



**CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS  
 HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
 MEETING  
 CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
 550 LANDA STREET**



**TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025 at 8:30 AM**

**AGENDA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A) Approval of the March 11, 2025, regular meeting [25-364](#) minutes.

**4. CITIZENS' COMMUNICATIONS**

*This time is for citizens to address the Historic Landmark Commission on issues and items of concerns not on this agenda. There will be no Historic Landmark Commission action at this time.*

**PRESENTATIONS**

- A) Presentation and update on the Draft Historic [25-381](#) Preservation section of the Land Development Ordinance

**5. INDIVIDUAL ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- A) HST25-092: Discuss and consider a recommendation to [25-360](#) the Texas Historical Commission on an application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination for Central New Braunfels Historic District, roughly bounded by S Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W Zink Street to the northwest.
- B) Discuss and consider creating a survey and designation [25-367](#) subcommittee and ways to be more proactive with local landmark and district designations.

**6. STAFF UPDATES**

- A) May is Preservation Month! [25-380](#)

7. **COMAL COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION UPDATES**

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify the above Notice of Meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the New Braunfels City Hall.

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Board Liaison

NOTE: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, or large print, are requested to contact the City Secretary's Office at (830) 221-4010 at least two (2) work days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.



# Historic Landmark Commission Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street  
New Braunfels, TX

**4/8/2025**

Agenda Item No. A)

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**SUBJECT:**

Approval of the March 11, 2025, regular meeting minutes.

**DRAFT - MINUTES  
OF THE NEW BRAUNFELS HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING OF TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2025**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 8:32am.

**2. ROLL CALL**

The following Commissioners were present: Justin Ball, Jillian Bliss, Nathan Feingold, Richard Hillyer, Teresa Johnson, Christi Sims, and Thomas Tumlinson.

The following Commissioners were absent: Lynn Norvell and Susan Sonier.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A) Approval of the February 11, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

**Motion by Commissioner Ball, seconded by Commissioner Hillyer, to approve the February 11, 2025 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

**4. CITIZENS' COMMUNICATIONS**

*This time is for citizens to address the Historic Landmark Commission on issues and items of concerns not on this agenda. There will be no Historic Landmark Commission action at this time.*

**No one spoke.**

**5. INDIVIDUAL ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

A) HLC Case HST25-065: Discuss and consider a Certificate of Alteration to install a new monument sign and replace existing wall signage on the building at 430 W Mill Street.

**Mary Lovell presented the aforementioned item.**

**Chair Johnson invited the applicants to speak on the item and asked if they had received prior approval for the proposed signage from the Texas Historical Commission.**

**Jason Walters and TJ Grossi elaborated on the request and addressed Chair Johnson's inquiry regarding Texas Historical Commission**



approval of the proposed signage.

Discussion followed regarding the approval status from the Texas Historical Commission, clarification of the request, construction materials, and the applicants plans regarding the existing unicorn statue on the property.

Chair Johnson opened the public hearing and asked if anyone in attendance would like to speak on the item.

Jim Holster asked for clarification of the request and if it would effect the existing historical markers on the building.

Brief discussion followed clarifying the scope of work.

Chair Johnson closed the public hearing.

Chair Johnson asked if there was any further discussion or motion.

Motion by Commissioner Sims, seconded by Commissioner Bliss, to approve the item with the condition that the applicants also receive approval from the Texas Historical Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

B) HLC Case HST25-066: Discuss and consider a Certificate of Alteration to install a new monument sign and install new wall signage on the building at 407 W Mill Street

Mary Lovell presented the aforementioned item.

Chair Johnson asked if there were any questions for staff.

Discussion followed on trees proposed for removal from the property and alternatives to removal.

Jason Walters and TJ Grossi elaborated on the intent of the request discussing the trees proposed for removal, proposed signage, landscaping requirements, the condition of the existing structure, and plans to revitalize the site.

Discussion followed on trees proposed for removal, landscaping requirements, signage permitting, tree removal requirements, property constraints, and the proposed signage.

Motion by Commissioner Sims, seconded by Vice-Chair Feingold, to approve the item as presented. Motion carried (5-2-0) with Chair Johnson and Commissioner Bliss in opposition.

6. **STAFF UPDATES**

A) Discussion about how to be more proactive with local landmark and district designations.

Mary Lovell stated that staff updates would be provided at the following regular meeting of the Commission.

7. **COMAL COUNTY HISTORIC COMMISSION UPDATES**

Chair Johnson announced the recent proclamation by the Comal County Historical Commission recognizing the listing of the Frueholz House and Frueholz Medical Building in the National Register of Historic Places.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:01am.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
COMMISSION CHAIR

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
COMMISSION LIAISON

**4/8/2025**

Agenda Item No. A)

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**PRESENTER**

Matt Goebel, Clarion Associates

Jenny Baker, Clarion Associates

**SUBJECT:**

Presentation and update on the Draft Historic Preservation section of the Land Development Ordinance.

4/8/2025

Agenda Item No. A)

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**PRESENTER**

Katie Totman, HPO

**SUBJECT:**

HST25-092: Discuss and consider a recommendation to the Texas Historical Commission on an application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination for Central New Braunfels Historic District, roughly bounded by S Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W Zink Street to the northwest.

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning & Development Services**BACKGROUND:**

As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of New Braunfels is required to provide a recommendation on any National Register nominations within City limits. A letter was received from the Texas Historical Commission in March 2025 stating that the Downtown area has been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination includes the area roughly bounded by S Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W Zink Street to the northwest. This includes a large part of the local Downtown Historic District, two properties in the Mill Street Historic District, several local landmarks, and other non-designated properties. Unlike local historic designations, inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places carries no regulatory restrictions. However, as mentioned above, many of the properties in the proposed boundaries are already locally designated as historic. The draft nomination is included in the attachments.

The Central New Braunfels Historic District represents a vital part of the city's cultural and architectural heritage, encompassing approximately 100 acres of the original 1845 town plan. Located in the heart of New Braunfels, the district is defined by its historic boundaries-S. Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, N. Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W. Zink Street to the northwest. The district's layout follows a distinctive skewed grid pattern, branching out from Main Plaza, which remains the city's historic and civic centerpiece. Main Plaza serves as an open public space, anchored by the Comal County Courthouse at its northwest corner, and is surrounded by a variety of historic commercial, governmental, residential, educational, and religious buildings.

Reflecting the city's evolution from a mid-nineteenth-century German settlement to a thriving commercial, industrial, and tourism hub, the district showcases a diverse range of building styles and materials. Historic development patterns have resulted in a natural clustering of property types-county government buildings and commercial blocks dominate the core near Main Plaza, while residential areas extend toward the district's southwest and northeast edges. These residences range from modest early single-family homes to larger

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bungalows and center-passage houses. Educational and religious buildings are interspersed throughout the area. The proposed district contains a total of 197 resources, of which 152 (77%) are considered contributing structures that uphold the historic character of the area. Additionally, 19 resources are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This high percentage of contributing properties underscores the district's significance and its potential for continued preservation and enhancement as a key cultural and economic asset for New Braunfels.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

Staff recommends approval of the listing of the proposed Central New Braunfels historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

Map 6. Overview map showing the contributing and noncontributing resources within the Central New Braunfels Historic District. Source: HHM, March 2025.

### Central New Braunfels Historic District C/NC Map





P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711-2276  
512-463-6100  
thc.texas.gov

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Neal Linnartz  
Mayor, City of New Braunfels  
550 Landa Street  
New Braunfels, Texas 78130

Re: National Register of Historic Places nomination for Central New Braunfels Historic District, roughly bounded by S. Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N. Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W. Zink Street to the northwest, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

Dear Mayor Linnartz:

A valid nomination to the National Register of Historic Places was recently submitted for the above-referenced property for review by our office. This letter serves as formal notice of the nomination from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC), which is also the state agency responsible for administering the Texas Certified Local Government Program (CLG) program under state and federal legislation. Our staff has reviewed the nomination and will forward it to the State Board of Review (SBR) for their consideration and possible action at their public meeting on **May 17, 2025 at Fair Park Visitor Center, 3535 Grand Ave., Dallas, Texas.**

*In addition, we invite you to attend a **public information meeting** to discuss the nomination process and its implications for property owners. The meeting will take place on **March 13, 2025 at 5:30p.m. in Schumann Hall at First Protestant Church, 172 West Coll Street, New Braunfels, Texas.***

The National Register is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation pursuant to the National Preservation Act of 1966, in the support of public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic resources.

As a participant in the CLG program, the local historic preservation review commission, board or committee and the chief elected official for **New Braunfels** is required to separately notify the THC's National Register and CLG program offices as to their opinions in regard to the nomination no later than **May 16, 2025.**

A copy of the draft nomination and meeting information is on the THC website: [www.thc.texas.gov/sbrmeeting](http://www.thc.texas.gov/sbrmeeting). We request the CLG representative to coordinate review by the landmark board in advance of the State Board of Review meeting. Compliance with the provisions of the CLG program is a state and federal obligation that could jeopardize the city's CLG status if compliance is not met.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter or if we can be of further assistance, please contact the THC's National Register program staff at [nr@thc.texas.gov](mailto:nr@thc.texas.gov) or (512) 463-6046. For questions regarding the CLG program, please contact Kelly Little at [kelly.little@thc.texas.gov](mailto:kelly.little@thc.texas.gov). Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this federal review process.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Tipton  
National Register Coordinator  
for Joseph Bell, Executive Director

cc: Katie Totman, HPO, City of New Braunfels

# SBR Draft

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### 1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Central New Braunfels Historic District  
Other name/site number: NA  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

### 2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by S. Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N. Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W. Zink Street to the northwest  
City or town: New Braunfels State: Texas County: Comal

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

State Historic Preservation Officer	
Signature of certifying official / Title	Date
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



Central New Braunfels Historic District, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property:** Private, Public-Local

**Category of Property:** District

### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
134	40	buildings
1	0	sites
1	2	structures
0	0	objects
136	42	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 19 (Note that the 3 noncontributing resources were also previously listed).

