

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS OF THE
RIP RAP #69 PHASE IIC PART IV
SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT CODE: 03-650B5-024CIIH
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Prepared for
ADAMS ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.
12018 Las Nubes
San Antonio, Texas 78233

Prepared by
Abigail Peyton

SWCA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
4407 Monterey Oaks Blvd.
Building 1, Suite 110
Austin, Texas 78749
www.swca.com

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INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resources constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the City of San Antonio (COSA) Rip Rap #69, Phase IIC, Part IV project area located in central San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas (Figure 1). The purpose of this constraints analysis is to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the project area and to assess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources. The goal is to provide information for project planning and development, as well as estimates on possible future work that may be required for regulatory compliance.

This report documents the results of the cultural resources background review and assessment of possible historic property and archaeological site locations for the project area. An archaeological survey of the project area was not conducted as an element of this research. This constraints analysis does not constitute any form of archaeological clearance for the project area, but may be used to coordinate future cultural resource compliance with city and/or state agencies.

DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA

The project area includes Southcross Boulevard (Blvd.), starting at Commercial Avenue (Ave.) and continuing east for approximately 0.7 miles and terminating at Marney Plaza (Figure 2). Improvements will also be conducted on the three intersecting cross streets in between Canavan Ave. and Bercham Ave. In all, the project area has a total length of 1.18 miles and construction activities will take place within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The project area is within a heavily developed residential area and can be found on the Terrell Wells, Texas United States Geological

Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Development or improvement projects in Texas can come under the purview of two primary cultural resource regulations, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Antiquities Code of Texas. Both are administered by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) located in Austin, the State Historic Preservation Officer of Texas. If an undertaking is federally permitted, licensed, funded, or partially funded, the project must comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, as amended. Section 106 requires that every federal agency consider the undertaking's effects on historic properties. The process begins with a historic properties inventory and evaluation. Under Section 106, any property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is considered significant. The NRHP is a historic resources inventory maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This list includes buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and archaeological resources. These regulations are defined in "Protection of Historic Properties," 36 CFR 800 of the NHPA. Examples of projects in Texas requiring compliance with the NHPA include those conducted on federal lands or ones acquiring a federal permit such as a Section 404 permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Cultural resource sites, historic and prehistoric, located on lands owned or controlled by the State of Texas or one of its political subdivisions are protected by the Antiquities Code of Texas (Code). The Code requires state agencies and political subdivisions of the state, including cities, counties, river authorities, municipal utility districts and school

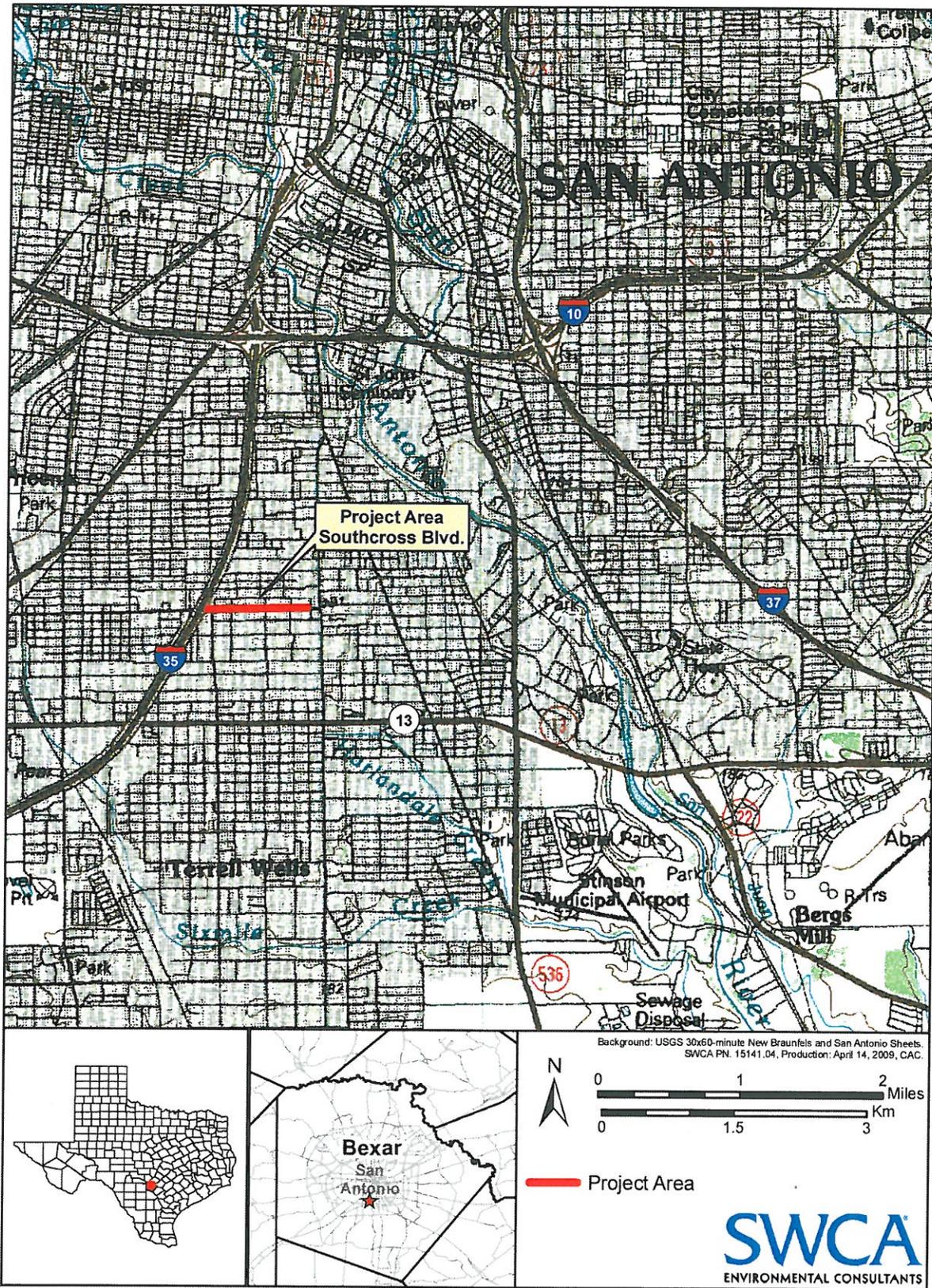


Figure 1. Vicinity Map.



