

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS OF THE  
SOUTH LAREDO STREET PROJECT  
SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT CODE: 05-615C7-178CIPI  
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Prepared for  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the City of San Antonio (COSA) South Laredo Street study 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 study 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 study area. An archaeological survey of the study area was not conducted as an element of this research. This constraints analysis does not constitute any form of archaeological clearance for the study area, but may be used to coordinate future cultural resource compliance with city and/or state agencies.

## **DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA**

The study area is located along South Laredo Street on either side of the Apache Creek crossing just west of IH-10 (Figure 2). The project will involve improvements to South Laredo Street within the existing right-of-way (ROW) extending approximately 150 feet on either side of the creek crossing for a total project length of 300 feet. The study area can be found on the San Antonio West, 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 districts to notify the THC of any action on public land involving five or more acres of ground

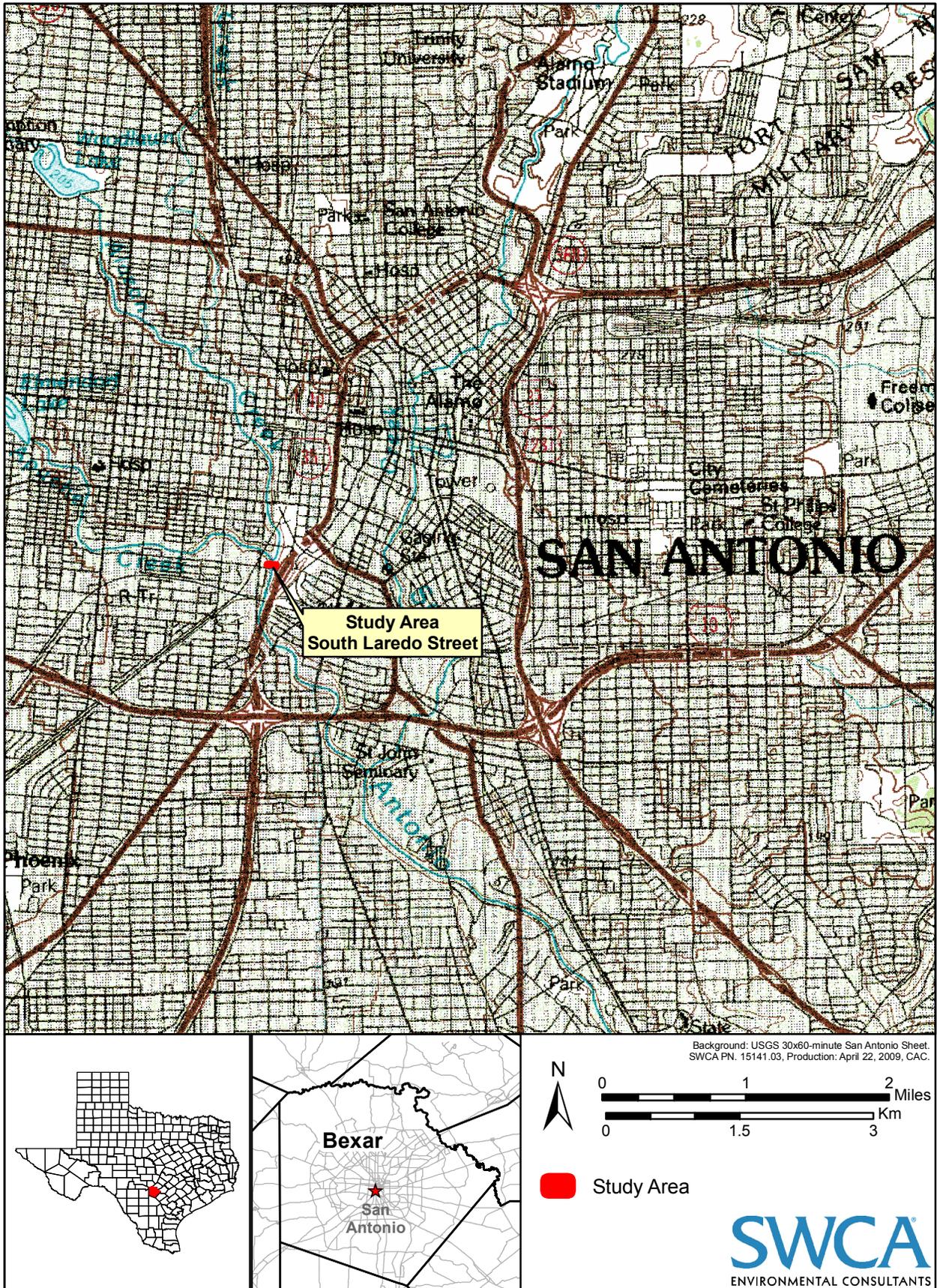
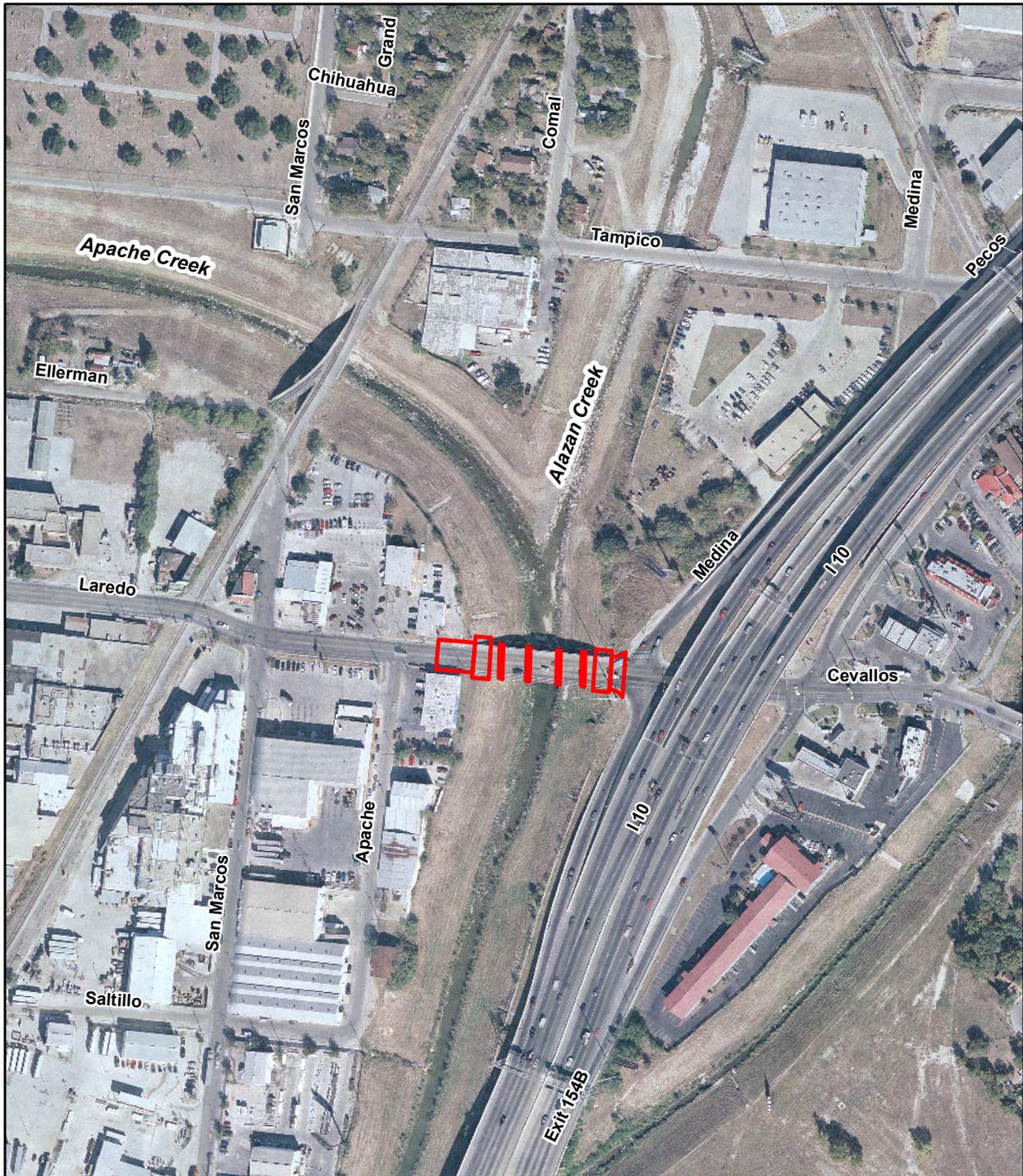
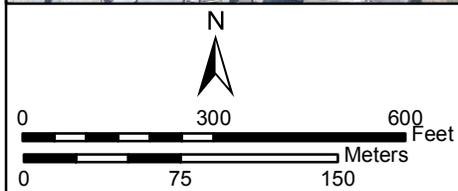


Figure 1. Vicinity Map.