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions:** (see page 11)

**Current Functions:** (see page 11)

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Romanesque, Folk Victorian

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Italian Renaissance, Mission Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Prairie School, Craftsman, Commercial

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne, Art Deco

MIXED

NO STYLE

OTHER: German vernacular, Eclectic, Rustic, National, Ranch

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Brick, Stucco, Wood, Stone, Metal, Concrete, Adobe

**Narrative Description** (see pages xx-xx)

Central New Braunfels Historic District, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Ethnic Heritage: German, Architecture

Period of Significance: 1845-1975

Significant Dates: 1845

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

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

Architect/Builder: Architects: Dielmann, Leo M. J.; Gordon, James Riely; Coughlin and Atlee Ayers; Schmidt, Jeremiah; Thielepape, W. C. A.; Seutter, C. V. and Alister Shand; Wetmore, James A.; Smith, Harvey P.; Phelps and Dewees; Langkopf, Jacob; Corgan, Jack and W. J. Moore

Builders: Moeller, Alwin Carl; Moeller, Adolph F.; Moeller, H. H.; Clemens, Kathinka; Krause, Friedrich; Kleinhans, Johann; Sippel, Walter; Herry, Alf; Herry, Christian; Hanz, Edwin A.; Fischer and Lamie

Narrative Statement of Significance (see pages xx-xx)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see pages xx-xx)

### 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): "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," Prepared for the City of New Braunfels, 2008.

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** 99.5

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 29.704594°N | Longitude: -98.127756°W |
| 2. Latitude: 29.705396°N | Longitude: -98.122242°W |
| 3. Latitude: 29.702917°N | Longitude: -98.123250°W |
| 4. Latitude: 29.701854°N | Longitude: -98.120782°W |
| 5. Latitude: 29.700084°N | Longitude: -98.119237°W |
| 6. Latitude: 29.699785°N | Longitude: -98.121147°W |
| 7. Latitude: 29.701575°N | Longitude: -98.124956°W |
| 8. Latitude: 29.700661°N | Longitude: -98.127729°W |
| 9. Latitude: 29.700843°N | Longitude: -98.129339°W |

**Verbal Boundary Description:** See page 54.

**Boundary Justification:** See page 54.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Kristina Kupferschmid/Architectural Historian  
Organization: HHM & Associates, Inc.  
Street & number: P.O. Box 9648  
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78766  
Email: kkupferschmid@hhminc.com  
Telephone: 512-478-8014  
Date: March 4, 2025

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see pages xx-xx)

**Additional items** (see pages xx-xx)

**Photographs** (see pages xx-xxx)

## Photograph Log

Name of Property: Central New Braunfels Historic District  
City or Vicinity: New Braunfels  
County: Comal County  
State: Texas  
Photographer: Kristina Kupferschmid (HHM Inc.)  
Date: September, October, and November 2023 and May 2024

*All photographs accurately depict property conditions. No changes nor significant deterioration has occurred since the photos were taken in 2023 and 2024.*

### Photo 1

Camera facing northeast toward contributing Main Plaza (Resources 442365 A-G, NRHP 2021) with the contributing courthouse (Resource 864, NRHP 1976) in background.  
Date: November 2, 2023

### Photo 2

Camera facing northeast at contributing Market Plaza (Resource 442364). Note the residences that surround the park.  
Date: November 2, 2023

### Photo 3

Camera facing east, showing the contributing buildings at 343 and 367 Main Plaza (Resources 50 and 49).  
Date: October 3, 2023

### Photo 4

Camera facing north toward the main entrance into the contributing Comal County Courthouse (Resource 864, NRHP 1976) from Main Plaza.  
Date: October 24, 2023

### Photo 5

Camera facing north showing the dense development of the 200 block of the northwest side of W. San Antonio Street.  
Date: October 3, 2023

### Photo 6

Camera facing north showing the commercial development on the northeast side of the 200 and 100 blocks of S. Seguin Avenue. Note the development on the southwest side is set further from the street.  
Date: September 25, 2023

### Photo 7

Camera facing southwest showing contributing Resource 62A at 260 S. Seguin Avenue. Note that the First Protestant Church (NRHP 1971) and the 1910 Queen Anne style Walter Faust House are connected by a rear, non-historic-age addition.  
Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 8

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church (Resource 54551A) at 198 W. Bridge Street. Note that the historic-age church building is connected to the addition to its side via a setback hallway.

Date: October 25, 2023

Photo 9

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing former Guadalupe Hotel (Resource 859, NRHP 1975) at 471 Main Plaza.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 10

Camera facing north showing the contributing house (Resource 944C) at 374 W. Bridge Street.

Date: October 25, 2023

Photo 11

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing L. A. Hoffman Building (Resource 73B) at 167. S. Seguin Avenue. The contributing Krause Building (Resource 73A) is to the right.

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 12

Camera facing south showing the contributing Henne Hardware warehouse (Resource 849) at 221 W. Mill Street. Note that it is set to the rear of the Henne Hardware commercial building on W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 13

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing John Faust house (Resource 6A) at 361 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 14

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing old New Braunfels High School (Resource 1292) at 430 W. Mill Street.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 15

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Gerlich Building, an old car dealership (Resource 842) at 386 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 16

Camera facing south showing a row of contributing former residences that are now offices in the 400 block of S. Seguin Avenue. Resource 213A at 408 S. Seguin Avenue is in the foreground.

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 17

Camera facing north showing the contributing school building (Resource 54551B) at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church at 198 W. Bridge Street.

Date: October 25, 2023

Photo 18

Camera facing southwest showing the contributing one-part commercial block building at 139 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 848).

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 19

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing commercial block building constructed for the phone company at 210 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 431521).

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 20

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing commercial building with residence at the rear at 364 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 103A).

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 21

Camera facing southeast showing the noncontributing, non-historic-age Comal County Courthouse Annex (Resource 863) at 188 N. Seguin Avenue.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 22

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former multi-family dwelling at 189 Comal Avenue (Resource 116A).

Date: May 16, 2024

Photo 23

Camera facing southwest showing the contributing Jahn Building at 494 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 207).

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 24

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Faust Hotel (Resource 61, NRHP 1985) at 240 S. Seguin Avenue.

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 25

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing former Dittlinger office building (Resource 106) at 398 E. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 26

Camera facing north showing the contributing First Protestant Church auditorium (Resource 62B) at 260 S. Seguin Avenue (note that the building faces W. Coll Street).

Date: September 26, 2023

Photo 27

Camera facing north showing the contributing train depot (Resource 840) at 302 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 28

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former Central Fire Station (Resource 45, NRHP 2019) at 131 Hill Avenue.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 29

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former New Braunfels Social Club (Resource 149) at 353 S. Seguin Avenue.

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 30

Camera facing northwest showing the 100 block of the northwest side of W. San Antonio Street with contributing 168 and 142 W. San Antonio Street and noncontributing 401 Main Plaza (Resources 852, 851, and 44893 from left to right). Note that even though it is non-historic-age, Resource 44893 compatibly fits into the historic streetscape.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 31

Camera facing southwest showing the noncontributing, non-historic-age building at 468 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 208A).

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 32

Camera facing southeast the contributing S.V. Pfueller House residence at 170 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 68A).

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 33

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing old Post Office (Resource 854) at 196 N. Castell Avenue.

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 34

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing two-part commercial block building at 249 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 33).

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 35

Camera facing northeast showing the 100 block of N. Castell Avenue with Resource 855, Resource 856, and Resource 857 (from right to left, all contributing).

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 36

Camera facing northwest showing a historic-age, noncontributing former residence converted for reuse for religious purposes at 137 E. Mill Street (Resource 898).

Date: October 25, 2023

Photo 37

Camera facing south showing an altered historic-age commercial building that is noncontributing at 111 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 48).

Date: November 2, 2023

Photo 38

Camera facing north showing the 400 block of Main Plaza (Resources 44895, 859, 858 left to right) at the southwest side of Main Plaza. Note that the historic-age façade remains on the noncontributing Resource 44895; Resources 859 and 858 are contributing.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 39

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Henne Hardware building (Resource 833) at 246 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 40

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing old Henne Hardware tin shop (Resource 834) at 264 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 41

Camera facing north showing Naegelin's Bakery (Resource 70B) and the Stephen Klein House (Resource 70A, NRHP 1970) at 129 S. Seguin Avenue; both are contributing.

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 42

Camera facing southwest showing the contributing Ulrich House (Resource 920) at 259 N. Seguin Avenue.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 43

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing old Plumeyer Bakery (Resource 32A) at 239 W. San Antonio Street.

Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 44

Camera facing northeast showing a contributing hall-and-parlor residence at 325 S. Castell Avenue (Resource 160).

Date: September 26, 2023

Photo 45

Camera facing southwest showing a contributing Craftsman bungalow at N. Castell Avenue (Resource 937A).

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 46

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing Eiband House at 447 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 223A).

Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 47

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Brauntex Theatre at 290 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 837, NRHP 2008).

Date: October 3, 2023

Photo 48

Camera facing northwest showing a contributing hall-and-parlor residence at 374 W. Mill Street (Resource 923).

