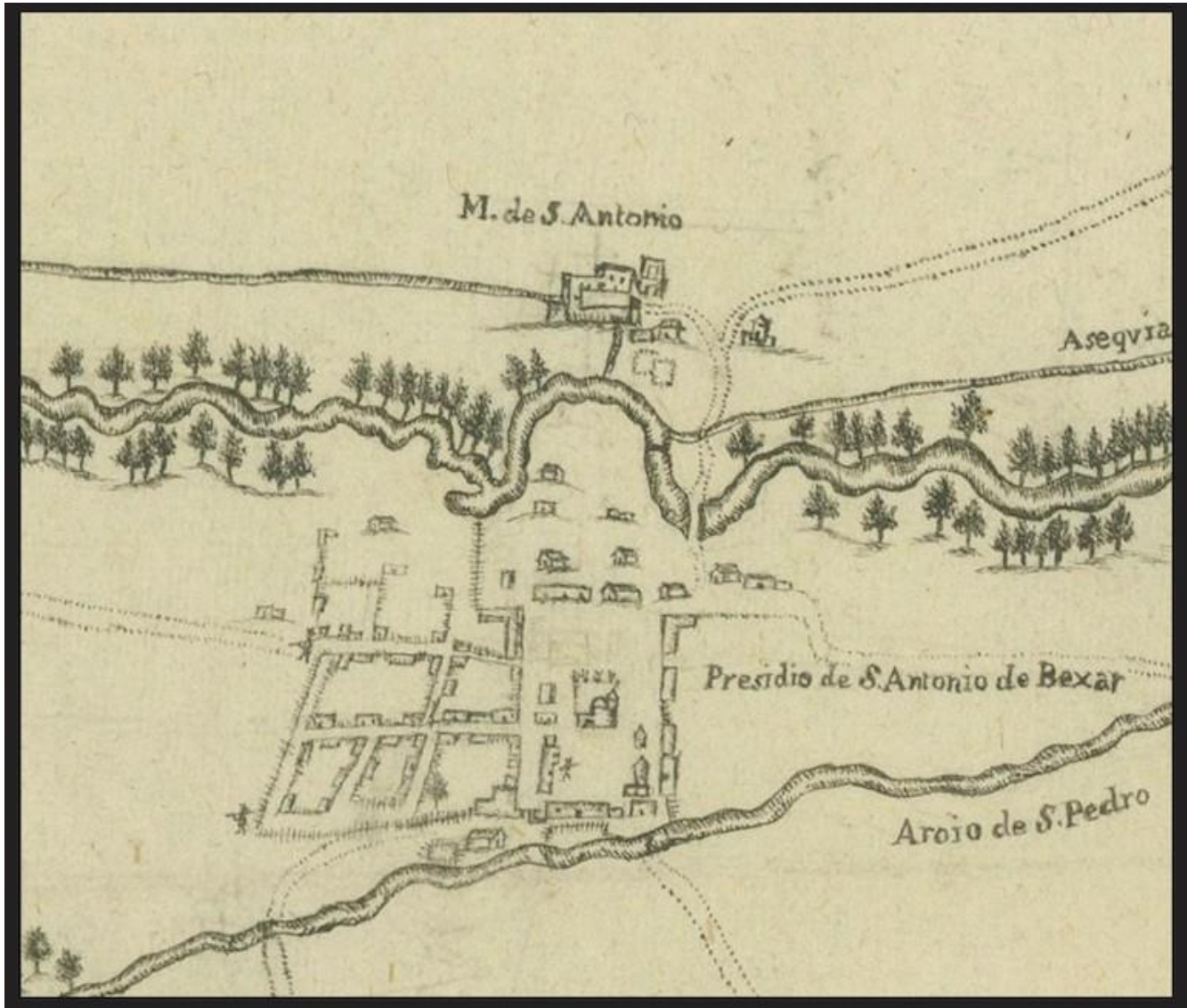
Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