Background: 2006 City of San Antonio imagery, San Antonio West Quadrangle.  
 SWCA PN. 15141.03, Production: April 24, 2009, CAC.



 Study Area

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Figure 2. Project Location Map.

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 study area. An SWCA archaeologist reviewed the San Antonio West, 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 study 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 study area was assessed for the potential to contain archaeological and/or historical materials. The study 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 study 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 study area is mapped as Fluvial terrace deposits and consists of gravel, sand, silt, and clay (Fisher 1983).

The soils of the study area are mapped as Trinity and Frio soils, frequently flooded (Taylor et al. 1991). These soils are of the Venus-Frio-Trinity association and consist of deep, calcareous soils on bottom lands and terraces (Taylor et al. 1991).

## ***BACKGROUND REVIEW***

The results of the background review determined that the study area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources. Additionally, no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the study area.

A total of six area surveys, twenty-three previously recorded archeological sites, two National Register Properties, three National Register Districts, seven historical markers, and one cemetery are located within one mile of the study area.

The previous investigations consist of area surveys located north and east of study area. These surveys were conducted on behalf of various local and federal agencies such as the Fort Worth Corps of Engineers (FTWCOE), COSA, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The largest area survey, conducted by HUD in 1981, resulted in the documentation of eighteen of the twenty-three archeological sites within one mile of the study area. These eighteen sites consist entirely of standing brick structures that date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most the structures represent residences, shops, brothels, and mills that made up this community in central San Antonio. The remaining five sites consist of two historic artifact scatters and three historic homesteads.

The two National Register Properties are the Jose Antonio Navarro Elementary School located 0.7 miles north of the study area and the Carl Hilmar Guenther House located 0.8 miles

east of the study area. The National Register Districts are located east of IH-35 and consist of the King William Historic District, US San Antonio Arsenal, and the Blue Star Street Industrial Historic District.

Five the seven historical markers are bundled together approximately 0.4 miles north of the study area. These markers commemorate distinct individuals in the Texas Revolution such as Don Juan Ximenes, Jose Antonio Navarro, Col. Jose Francisco Ruiz, Captain Jose Antonio Menchaca, and Placido Olivarri. The remaining two historical markers are located east of IH-35 within the King William Historic District and denote the location of the Edward Stevens house and the JM and Birdie Nix house. In addition to these properties, the San Fernando #1 Cemetery is located approximately 0.4 miles north of the study area.

## ***ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT***

The project will consists of improvements along South Laredo Street on either side of Apache Creek. The study area is located within a highly urban area that is bordered to the east by the IH-35 corridor and to the west by commercial and residential development. Based on aerial photography, the Apache Creek waterway has been highly modified in order to accommodate storm water surges and currently is flanked by cleared broad maintained grassy terraces. No riparian vegetation remains intact along Apache Creek, which further attests to the severe modification that has taken place along the creek banks. With this in mind, the potential for intact alluvial landforms and buried prehistoric archeological deposits in this area can be considered very low.

The background review of the study area determined that the study area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no previously recorded sites are located within or directly adjacent to the study area. The back-

ground review did reveal that the all of the surrounding archeological sites consist of historic-age structures or artifact scatters associated with urban life in central San Antonio. As no structures are located within the study area, the probability for historic resources within the study area is also very low.

developed in coordination with the involved regulatory agency, likely the THC or HPO.

## **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the COSA South Laredo Street study 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 study area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the study area. Due to heavy modifications to the Apache Creek channel, it is unlikely that any intact, buried prehistoric archeological deposits will be located in the study area. Similarly, while there are a number of historic structures recorded in a one mile radius of the study area, no structures are located within the study area thus eliminating the likelihood for historic sites within the study area. With this in mind, an archaeological survey of the project area is not considered necessary nor is it likely to be 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

## ***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.