Date: October 24, 2023



Photo 49

Camera facing northeast showing the contributing Dr. Koester House at 421 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 222).  
Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 50

Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Folk Victorian residence at 392 W. Mill Street (Resource 922).  
Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 51

Camera facing southeast showing the contributing Voigt House at 308 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 99A).  
Date: October 24, 2023

Photo 52

Camera facing north showing the contributing Faust-Frueholz House at 305 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 150A, NRHP 2024).  
Date: September 26, 2023

Photo 53

Camera facing south showing a contributing Prairie style foursquare residence at 328 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 158).  
Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 54

Camera facing northeast showing a contributing two-part commercial block Commercial style building at 283 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 85A).  
Date: September 25, 2023

Photo 55

Camera facing northwest showing a contributing Ranch house at 324 W. Mill Street (Resource 928).  
Date: October 24, 202

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.

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions:

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant, warehouse, hotel, theater

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, multiple dwelling, garage, shed

EDUCATION: school, school gymnasium

FUNERARY: funeral home

GOVERNMENT: courthouse, post office, city hall, fire station,

LANDSCAPE: plaza

RELIGION: religious facility, church school

SOCIAL: meeting hall

TRANSPORTATION: train depot, bus station

### Current Functions:

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant, warehouse, hotel, theater

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, multiple dwelling, garage, shed

EDUCATION: education-related

GOVERNMENT: courthouse

LANDSCAPE: plaza

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

RELIGION: religious facility, church school

SOCIAL: meeting hall

## Narrative Description

The Central New Braunfels Historic District encompasses approximately 100 acres of the 1845 Original Town plan in central New Braunfels, the seat of Comal County, Texas. The district is roughly bounded by S. Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N. Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W. Zink Street to the northwest. Laid out on a skewed axis, running northwest-southeast, the district's grid emanates out from Main Plaza in the heart of downtown along its primary streets, San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue. The Main Plaza serves as the focal point characterized by open public space with the Comal County Courthouse positioned at the northwest corner. The district contains a diverse collection of historic-age commercial, residential, governmental, educational, and religious resources embodying a variety of building forms, materials, and architectural styles which reflects the city's growth and evolution from an early German settlement in the mid-nineteenth century, to a prosperous commercial, industrial, and tourism center in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The city's historic development patterns created an intermixture of property types, but those with similar historic functions remain clustered together. Large free-standing county government buildings and brick one- and two-part commercial block buildings comprise much of the commercial core around Main Plaza and along San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue. Residential construction, represented in single-family houses, ranging from small, one-room-width and hall-and-parlor plans, to larger center passage and bungalow plans, is primarily located at the southwest and northeast edges of the district. Educational and religious resources are loosely scattered throughout the district. Architectural styles include mid-nineteenth-century German vernacular buildings, late-nineteenth-century Victorian and revival styles ranging from Folk Victorian to Romanesque and Classical Revival, and twentieth century Craftsman, Prairie, Modern styles.<sup>1</sup> The district has minimal modern infill, and some resources have been altered but most are largely intact. Despite changes over the years, the district retains good integrity. The district contains a total of 197 resources, 19 of which were previously listed in the National Register.<sup>2</sup> In total, of the 197 resources, 152 (77 percent) are contributing and 45 (23 percent) are noncontributing.<sup>3</sup>

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## Previously Listed National Register Properties in the Proposed Central New Braunfels Historic District

Comal County Courthouse, #76002017 (Total resources = 1)  
Groos, Carl W. A., House, #884 (Total resources = 1)  
Hotel Faust, #85000922 (Total resources = 1)  
First Protestant Church, #71000926 (Total resources = 1)  
Central Fire Station, #100004753 (Total resources = 1)  
Brauntex Theater, #8000240 (Total resources = 1)  
Main Plaza, #100007074 (Total resources = 7: 5 contributing, 2 noncontributing)  
Guadalupe Hotel, #75001963 (Total resources = 1)  
Faust-Frueholz House and Medical Building, #100010760 (Total Resources = 4: 3 contributing, 1 noncontributing)  
Klein, Stephen House, #70000743 (Total Resources = 1)

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<sup>1</sup> Stylistic classification of resources in the district relied on Virginia McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses* and Kenneth Hafertepe's *The Material Culture of German Texans* for classification guidance on the district's German vernacular resources. Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street* was used for classifying forms and styles of commercial buildings.

<sup>2</sup> Of the 19 resources, 16 are contributing and 3 are noncontributing. The 3 noncontributing were also previously designated as noncontributing resources.

<sup>3</sup> Note that throughout the nomination, Resource ID nos. are parenthetically referenced. This number is used in the Inventory and on the Maps. The nomination uses the Comal County Appraisal District Property Identification Number for Resource ID nos. Properties with multiple resources are identified with a letter subset.

## Setting

New Braunfels is in southeast Comal County in south central Texas. Roughly halfway between Austin to the northeast and San Antonio to the southwest, New Braunfels is located on Interstate Highway (IH) 35 along one of the country's fastest developing corridors. Downtown New Braunfels and the historic district are roughly three-quarters of a mile northwest of IH 35. The city is located along the Balcones Escarpment, falling along the eastern edge of the Texas Hill Country and the western edge of the fertile Blackland Prairie. Two rivers, the Comal River and the Guadalupe River, snake southeasterly through the city. The Comal River, the shortest navigable river in Texas, is roughly one block north of the district's northern boundary. Originating approximately one mile northwest of the district at Comal Springs, the Comal River snakes southeast for roughly two-and-a-half miles before converging with the Guadalupe River. Originating atop the steep escarpment in Kerr County to the northwest, the Guadalupe River is prone to flooding. Construction of Canyon Dam 18 miles to the north in 1964 helped control the river, though flooding since the dam's construction has still occurred. The topography within the district is generally flat, though the land does drop along the banks of the Comal River immediately west of the boundaries, along the railroad tracks. The terrain is hillier to the west and northwest of the district and comprised of limestone, sand, and gravel. The terrain of the Blackland Prairie to the south and east is flatter and comprised of loam soils and clay subsoils. As it is a characteristically commercial district, it lacks much vegetation. Some trees line the streets, and lawns and trees are in the district's two parks, Main Plaza and Market Plaza. Lawns and trees also are characteristic of the district's residential areas.

## Development Patterns and Evolution of the District

The layout—street pattern, orientation, lot size, and lot organization—present in the district today follows the grid pattern laid out in 1845 (Figure 1). The town plan of New Braunfels was laid out on a skewed northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest axis with Main Plaza (Resources 442365 A-G; NRHP 2021) as its center (Photo 1). From Main Plaza, the downtown's two primary transportation arteries—San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue—emanate out in northeast-southwest and northwest-southeast directions. Secondary streets run parallel to the two main streets. In addition to Main Plaza, the original town plan laid out Market Plaza (Resource 442364, Photo 2). Built around 1880, the former International and Great Northern railroad tracks run along Hill Avenue, crossing into the district at W. San Antonio Street and then turning northwest where the tracks roughly follow the alignment of the Comal River.

The entirety of the district falls within the original town plan that laid New Braunfels into 342 lots. The subdivision of lots over the historic period, particularly in the denser commercial areas closer to Main Plaza on W. San Antonio Street, S. Seguin Avenue, and N. Castell Avenue, made some lots smaller than their original size, but a number remain roughly 96 feet wide by 192 feet deep. As laid out, and still evident today, the original lots were deep with narrow street frontage, designed to keep the town compact. This pattern of subdivision, combined with mixed-use construction patterns and the construction of multiple buildings on one lot during the historic period, created the district's somewhat incongruous streetscapes characterized by pockets of differing setbacks, density, and building types, as reflected on S. Seguin Avenue.

Still visible today, much of the district developed with commercial, residential, governmental, religious, and educational resources constructed next to one another (Figures 2-11). While more cohesive residential neighborhoods developed just outside of the district, residents did construct houses within the downtown core on Main Plaza and on San Antonio and Seguin Streets. Beginning early in the historic period, these trends persisted into the early-to-mid twentieth century. Most of the early houses and original lots gave way to governmental and commercial development and plot subdivision around Main Plaza and in the 100 and 200 blocks of W. San Antonio Street (Photo 3). During this period, the courthouse's prominent location on Main Plaza was established; the first courthouse was built in 1860 and replaced with the current one (Resource 864; NRHP 1976) in 1898 (Photo 4). The 100 and 200 blocks on W. San Antonio Street, the densest in the district, as well as the northeast side of the 100 and 200 blocks of S. Seguin Avenue,

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developed as most downtowns, with one- and two-part commercial block buildings, abutting the sidewalk and sharing party walls (Photos 5-6). On the southwest side of S. Seguin Avenue, though, many historic-age residences remain, intermixed with commercial buildings. Because the house lots were typically not subdivided and because the houses are set back from the street, a less dense and less uniform streetscape developed on Seguin Avenue. Though all the former residences on Seguin Avenue now serve commercial purposes, their presence reflect earlier historic building patterns.

While mixed-use development characterized the blocks closest to Main Plaza, residential development in New Braunfels occurred more exclusively on the streets running parallel to San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue. In the residential areas that extend into the district, in the northeast around Market Plaza, and on W. Bridge and W. Mill Streets, the subdivision of lots during the historic period created the various lot sizes that are present today. Reflecting different periods of residential development, houses throughout the district are not uniformly set back from the street. The earliest, mid-nineteenth-century houses are often set close to the street, allowing for small-scale agriculture and secondary buildings and structures to the rear. By the late nineteenth century, though, most of the houses were built set further back from the street.