1979 NR map showing demolitions (shaded in red)



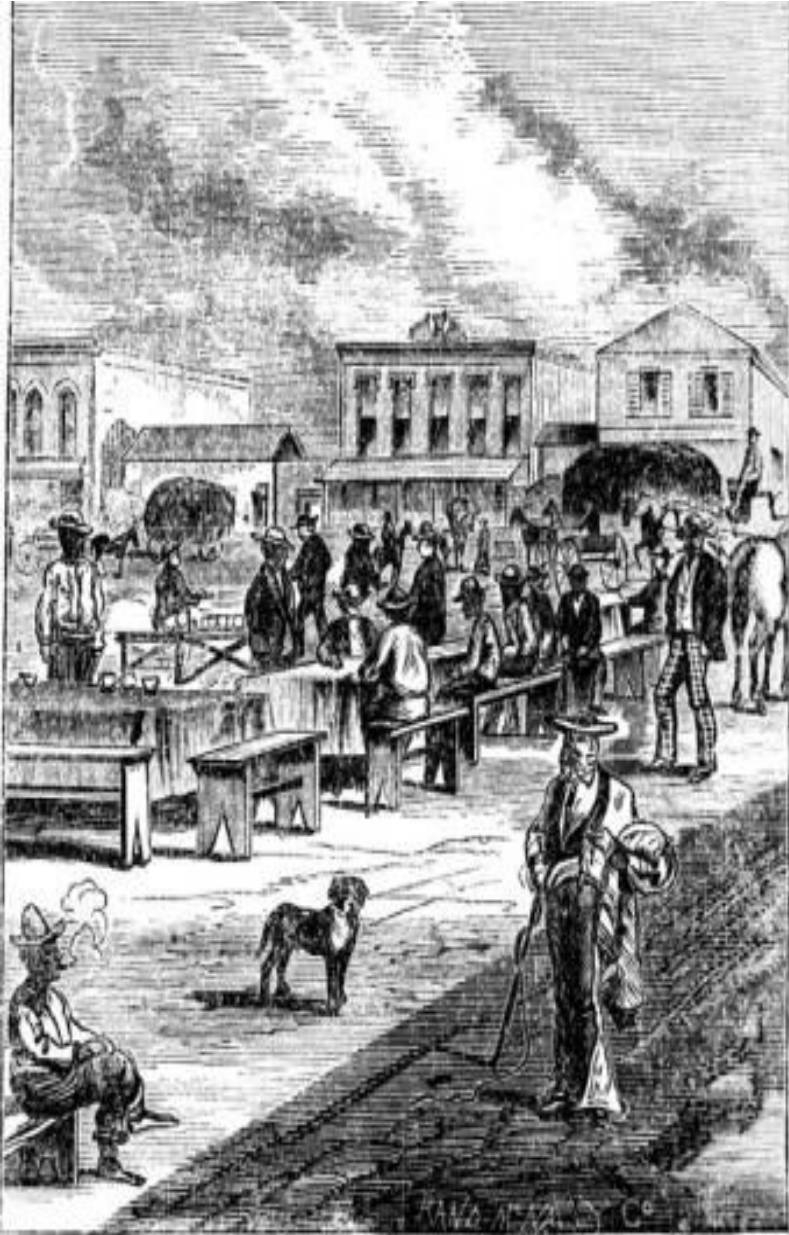
Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Portion of 1764 map drawn by Luis Antonio Menchaca of San Antonio, TX. Looking east, it shows the Presidio (Military Plaza) and Main Plaza in the foreground as well as San Pedro Creek. Note the dome of San Fernando Church. The Great Bend of the San Antonio River and the Mission (the Alamo) are in the background. (Courtesy of John Carter Brown Library Map Collection, 2018).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Chili stands and hay wagons in Military Plaza with c. 1857 Kalteyer Drug Store at rear, which is now the site of the old Kress Store. (Courtesy of Institute of Texan Cultures special collections).