Figure 2. Project Location Map.

districts to notify the THC of any action on public land involving five or more acres of ground disturbance; 5,000 or more cubic yards of earth moving; or those that have the potential to disturb recorded archeological sites. The THC's Archeology Division manages compliance with the Code, including the issuance of formal Antiquities Permits, which stipulate the conditions under which scientific investigations will occur. Under the Code, any historic or prehistoric property located on state land may be determined eligible as a State Archeological Landmark (SAL). Projects in Texas that typically necessitate compliance with the Code include entities such as the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), cities such as San Antonio, counties, and others such as the San Antonio Water System (SAWS).

Finally, in Bexar County and the City of San Antonio, the Historic Preservation and Design Section of the City of San Antonio's Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-360 to 35-634) mandates various levels of historic preservation applicable to many development projects. This regulation allows for the review of projects by the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) to assess a project's potential effects to known cultural resources.

METHODS

The cultural resources constraints analysis consisted of a background cultural resource and environmental literature search of the project area. An SWCA archaeologist reviewed the Terrell Wells, Texas USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) and searched the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas online database for any previously recorded surveys and historic or prehistoric archaeological sites located in or near the project area. Previous cultural resource investigations listed

on the Atlas are limited to projects under purview of the Antiquities Code of Texas or the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Also, projects under these regulations may not be posted on Atlas due to a delay in the completion of field work and the completion of the report. In addition to identifying recorded archaeological sites, the review included information on the following types of cultural resources: NRHP properties, SALs, Official Texas Historical Markers, Registered Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. The archaeologist also examined the following sources: the *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas* (Taylor et al. 1991) and the *Geologic Atlas of Texas-San Antonio Sheet* (Fisher 1983).

Utilizing this information, the project area was assessed for the potential to contain archaeological and/or historical materials. The project area was then divided into high, medium, and low-probability areas, based on the potential to contain archaeological and historical resources. High-probability areas are defined as locales that possess or have a high likelihood of containing significant cultural resources. These areas are generally identified by distinct landforms and deposits that have been shown in other regional surveys to contain archaeological sites. In the case of historic resources, high-probability areas are identified by the presence of historic-age properties within project area. Moderate or low-probability areas are defined as locales where archaeological and/or historical resources are likely absent or have limited potential to be preserved or significant (e.g., upland settings or areas with intensive development).

RESULTS

GEOLOGY/SOILS

The geology of the project area is mapped as Pleistocene-age fluvial terrace deposits and

consists of gravel, sand, silt and clay located generally above floodplains along entrenched streams (Fisher 1983).

The soils of the project area are mapped as Houston black clay, terrace, 0 to 1 percent slopes and Lewisville silty clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes (Taylor et al. 1991). These soils are of the Lewisville-Houston Black, terrace, association and consist of deep calcareous clayey soils developed in old alluvium (Taylor et al. 1991).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The results of the background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area. The Rodfei Cemetery is located approximately 0.8 miles north of the project area. A large area survey was conducted by the THC in 1976 northeast of the project area. This survey resulted in the documentation of numerous sites along with the designation of an extensive National Register District, however these properties are all located beyond the one-mile search radius.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

In general, the project area is situated within a high-occupancy residential area and is underlain by silty clayey Lewisville-Houston Black soils with little potential for subsurface archeological deposits. Such soils types typically confine archeological materials to surface contexts. Had any prehistoric or historic cultural resources once been located within the project area, they would have been destroyed long ago by construction activities associated with the construction of the roadways as well as the encroaching development. Analysis of the aerial photography indicated that the majority of the project area has been moderately to severely disturbed by residential

development. Based upon the soils, geology, topography of the landscape, and background research, the possibility that intact archeological resources will be present in the project area is low to non-existent.

Regarding historic resources, an assessment of the age and construction styles of the residences along the project area is beyond the scope of this study. However, as the proposed project is contained in the existing street ROW and does not include any permanent above-ground features, it is unlikely that any historic resources will be directly or indirectly impacted by the project.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the COSA Rip Rap #69, Phase IIC, Part IV project area in central San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The purpose of the constraints analysis was to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the property and to assess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources.

The background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area. The project area is situated within a heavily developed residential area with no waterways or alluvial landforms present. With this in mind, it is highly unlikely that any intact, buried cultural resources are located within the project area. Given the amount of disturbances coupled with the nature of the local geology and soils, the potential for archeological sites within the project area is considered low. As such, it is unlikely that an archeological survey will be necessary or required by the regulatory agencies.

Should compliance with cultural resource regulations such as the National Historic Preservation Act or the Antiquities Code of Texas be required for any future development of the property, an exact scope of any requisite cultural resource investigations would need to be developed in coordination with the involved regulatory agency, likely the THC or HPO.

REFERENCES CITED

Fisher, W.L.

1983 *Geologic Atlas of Texas, San Antonio Sheet*. Bureau of Economic Geology, The University of Texas at Austin.

Taylor, F. B., R. B. Hailey, and D. L. Richmond

1991 *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas*. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.