The original town plan also contributed to the district’s characteristic intermixing of property types. The 1845 plan set aside lots for the district’s two congregations, the First Protestant Church (Resource 62A, NRHP 1971) and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church (Resource 54551A) (Photos 7-8). Both congregations remain at their original locations—on S. Seguin Avenue and W. Bridge Street—each acquiring adjacent parcels and additional buildings during and outside the period of significance. The location of educational buildings, clustered at the district’s southwest corner on N. Academy Street in a characteristically residential area, was also established early. Though not on the original plan, this educational cluster developed around 1858 when the land was transferred to the former New Braunfels Academy from the City around 1858.<sup>4</sup>

**Range and Distribution of Construction Dates**

The buildings in the district reflect the growth and development of New Braunfels during the period of significance from 1845 to 1975. The inventory of buildings in the district illustrates the town’s growth and development beginning with its original development through to 1975, a 130-year period. Table 1 and Chart 1 break down the number of resources built in each decade.

Table 1. Decades of construction within the district.

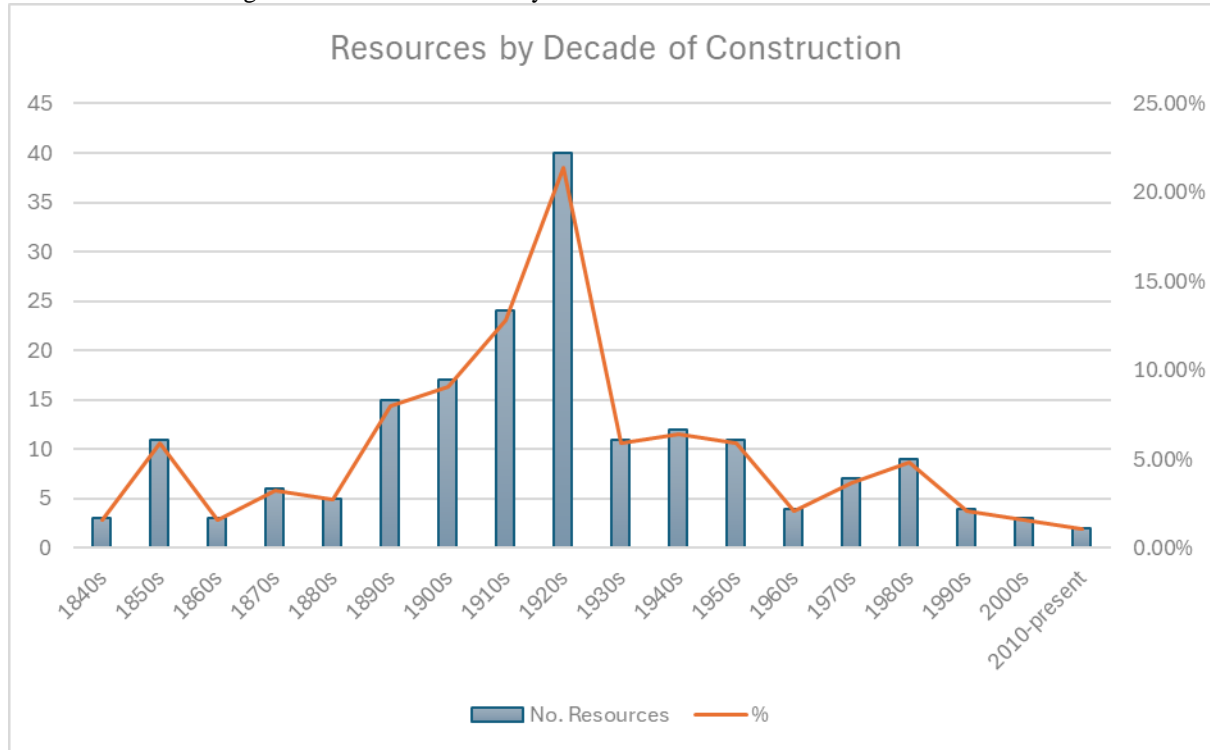
Decade	No. Resources	Percentage
1840s	3	1.5%
1850s	10	5.1%
1860s	3	1.5%
1870s	8	4.1%
1880s	5	2.5%
1890s	17	8.6%
1900s	16	8.1%
1910s	27	13.7%
1920s	38	19.3%
1930s	16	8.1%
1940s	10	5.1%
1950s	12	6.1%
1960s	4	2.0%
1970s	9	4.6%

<sup>4</sup> HHM & Associates, Inc (HHM). “New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey,” Prepared for the City of New Braunfels, 2008, E-7.

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1980s	8	4.1%
1990s	5	2.5%
2000s	4	2.0%
2010-present	2	1.0%

Chart 1. Chart showing resources in the district by decade of construction.



Over the first four decades after the city’s founding, construction occurred at a steady pace with roughly half of the district developed by 1881, one year after the arrival of the railroad (Figure 12). The densest development occurred around Main Plaza and in the blocks adjacent to it. Commercial, religious, and residential development stretched on S. Seguin Avenue outside the district boundaries all the way to the railroad tracks. Similarly, on W. San Antonio Street, development stretched past the railroad tracks and past the district’s southwest boundary. Orchards and gardens to the rear of residential lots, as depicted in the 1881 birds-eye view, are evidence of the small-scale agriculture that still occurred in the 1880s. Buildings were scattered in all other areas in the district, though the least dense development occurred in the district’s northeast, west, and southwest sections, near the district boundaries, off the main streets of San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue. People used locally available materials including cedar timbers, adobe brick, and stone for construction, as little else was available before the arrival of the railroad. Twenty-six resources built by 1881 remain within the district. Among the commercial, residential, and religious examples are the Guadalupe Hotel on Main Plaza (Resource 859, Photo 9, NRHP 1975), the district’s two churches (Resources 62A and 54551A), and the house at 394 W. Bridge Street (Resource 944C, Photo 10).

Development picked up following the arrival of the railroad, and by the turn of the twentieth century most of the lots in the district were developed. Per Sanborn maps, some lots—primarily the residential lots—had one main building and one or two auxiliary buildings to the rear, and many of the lots in the commercial section around Main Plaza had several primary commercial buildings. With the railroad came new building materials and techniques; brick grew popular for commercial buildings and some large houses, milled wood was used for most houses, and stone remained in favor for large non-residential and non-commercial buildings. New commercial development occurred around Main



Plaza and in the 100 and 200 blocks of W. San Antonio Street. Commercial buildings, including the two-story commercial L. A. Hoffman Building at 167 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 73B, Photo 11), were also constructed in the 100 block of S. Seguin Avenue. Closer to Main Plaza and San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue, property owners continued constructing residences and commercial buildings next to one another. The 200 block of W. Mill Street is a good example of this development pattern and is reflected today in the line of houses on the northwest side of the street and the large Henne Hardware warehouse on the southeast side at 221 W. Mill Street (Resource 849, Photo 12). Further from these areas, residential development was more uniform. Houses were typically built larger than those from the preceding decades, and they were set further from the street as in-town agricultural practices were abandoned. The John Faust House, built in 1905 at 361 W. San Antonio, is an example of this trend (Resource 6A, Photo 13).

Over the first three decades of the twentieth century, development increased, and the intermixture of property types persisted. Governmental and educational buildings, including the New Braunfels High School at 430 W. Mill Street (Resource 1292), were constructed in the district, contributing to its increasing density (Photo 14). Commercial infill continued on Main Plaza and S. Seguin Avenue, with the northeast side of the street transitioning to more commercial and the southwest side changing very little from its residential character. New commercial buildings replaced many older ones on W. San Antonio Street, but the street density, which was mostly developed with one- and two-part commercial block buildings by the early 1900s, changed very little. South of the railroad tracks, new commercial buildings, including the Gerlich Building, a car dealership built in 1912 (Resource 842, Photo 15), replaced small, older dwellings. West, northeast, and southeast of Main Plaza, new houses, including the bungalows at 408 and 426 S. Seguin Avenue (Resources 213A and 212), went up on previously vacant lots (Photo 16).

The development patterns set by 1930 minimally changed throughout the rest of the historic period. Over the historic period, development grew denser in some areas due to lot subdivisions. Most notably, in the characteristically residential areas of the district, northeast of Main Plaza on Comal Avenue and to the southwest on W. Bridge Street, several lots were subdivided and new houses, including the house and garage at 383 W. Bridge Street (Resources 924 A and B), were built. The religious and educational institutions in the district also contributed to density and streetscape changes in this period. The New Braunfels High School built a large new gymnasium (Resource 1042B) to the rear of its manual training building at 407 W. Mill Street, filling in most of the lot. In the northwest corner of the district, Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church began acquiring adjacent residential lots for building expansion that included a new parochial school building in 1970 (Resource 54551B, Photo 17). In several areas new empty lots emerged. For example, in the northern end of the 300 block of E. San Antonio Street no new construction replaced the three houses demolished sometime in the 1930s or 1940s, leaving lots that remain vacant today. Likewise, on the southeast side of the 200 block of W. Mill Street, demolitions of warehouses and houses by 1973 created the sparse density that remains today (Figure 13).

Many of the 49 resources (24 percent of all resources in the district) constructed from 1930 to 1975 replaced older buildings. While new construction often replaced buildings of the same function, such as the commercial buildings on W. San Antonio Street and on and near Main Plaza on S. Seguin Avenue and N. Castell Avenue, including the 1950s one-part commercial block building at 139 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 848), the mixed-use character began to erode in other areas (Photo 18). On E. San Antonio Street, several houses and two small stores were demolished for the construction of new commercial buildings. Multiple buildings gave way for the construction of the two large commercial buildings at 210 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 431521, Photo 19) and 174 S. Market Avenue (Resource 96), while only one older house was demolished for the building at 364 E. San Antonio Street. Built around 1940, the multi-use building at 364 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 103A) had a front-facing store, and in keeping with the character of the street, had a dwelling at its rear (Photo 20). South Seguin Avenue also shifted more commercial, with several offices and a restaurant replacing older houses of similar scale and setback. The shift in function of existing buildings from residential to commercial on Seguin Avenue, San Antonio Street, and in the 200 block of W. Mill Street, beginning in the 1950s and continuing through the 1980s, also contributed to this shift. Limited development since 1975 includes the Comal County Courthouse Annex at 188 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 863, Photo 21). Built in

1990, it replaced several older stores. Other new construction was compatible in size and scale to what was demolished.