BREAKFAST IN MARKET SQUARE, SAN ANTONIO.

Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

1885 Chili stands on south side of Military Plaza with extant Kotula Building in background. (Courtesy UTSA Special Collections).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Map of 1836 battle of Alamo that also illustrates early town with only one bridge. Note northern development of downtown with no bridges or crossings. Only Commerce Street Bridge spans the San Antonio River. (Courtesy of Portal to Texas History, n.d. map drawn by Andrew Jackson Houston).

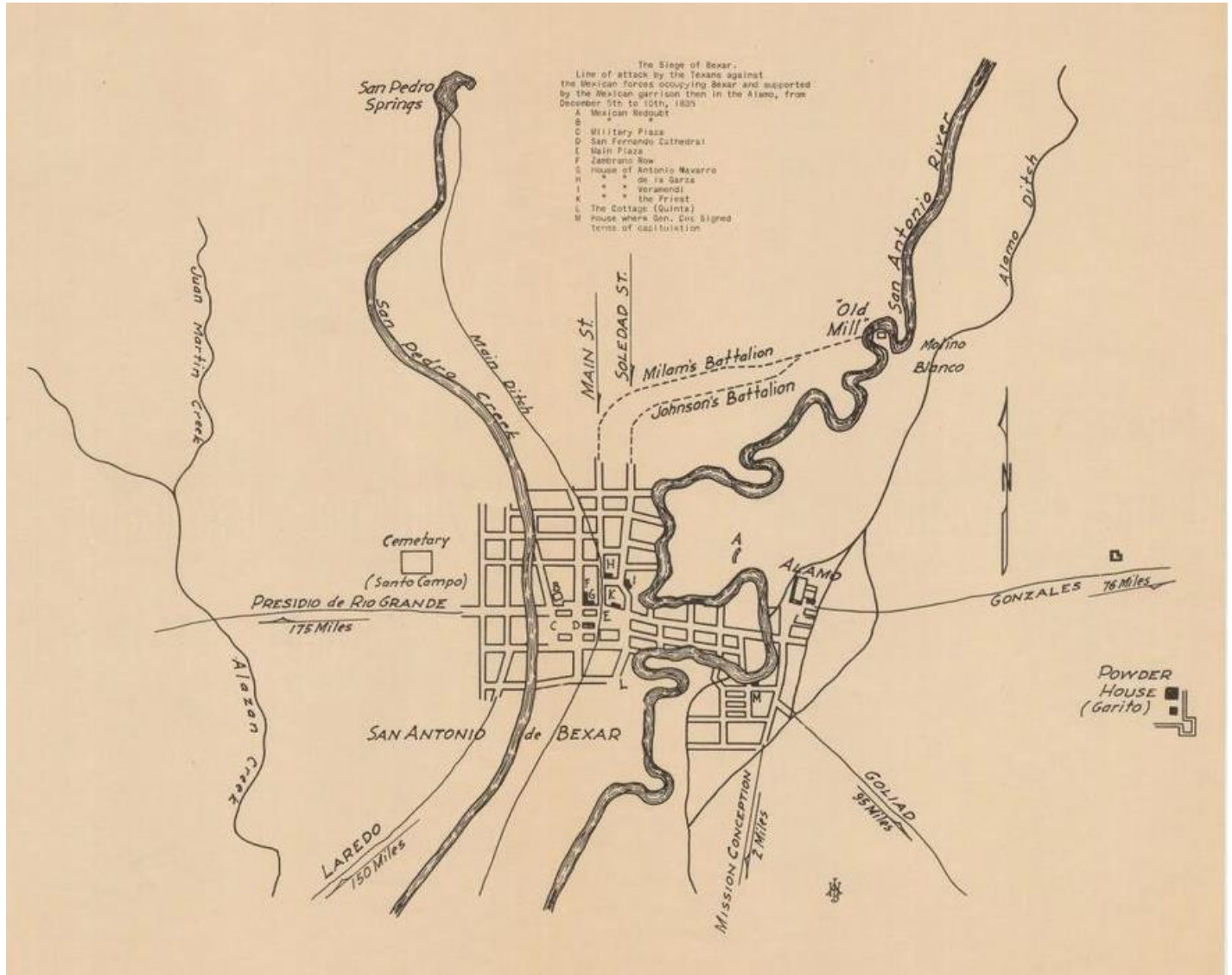


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Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Frost Bank Building fronting on Main Plaza, c 1906. (Courtesy UTSA Special Collections).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