## Property Uses, Types, Forms, and Architectural Styles

Historically and today, the majority of resources extant in the district were and remain predominantly used for commercial and residential purposes. As originally built, residential buildings accounted for 44 percent of all the extant buildings in the district, and commercial buildings accounted for 42 percent. Due to the reuse of residential buildings—and governmental buildings—for commercial purposes, only 24 percent of the resources of the district are now used for residential purposes, and 61 percent of all buildings in the district are used for commercial purposes.<sup>5</sup> A mix of governmental, religious, educational (each roughly two percent), and a scattering of landscape, transportation, funerary, and social resources (each one or less than one percent) account for the remaining resource functions (around 11 percent in total).

Among the residential resources, all but one of the main buildings are single-family houses. The one multi-family residence in the district, 189 Comal Avenue (Resource 116A, Photo 22), was built around 1890 and shares characteristics with the single-family residences. Houses are one- and two-story and the most common forms are center passage and bungalow plans. Other common forms include hall-and-parlor, L-plan, modified L-plan, and one-room width houses.<sup>6</sup> The district also has one or two examples of the following forms: Ranch, irregular, square-plan hipped-roof, and foursquare. Ancillary buildings account the remaining residential resources in the district and include, in order of prevalence, garages, back houses, and sheds.<sup>7</sup>

Commercial resources in the district housed a variety of businesses, including stores, offices, restaurants, saloons, auto sales, theaters, hotels, and gas stations. One-part and two-part commercial block buildings account for the majority of commercial buildings in the district. They stand one- to two-stories tall, are set to the sidewalk, and often share party walls. The commercial buildings on Main Plaza, the 100 and 200 blocks of W. San Antonio Street, and the northeast side of the 100 and 200 blocks of S. Seguin Avenue exemplify this type. Examples of free-standing commercial block buildings are found further removed from Main Plaza on both San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue. For example, the two commercial block buildings at the southeast edge of the district—468 and 494 S. Seguin Avenue (Resources 208B and 207)—were built alongside residences and do not, and historically did not, share party walls with neighboring buildings (Photo 23). The two hotels in the district—the Guadalupe Hotel at 471 Main Plaza (Resource 859; NRHP 1975) and the Faust Hotel at 240 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 61; NRHP 1985)—have commercial block forms but stand taller at three and four stories. Unlike the other commercial block buildings, the four-story Faust Hotel is set back from the street (Photo 24). The warehouses in the district are set to the rear of the commercial properties, are free-standing, and have rectangular forms. Historic-age commercial buildings from the 1950s through 1970s, like the office at 473 S. Seguin Avenue, also typically have a rectangular form, are set back from the street, and have

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<sup>5</sup> Two of the governmental resources, the former U.S. Post Office (Resource 854) and former City Hall (Resource 899), have been repurposed for commercial use.

<sup>6</sup> To assign forms for the earliest residential construction in the district (between 1845 and ca. 1880), the author relied on typology discussed in Kenneth Hafertepe's *The Material Culture of German Texans*. Based on Hafertepe's discussion of typical floor plans, houses with one front room were classified as one-room width houses. Hafertepe also uses the term "enclosed central passage": these houses are classified simply as "center passage." This nomination does deviate from Hafertepe's typology. Two forms in his discussion, "two front rooms, two doors" and "two front rooms, one door" are classified in this nomination as hall-and-parlor and center passage, respectively. Because they look identical to hall-and-parlor and center passage plan houses from the exterior and without knowing the interior layout of these houses and whether or not a hallway exists, it is not possible to follow Hafertepe's typology.

<sup>7</sup> Ancillary resources "substantial in size and scale" were documented and included in the inventory of this district, per National Park Service guidance. Only the ancillary resources visible from the right-of-way were documented and the author of this nomination acknowledges that there may be additional ancillary buildings in the district that are not included in the district due to their location and lack of visibility from the right-of-way. Resources set behind main/primary buildings, obscured by vegetation or fences were not documented and therefore are not included in the district's inventory. NPS guidance: [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/BPR\\_garages-and-outbuildings-2022-01-06.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/BPR_garages-and-outbuildings-2022-01-06.pdf).



parking lots. Singular commercial form examples in the district include a free-standing gas station at 301 Main Plaza (Resource 52) with a box with canopy form. The Dittlinger office building at 398 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 106) is a free-standing building with a large porch (Photo 25).

The non-residential and non-commercial resources account for around 11 percent of all resources in the district. The educational buildings are clustered together in the district's southwest corner and include a one-story 1900 school building (old New Braunfels Academy, Resource 1042A), a two-and-a-half-story 1913 high school (old New Braunfels High School, Resource 1292), and a two-story 1936 gymnasium (Resource 1042B). The district also has two parochial school buildings—one historic-age (Resource 54551) and one non-historic-age (Resource 952)—both located on the Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church property next to the 1871 church; both have rectangular forms. The Catholic Church (Resource 54551A) and the Protestant Church (Resource 62A, NRHP 1961), two of the largest buildings in the district, both have Latin cross plans (see Photos 7-8). At the rear of the Protestant Church is a two-and-a-half story auditorium built for the congregation in 1920 (Resource 62B, Photo 26). The district has two transportation resources: the linear 1907 train depot (Resource 840, Photo 27) and a bus station with a two-part commercial block form (Resource 94). The district has five governmental resources on and near Main Plaza. They are all free-standing and account for some of the largest buildings in the district. The governmental buildings include: the county courthouse with a Greek cross-plan (Resource 864, NRHP 1976); the one-and-half-story, rectangular city hall building (Resource 899); a temple front former post office (Resource 854); a two-story, rectangular fire station (Central Fire Station, Resource 45, Photo 28; NRHP 2019); and a non-historic age courthouse annex (Resource 863). Two plazas, Main Plaza (Resources 442365 A-G, NRHP 2021) and Market Plaza (Resource 442364) are the two landscape resources in the district. The temple front-New Braunfels Social Club is the lone social resource in the district (Resource 149, Photo 29). The district also has one funerary resource, the Doepenschmidt Funeral Home at 189 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 862), a large, two-story building with an arcaded block front.

## Common Construction Materials

Materials, like property types and forms, are also varied in the district. Brick is the most common construction material in the district, used primarily for commercial, educational, governmental, and some residential resources. Other residences in the district have wood-siding, and stucco was applied to several houses during the historic period. Adobe brick was also used prevalently in mid-nineteenth-century houses. The majority of roofs are metal, as they were early in the historic period due to an 1880s ordinance requiring fire-proof roof cladding.<sup>8</sup> Stone is another prevalent material in the district. Several smaller-scale resources have stone veneers, while large-scale buildings, including the courthouse and churches were built with local limestone. Concrete, though found more prevalently in post-war era commercial buildings, was also used for the 1907 train depot. The concrete blocks were made by a local firm, Moeller, Mordhurst and Blumberg.<sup>9</sup> The district also has three commercial buildings with Mesker Brothers galvanized sheet metal façade ornamentation (see Photo 11) – including the 1890 J. A. Hoffman building at 167 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 73B).

## Architectural Styles

Characteristic of the district, the architectural styles of the buildings within its boundaries vary widely, reflecting its evolution from a mid-nineteenth-century German settlement into a prosperous, modern commercial center. Among the residential buildings, Folk Victorian is the most prevalent (68 percent), followed by Craftsman (13 percent), and German vernacular houses (10 percent).<sup>10</sup> The district also has a smaller number of more ornate houses built in high

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<sup>8</sup> John B. and Cindy J. Coers, "New Braunfels First Fire Station 1918," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 1, 2024, [https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/1918\\_Fire\\_Station/NB%201st%20Fire%20Station%201918%20for%20web%202.pdf](https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/1918_Fire_Station/NB%201st%20Fire%20Station%201918%20for%20web%202.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Myra Lee Adams Goff, "Railroad transforms New Braunfels," *Herald-Zeitung*, September 8, 2013, 4C.

<sup>10</sup> Note that some residences built in the German vernacular in the mid-nineteenth had Folk Victorian ornamentation added in the late nineteenth century. These residences are classified as Folk Victorian.

styles including Classical Revival (six percent) and Queen Anne (five percent). The auxiliary residential buildings display no stylistic influences. Commercial buildings also display a variety of styles, with the Commercial style the most prevalent (25 percent). Modern (10 percent), Eclectic (eight percent), Moderne (five percent), Classical Revival (four percent), Art Deco (four percent), and Romanesque Revival (four percent) were also used for commercial buildings. Warehouses and a number of post-World War II commercial buildings display no stylistic influences. Other post-war era commercial buildings have Modern stylistic influences. Historic-age governmental resources were built in the following styles: Classical Revival (50 percent); Romanesque Revival (25 percent); and Prairie and Mission Revival (25 percent). Educational buildings used Prairie, Classical Revival, and Italianate styles, while the churches in the district were both built in the Gothic Revival style.