National Bank of Commerce building, ca. 1919, at the northwest corner of Commerce and Soledad before it was stripped of ornamentation and re-clad in plain red brick in 1975. (Courtesy UTSA Special Collections).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Frost Motor Bank, c1965. (Courtesy of Frost History website).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Frost Building on Houston Street, c1909. Replaced by Frost Tower (Courtesy of Institute of Texan Cultures).



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Looking east on Commerce Street at Soledad Street, Berns Building on the left, 1956. (Courtesy of Institute of Texan Cultures photo collection)



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Northeast corner of Soledad and Commerce streets, Berns Building has been re-clad, undated photo. (Courtesy of Institute of Texan Cultures photo collection)



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #1: Main Plaza, 100 Main Plaza, camera facing south



Photo #2: San Fernando Cathedral (front), 115 Main Plaza, East façade, camera facing west



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #3: Bexar County Courthouse, 100 Main Plaza, North façade, camera facing south



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #4: Municipal Building, 103 or 114 S. Main, Northeast oblique, camera facing southwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #5: City Hall, 100 Military Plaza, East façade, Camera facing southeast



Photo #6: Military Plaza, 100 Military Plaza, North façade, Camera facing south



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #7: Spanish Governors Palace, 105 Military Plaza, East façade, camera facing west



Photo #8: Vogel Belt / Plaza de Armas, 111, 115, 117 Military Plaza, East oblique, camera facing west



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #9: Commercial Buildings on Dolorosa Street, 406, 408, 414-418 Dolorosa Street, Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast



Photo #10: San Fernando Cathedral (back), 115 Main Plaza, West façade, camera facing east



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #11: Continental Hotel, 332 W. Commerce Street, Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast



Photo #12: Melchoir de la Garza House, 100 S. Laredo Street, West façade, camera facing east



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #13: Central Candy Co. / Artes Graficas, 113-119 Cameron Street, East façade, camera facing west



Photo #14: Old Bexar County Jail, 120 Cameron Street, West façade, camera facing east



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #15: South Flores Facades, 211 W. Commerce Street, 111 & 113 N. Flores Street, Northeast oblique, camera facing southwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #16: Frost Tower, 100 Houston Street, North façade, camera facing southeast



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #17: Frost Bank Parking Garage, 109 N. Main, 117 W. Commerce Street, West façade, camera facing east



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #18: Rand Building, 110 E. Houston Street, Northeast oblique, camera facing southwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #19: Savoy Hotel, 122 W. Houston Street, North façade, camera facing south



Photo #20: Book Building & University Block, 140, 122 W. Houston Street, Northeast oblique, facing southwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #21: Soledad Block, 102-118 Soledad Street, southwest oblique, camera facing northeast



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #22: Alameda Theater, 303-314 W. Houston Street, Northeast oblique, camera facing southwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #23: Alameda Theater, 303-314 W. Houston Street, Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast



Photo #24: Alameda Theater Block, 327-345 Commerce, Southwest oblique, camera facing northeast



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #25: La Feria Block, 400, 418 W. Commerce Street, Northeast façade, camera facing southwest



Photo #26: La Feria Block, 703 Dolorosa, Southeast façade, camera facing northwest



Main and Military Plazas Historic District (Period of Significance and Boundary Increase), San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo #27: La Feria Block, 400-418 W. Commerce, Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast



- end -