## District Integrity

Overall, the Central New Braunfels Historic District retains sufficient integrity and its ability to express its historic and architectural character. The district retains good integrity of location, setting, feeling, workmanship, association, materials, and design. The original street grid and railroad alignments, as well as historical development patterns retained from the period of significance add to the district's integrity of setting, feeling, and association. The overall scale, orientation, setback, and placement of buildings established during the historic period also remain largely unchanged. The high percentage of contributing resources (77 percent) helps communicate the district's overall integrity as well. The district does contain some modern infill, though many of the non-historic-age buildings are compatible in size, scale, form, and use and therefore detract only minimally from the historic streetscape. This is reflected in northwest side of the 100 block of 142 W. San Antonio Street, where a non-historic-age building anchors the end of the block (Photo 30). The majority of non-historic-age resources include small residential garages dotted throughout the district and one-story commercial buildings like the one at 468 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 208A, Photo 31). The most incompatible non-historic-age resource is the courthouse annex off Main Plaza at 188 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 863, see Photo 21). Built in 1990, the large three-story building, though similar in scale to the adjacent courthouse, replaced several smaller historic-age buildings. Overall, historic density patterns remain intact, as demolition after the end of the period of significance in the district was limited. Where density has thinned, as in the southeast side of the 200 block of W. Mill Street, demolitions of warehouses and houses occurred during the period of significance.

The majority of resources within the district also individually retain their integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship. Most alterations and additions are small and compatible with the historic character of the district, and many occurred during the period of significance. One common example is the addition of wood siding or Folk Victorian style wood ornamentation to mid-nineteenth-century German vernacular houses. Commercially, the 1851 Guadalupe Hotel (Resource 859, NRHP 1975) underwent multiple historic-age alterations, including the addition of the front gallery (1858) and the third-floor addition (1873). In 1933, the gallery was removed, and a one-story front addition was built. In 1979, before the 1930s alterations were considered historic-age, the New Braunfels Conservation Society, with support from the Texas Historical Commission, restored the front façade to the 1873 appearance, removing the addition and adding back the gallery (see Photo 9, Figures 14-15). Most alterations are minor enough that the building still retains most of its character-defining features and overall form, therefore continuing to contribute to the district. Common residential alterations include window, door, and roof replacements, as highlighted by the house at 170 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 68A, Photo 32). Though the windows, doors, and roof were replaced after the historic period, the house retains its historic character—form, scale, materials, and stylistic influences—and is therefore contributing. Common alterations to commercial buildings include window, door, and storefront replacements. An example of a commercial building with alterations that still contributes to the district is 249 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 33, Photo 34). The first-floor windows and doors have been replaced and the canopy has been removed, but the building, constructed in 1924, retains its historic form, scale, materials, and stylistic influences, and therefore contributes to the district. Per *Evaluating Non-Historic Exteriors*, published by the National Park Service in September 2022, “If the historic exterior building material is covered by

non-historic materials, the property can still be eligible *if* the significant form, features, and detailing are not obscured.”<sup>11</sup> Following this guidance, several buildings were evaluated as contributing to the district. One example is the former theater at 136 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 855, Photo 35). Despite the addition of stucco over much of the brick, the building retains its original form, fenestration patterns, canopy, and signage, and therefore the building retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the district. Several other buildings in the district are also classified as contributing, despite having more substantial alterations. The two churches in the district both have large, non-historic-age additions. In both cases, the original church building form is retained due to the location of the addition built to one side or the rear. A hallway connects the original church to the addition in both examples. At the First Protestant Church (Resource 62A, NRHP 1971), the addition also connects to the rear of the 1910 Queen Anne style Walter Faust House via a hallway (see Photo 7). In each example, the non-historic-age additions are spatially and visually distinct in design and footprint. Additionally, both churches retain their original forms and are relatively unchanged otherwise, retaining a high degree of integrity and allowing them to convey their historic and architectural significance within the district.

Around 13 percent of the historic-age resources have been significantly altered and therefore are noncontributing to the district. Of the twenty-four historic-age resources classified as noncontributing, 18 are commercial buildings and six are residential buildings. Common alterations among the noncontributing buildings include non-historic-age large-scale additions to houses and the covering of exterior wall materials and alterations to storefronts and fenestration patterns outside the period of significance on commercial buildings. While one of these alterations likely would not detract from the building’s overall integrity enough to classify it as noncontributing, the cumulative impact of all the changes render the building unable to convey its historic character. The house at 137 E. Mill Street (Resource 898) was built around 1925 as a Craftsman bungalow but was altered in the 1980s when the residence was converted into a non-residential use (it is currently used for religious purposes) (Photo 36). During the alteration, a rear addition and projecting side wing were constructed, and the front porch was enclosed, altering the pattern of egress and fenestration pattern on the front façade. The combined impact of these alterations render the former residence noncontributing. The 1930 bank building at 111 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 48) is a commercial example of a significantly altered building that is noncontributing (Photo 37). Two additions, one in 1967 and one in 1985, expanded the building along W. San Antonio Street and to the rear, and the covering of the 1967 limestone veneer with brick in 1985, render this building unidentifiable as a historic-age building, and therefore it is noncontributing.<sup>12</sup> Another example on Main Plaza is the former bank building at 443 Main Plaza (Resource 44895). Constructed around 1925, only the front façade of the building remains. Around 2017, public restrooms were built to the rear of the front façade. Though the former bank is noncontributing as it lacks its original three walls and roof, the retention of the front façade helps preserve the historic streetscape of the block (Photo 38).

### Survey Methodology

The Central New Braunfels Historic District was originally documented in 2009 as part of the larger New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey completed for the City of New Braunfels and funded with a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant. This project recommended a historic district with boundaries similar to those in this nomination. In 2023, the Comal County Historical Commission, with a CLG grant, resurveyed, reassessed, and updated the district boundaries for the completion of this nomination. As part of this update, resources undocumented in 2009, including non-historic-age resources and auxiliary resources, such as sheds and garages, were documented in order to create a complete inventory. Only auxiliary resources substantial in size and scale and clearly visible from the right-of-way were evaluated and included in the district inventory. In instances where aerial images show resources in back yards but they are not visible from the right-of-way due to fencing or vegetation, these resources are not included in the inventory.

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<sup>11</sup> National Park Service, “Evaluating Non-Historic Exteriors,” *Best Practices Review*, Issue 1, September 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/publications.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> “First National Announces Half Million Dollar Expansion,” *New Braunfels Herald*, January 12, 1967, 1.; “Banking on growth,” *New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung*, June 14, 1985, 1.

Central New Braunfels Historic District, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

## Inventory

Table 2. Resources listed in address order. \*Indicates previously listed resources in the NRHP.

ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
952	150 W BRIDGE ST	Religious	Parochial school	Rectangular	No style	2008	NC
915A	163 W BRIDGE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1932	C
915B	163 W BRIDGE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1932	C
54551A	198 W BRIDGE ST A	Religious	Church	Latin cross-plan	Gothic Revival	1871-1990	C
54551B	198 W BRIDGE ST B	Religious	Parochial school	Massed block	Modern	1970	C
54551C	198 W BRIDGE ST C	Religious	Rectory	Center passage	Italianate	1907	C
939A	284 W BRIDGE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1918	C
939B	284 W BRIDGE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1918	C
931	291 W BRIDGE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	National	1895	C
927	307 W BRIDGE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1923	C
940	326 W BRIDGE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	Folk Victorian	1891	C
925A	343 W BRIDGE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1918	NC
925B	343 W BRIDGE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	2000	NC
943	354 W BRIDGE ST	Residential	Single-family house	One-room width	German vernacular	1855	C
944A	374 W BRIDGE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	One-room width	Folk	1870	C
944B	374 W BRIDGE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1910	C
924A	383 W BRIDGE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Ranch	Minimal Traditional	1946	C
924B	383 W BRIDGE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1948	C
944C	394 W BRIDGE ST	Residential	Single-family house	One-room width	German vernacular	1858	C
855	136 N CASTELL AVE	Commercial	Theater	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1924	C
848	139 N CASTELL AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Modern	1959	C
856	140 N CASTELL AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Art Deco	1935	C
830	145 N CASTELL AVE	Commercial	Office	One-part commercial block	Modern	1980	NC
857	146 N CASTELL AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Commercial	1935	C
854	196 N CASTELL AVE	Governmental	Post office	Temple front	Classical Revival	1915	C
913A	260 N CASTELL AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Minimal Traditional	1941	C

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
913B	260 N CASTELL AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1941	C
937A	285 N CASTELL AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1919	C
937B	285 N CASTELL AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1919	C
914	294 N CASTELL AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1924	C
160	325 S CASTELL AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	National	1883	C
65	390 S CASTELL AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	German vernacular	1868	C
154	152 E COLL ST*	Medical	Medical building	Rectangular	Modern	1955	C
114	169 COMAL AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Minimal Traditional	1947	C
115A	175 COMAL AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Minimal Traditional	1952	C
115B	175 COMAL AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1952	C
116A	189 COMAL AVE A	Residential	Multi-family house	Center passage	Folk Victorian	1890	C
116B	189 COMAL AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1900	C
147A	155 E GARDEN ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Queen Anne	1916	C
147B	155 E GARDEN ST B	Commercial	Garage	Rectangular	No style	2022	NC
45	131 HILL AVE*	Governmental	Fire station	Rectangular	Prairie, Mission Revival	1918	C
864	100 MAIN PLAZA*	Governmental	Courthouse	Greek cross-plan	Romanesque Revival	1898	C
69	263 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Store, Office	Two-part commercial block	Commercial, Classical Revival	1885, 1910, 1930, 1985	NC
52	301 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Gas station	Box with canopy	No style	1925	NC
51	337 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Eclectic, Prairie	1927	C
50	343 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Theater	Two-part commercial block	Moderne	1930	C
49	367 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Office	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1924	C
44893	401 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Bank	Two-part commercial block	No style	1986	NC
44895	443 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Bank	Two-part commercial block	Art Deco	1925	NC
859	471 MAIN PLAZA*	Commercial	Hotel	Two-part commercial block	Classical Revival	1851	C
858	489 MAIN PLAZA	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1925	C



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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
442365A	MAIN PLAZA A*	Landscape	Plaza	Oblong	Classical Revival, Queen Anne	1845	C
442365B	MAIN PLAZA B*	Recreation	Fountain	Octagonal	Classical Revival	1896	C
442365C	MAIN PLAZA C*	Recreation	Bandstand	Octagonal	Classical Revival, Queen Anne	1905	C
442365D	MAIN PLAZA D*	Recreation	Memorial	Rectangular	No style	1935	C
442365E	MAIN PLAZA E*	Recreation	Memorial	Rectangular	No style	1937	C
442365F	MAIN PLAZA F*	Recreation	Marker	Rectangular	No style	1976	NC
442365G	MAIN PLAZA G*	Recreation	Marker	Rectangular	No style	1976	NC
96	174 S MARKET AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1955	C
100A	195 S MARKET AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Folk Victorian	1895	C
100B	195 S MARKET AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1935	C
110	286 S MARKET AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Folk Victorian	1895	C
899	105 E MILL ST	Governmental	City Hall, Police Department	Rectangular	Classical Revival	1929	C
898	137 E MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman/Classical Revival	1925	NC
916	162 W MILL ST	Commercial	Office	Commercial box	New Traditional	1986	NC
912	180 W MILL ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Modern	1962	C
936	210 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Linear	German vernacular	1850	NC
849	221 W MILL ST	Commercial	Warehouse	Rectangular	No style	1900	C
935A	230 W MILL ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	German vernacular	1855	C
935B	230 W MILL ST B	Residential	Shed	Rectangular	No style	1910	C
935C	230 W MILL ST C	Residential	Back house	Rectangular	No style	1935	C
932	256 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	One-room width	German vernacular, Folk Victorian	1871	NC
933	264 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Folk Victorian	1858	C
847	267 W MILL ST	Commercial	Office	Irregular	Mansard	1980	NC
846A	287 W MILL ST A	Recreation	Storage building	Linear	No style	1995	NC
846B	287 W MILL ST B	Recreation	Canopy	Linear	No style	1995	NC
930	292 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Folk Victorian	1883	C
845	321 W MILL ST	Commercial	Store	Box with canopy	No style	1985	NC
928	324 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Ranch	Ranch	1962	C

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
926	352 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Folk Victorian	1900	C
923	374 W MILL ST	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	Folk Victorian	1870	C
843A	387 W MILL ST A	Commercial	Office	Irregular	New Traditional	2016	NC
843B	387 W MILL ST B	Residential	Back house	Rectangular	Late German vernacular	1905	C
843C	387 W MILL ST C	Residential	Shed	Rectangular	No style	1920	C
922A	392 W MILL ST A	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Folk Victorian	1896	C
922B	392 W MILL ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1935	C
1042A	407 W MILL ST A	Educational	Public school	Rectangular	No style	1900	C
1042B	407 W MILL ST B	Educational	Gymnasium	Rectangular	Italianate	1936	C
1292	430 W MILL ST	Educational	Public school	Central block with wings	Prairie, Classical Revival	1913	C
68A	170 E SAN ANTONIO ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Classical Revival	1910	C
68B	170 E SAN ANTONIO ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1910	C
68C	170 E SAN ANTONIO ST C	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1910	NC
431521	210 E SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Office	Rectangular	Modern	1950	C
98	270 E SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Rectangular	No style	1990	NC
99A	308 E SAN ANTONIO ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Second Empire, Colonial Revival	1880	C
99B	308 E SAN ANTONIO ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1955	C
102	348 E SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Office	Rectangular	Modern	1970	C
103A	364 E SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial, Residential	Single-family house	One-part commercial block	Rustic	1940	C
103B	364 E SAN ANTONIO ST B	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1920	C
106	398 E SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Office	Temple front	Eclectic	1923	C
48	111 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Bank	Two-part commercial block	No style	1930	NC
851	142 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Eclectic	1910	C
852	168 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1920	C
850A	180 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	No style	1910	C

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
850B	180 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1910	C
47A	193 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1871	C
47B	193 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1930	C
828A	204 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Art Deco	1893	NC
828B	204 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	No style	1940	NC
31	209 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial, Romanesque Revival	1905	C
829	214 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Classical Revival	1912	C
35	223 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1930	NC
832B	226 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1925	NC
832A	236 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1925	C
32A	239 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Bakery	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1913	C
32B	239 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Romanesque Revival	1913	C
833A	246 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Eclectic	1893	C
833B	246 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Oil house	Rectangular	No style	1950	C
33	249 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store, Medical offices	Two-part commercial block	Classical Revival	1924	C
834	264 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Eclectic	1856	C
40	265 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Theater	One-part commercial block	No style	1900	NC
836	270 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1920	C
37	273 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1895	NC



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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
36	277 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1925	C
839	278 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Bank	Two-part commercial block	Romanesque Revival	1890	C
38	283 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1924	C
837	290 W SAN ANTONIO ST*	Commercial	Theater	Two-part commercial block	Moderne	1942	C
39	297 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	No style	1925	NC
7	301 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Italianate	1912	C
840	302 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Transportation	Train depot	Linear	Craftsman	1907	C
841	322 W SAN ANTONIO ST	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Modern	1950	C
6A	361 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Irregular	Queen Anne	1905	C
6B	361 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Residential	Back house	Rectangular	Queen Anne	1905	C
842A	386 W SAN ANTONIO ST A	Commercial	Auto sales/service	One-part commercial block	Commercial	1912	C
842B	386 W SAN ANTONIO ST B	Commercial	Warehouse	Rectangular	No style	1970	C
863	188 N SEGUIN AVE	Governmental	Courthouse	Irregular	No style	1990	NC
862	189 N SEGUIN AVE	Funerary	Funeral home, Garage	Arcaded block	Italian Renaissance	1923	C
917	205 N SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Auto sales/service	One-part commercial block	No style	1925	NC
920	259 N SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	German vernacular, Folk Victorian	1850	C
953	315 N SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Auto sales/service	Commercial block	Moderne	1948	C
70A	129 S SEGUIN AVE A*	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	German vernacular	1845	C
70B	129 S SEGUIN AVE B	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1868	C
53	130 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	No style	1945	NC
54	144 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Office	One-part commercial block	No style	1960	NC

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
55	150 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Moderne	1937	NC
73A	167 S SEGUIN AVE A	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Folk Victorian	1860	C
73B	167 S SEGUIN AVE B	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Eclectic	1890	C
74	185 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1925	C
58	190 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Eclectic	1905	C
75	197 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	Rectangular	No style	1985	NC
80	203 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Commercial	1928	C
145956	219-221 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial, Romanesque Revival	1890	C
59	220 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Restaurant	Rectangular	Modern	1974	NC
60	228 S SEGUIN AVE*	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Classical Revival	1871	C
61	240 S SEGUIN AVE*	Commercial	Hotel	Two-part vertical block	Eclectic	1929	C
84	243 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Office	Rectangular	Modern	1973	C
91	251 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	German vernacular, Folk Victorian	1850	C
62A	260 S SEGUIN AVE A*	Religious, Residential	Church, Single-family house	Latin cross-plan, Irregular	Gothic (church), Queen Anne (house)	1875 (church), 1910 (house)	C
62B	260 S SEGUIN AVE B	Religious	Auditorium	Two-part commercial block	Eclectic	1920	C
94	275 S SEGUIN AVE	Transportation	Bus station	Two-part commercial block	Moderne	1925	NC
85A	283 S SEGUIN AVE A	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1929	C
85B	283 S SEGUIN AVE B	Commercial	Warehouse	Rectangular	No style	1955	C
150A	305 S SEGUIN AVE A*	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Classical Revival	1880, 1905 (remodel)	C
150B	305 S SEGUIN AVE B*	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1930	C
150C	305 S SEGUIN AVE C*	Commercial	Office, Library	One-part commercial block	Eclectic	1922	NC
158	328 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Foursquare	Prairie	1920	C
149	353 S SEGUIN AVE	Social	Meeting hall	Temple front	Classical Revival	1910	C

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
148	373 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Center passage	Colonial Revival	1905	NC
146	389 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Office	Irregular	No style	1990	NC
221A	405 S SEGUIN AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Modified L-plan	Queen Anne	1890	C
221B	405 S SEGUIN AVE B	Residential	Back house	Rectangular	Modern	1950	C
221C	405 S SEGUIN AVE C	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1950	C
213A	408 S SEGUIN AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1925	C
213B	408 S SEGUIN AVE B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	Craftsman	1925	C
222A	421 S SEGUIN AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Two front rooms, two doors	German vernacular	1859	C
222B	421 S SEGUIN AVE B	Commercial	Office	Rectangular	No style	1985	NC
212A	426 S SEGUIN AVE A	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1920	C
212B	426 S SEGUIN AVE B	Residential	Carport	Rectangular	No style	2000	NC
223A	447 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Prairie	1913	C
211	448 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Square plan hipped-roof	National; Folk Victorian	1920	C
223B	453 S SEGUIN AVE	Residential	Single-family house	Rectangular	No style	1925	C
208A	468 S SEGUIN AVE A	Commercial	Office	One-part commercial block	Commercial	2000	NC
208B	468 S SEGUIN AVE B	Commercial	Store	One-part commercial block	Commercial	1890	C
224	473 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Office	Rectangular	Modern	1971	C
207	494 S SEGUIN AVE	Commercial	Store	Two-part commercial block	Commercial	1910	C
113A	234 TOLLE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	Modified L-plan	Folk Victorian	1910	C
113B	234 TOLLE ST B	Residential	Back house	Rectangular	Folk Victorian	1970	C
112	248 TOLLE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Modified L-plan	Folk Victorian	1900	C
111	270 TOLLE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Hall-and-parlor	Folk Victorian	1905	C
442364	292 TOLLE ST	Landscape	Plaza	Rectangular	Site	1845	C
108A	294 TOLLE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Folk Victorian	1915	C
108B	294 TOLLE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	Folk Victorian	1963	C
105	381 TOLLE ST	Residential	Single-family house	Bungalow	Craftsman	1920	C
104A	385 TOLLE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	One-room width	German vernacular	1872	C
104B	385 TOLLE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1920	C
107A	393 TOLLE ST A	Residential	Single-family house	L-plan	Folk Victorian	1893	C

# SBR Draft

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ID (CAD ID)	Address	Original Use	Type	Form	Stylistic Influence(s)	Est. Year Built	C/NC Status
107B	393 TOLLE ST B	Residential	Garage	Rectangular	No style	1989	NC

## Statement of Significance

The Central New Braunfels Historic District contains a unique collection of resources in the heart of New Braunfels, seat of Comal County, Texas. Settled by German colonists in the mid-nineteenth century, New Braunfels evolved into an industrial, commercial, governmental, and tourist center throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The district includes residences as well as commercial, educational, religious, transportation, and government buildings that reflect a variety of construction techniques and materials, forms, and architectural styles. New Braunfels's growth is in large part attributed to the town's strategic location, its natural resources, including two rivers, and its German heritage. Aided by transportation, first the railroad and then the highways and interstate, the residents of New Braunfels successfully utilized the town's resources throughout the historic period. Resources in the district reflect these themes: its German heritage and the prosperity associated with the town's industry and tourism. The Central New Braunfels Historic District is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Ethnic Heritage: German. Architecturally, the district contains a diverse collection of vernacular and high-style resources designed and built by both prominent architects such as James Riely Gordon and Leo M. J. Dielmann and local builders including brothers Adolph and Alwin Moeller. The district's variety of architectural forms and styles, which includes German vernacular one-room width houses, Folk Victorian L-plans, Craftsman bungalows, Commercial style one- and two-part commercial block buildings, and a Romanesque Revival courthouse lend the district significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.<sup>13</sup> The district is significant at the local level, and its period of significance begins in 1845, when the town was laid out, and extends to 1975, the 50-year cutoff.

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## Criterion A: Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Ethnic Heritage: German

### Mid-Nineteenth-Century German Migration and Settlement of New Braunfels

In the mid-nineteenth century, Germany was in a period of turbulence and change, faced with population pressures, land shortages and seizures, unemployment, and high taxes.<sup>14</sup> The industrial revolution saw a decline of trades and handicrafts and created a new industrial proletariat subject to poor working conditions. Rising food costs, caused by crop failures, led to famine and hunger riots, and mandated military service and religious and political persecution, worsened by the failed German Revolution in 1848, created widespread discontent. The lower classes—the farmers, artisans, and tradesmen—suffered the worst economically, as well as intellectuals and professionals persecuted by the government, therefore all sought opportunities outside of Germany.

Between the 1830s and 1900, more than 50,000 Germans settled in Texas, representing the largest non-American-born segment of the population at that time.<sup>15</sup> The first Germans arrived in Texas in the 1830s, acquiring land through the Mexican government's settlement incentives and enticed by letters written to family and friends from recently emigrated Germans touting the opportunities in Texas. This somewhat unorganized chain migration of the early 1830s formed the nucleus (in and around present-day Austin County) of what would become the German Belt in Texas, a stretch of land from Galveston and the Coastal Plains to the Hill Country where Germans settled in enclaves and communities developed in the nineteenth century. Compared to the first group of Germans, an organized second wave of German migrants arrived following Texas independence in 1836. Seeking increased European and Anglo settlers, the newly formed Republic of Texas (1836-1845) offered land grants to entice migration. Between 1836 and 1837, the Republic granted families 1,280 acres and single men 640 acres, and from 1837 to 1842, families received 640 acres

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<sup>13</sup> Stylistic classification of resources in the district relied on Virginia McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses* and Kenneth Hafertepe's *The Material Culture of German Texans* for classification guidance on the district's German vernacular resources. Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street* was used for classifying forms and styles of commercial buildings.

<sup>14</sup> Stephanie L. McDougal, "The Round Dance Halls of Texas: History of a Building Type, 1897-1937, MS thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2008, 10.

<sup>15</sup> Terry G. Jordan, "Germans," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/germans>.

and single men received 320 acres. In 1841, still sparsely settled and economically depressed, the Republic passed a law permitting the issuance of colonization contracts to individuals or organizations willing to settle a specified number of men and families within three years.<sup>16</sup> Families in the colony could receive up to 640 acres and single men could receive up to 320 acres of land within the colony. Through this scheme, four empresario colonies acquired nearly 4.5 million acres in Texas between 1841 and 1844: the Peters' Colony in North Texas (1841, established by American and English investors); Castro's Colony in South Central Texas (1842, established by a French empresario); Mercer's Colony in North Central Texas (1844, established by an American empresario); and Fisher-Miller land grant in Central Texas (1842, established by American and German empresarios).<sup>17</sup>

All empresarios faced obstacles and varying levels of success in settling their colonies. Among them, the empresarios of the Fisher-Miller Land Grant who had contracted to settle 600 German, Dutch, Swiss, Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian families on the more than three million acre-land grant situated between the Llano and Colorado rivers, failed to meet their contracted settlement goal within the timeframe allotted. Granted an extension in 1844, the empresarios faced an increased number of contracted settlers: 6,000 families.<sup>18</sup> Promoting the colony in Germany, Fisher met with and sold an interest in the contract to the *Adelsverein* (the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas) in June 1844.<sup>19</sup>

Organized in 1842 by German noblemen, including Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, the *Adelsverein* saw colonization as a means to support and promote Germany's commerce and industry while also providing economic opportunities for the proletariat in Germany. Fearful of the U. S. dominating world trade at the expense of Europe and Germany's economies, the *Adelsverein* hoped to form an economic partnership with Germany and Texas through its colonization efforts.<sup>20</sup> In return for its surplus labor sent to Texas, Germany would get raw materials for its factories, and the *Adelsverein* would also gain profits for its shareholders. Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, the society's commissioner general and field marshal, was in charge of establishing the first colony. In the two years after its founding, though, the *Adelsverein* had failed in its attempts at obtaining land in Texas for a German colony. Considering the proximity to existing transportation networks, security, availability of natural resources, and fertile soils, the *Adelsverein* first declined a colonization grant offered by President Sam Houston for land west of Austin due to the perceived threat of Native Americans. Later the society encountered legal complications with colonization permits for land it purchased in Fayette County in 1843. Then, in 1844 after meeting with Fisher, the *Adelsverein* purchased colonization rights in the Fisher-Miller land grant.<sup>21</sup> In exchange for \$120 for each adult, or \$240 for a family, the society promised colonists passage to Texas, 40 acres of land in the Fisher-Miller grant, and access to tools and livestock at reasonable prices. The society also promised protection of its colonists and the construction of roads and public buildings in the colony.<sup>22</sup> Colonists would not use enslaved labor and would preserve their German culture and language. The society would sell extra land in the colony to help support the venture. The first German colonists arrived in December 1844 on a point near Galveston, later named Indianola, selected by Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels as the designated port of entry for German immigrants sponsored by the *Adelsverein*.

Travel from the coast to the Fisher-Miller grant, over two hundred miles through the Texas Hill Country on crude trails, was arduous. To ease the burden, Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels purchased 1,264 acres in March 1845 to serve

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<sup>16</sup> Joseph M. Nance, "Republic of Texas," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/republic-of-texas>.

<sup>17</sup> Aldon S. Lang and Christopher Long, "Land Grants," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed April 23, 2024, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mp101>.

<sup>18</sup> Rudolph L. Biesele, "Fisher-Miller Land Grant," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/fisher-miller-land-grant>.

<sup>19</sup> Biesele, "Fisher-Miller Land Grant" *Handbook of Texas Online*.

<sup>20</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-2.

<sup>21</sup> Biesele, "Fisher-Miller Land Grant," *Handbook of Texas Online*.

<sup>22</sup> Judith Lynn Dykes-Hoffman, "On the Edge of the Balcones Escarpment: The Urban and Cultural Development of New Braunfels and San Marcos, Texas, 1845-1880," thesis (Ph D.), University of Texas at Austin (2003), 28.



as a way-station from Rafael Garza and Maria Antonea Veramendi-Garza, whose family acquired the land from the Mexican government in 1831.<sup>23</sup> The land encompassed high defensible areas, contained abundant natural resources, including water, wood, and stone, and was strategically located on an existing trail, the Old San Antonio Road, known as the *Camino Real* during the Spanish expeditions in the seventeenth century, that connected Austin and San Antonio. The first wagon train of Germans arrived at the site in March 1845 on the eve of the Mexican War, making goods scarce and transportation even more dangerous and difficult. Due to the favorability of the land, difficulty of travel, and isolation of the Fisher-Miller grant, the migrants opted to settle on the site on the banks of the Comal River, establishing the *Adelsverein*'s first colony, New Braunfels.<sup>24</sup>

### *Town Planning*

Among the first arrivals was German engineer and surveyor Nicolaus Zink. Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels tasked Zink with surveying the land and creating a town plan to provide colonists with lots. In 1845 Zink laid out the town between the Comal River and the *Sophienburg*, the never-realized fort that became the site of the society's headquarters at the highest point in the settlement (today the site of the city's museum and archives). The plan centered around an open town plaza (Main Plaza but identified as *Marktplatz* on Zink's map, Resource 442365A; NRHP 2021), for commercial and social use, with streets radiating out at right angles. Zink divided the town into 342 Bavarian half-acre town lots—roughly 96 feet wide by 192 feet deep—and the surrounding land to the south and southwest into ten-acre farm lots (see Figure 1).<sup>25</sup> Zink's plan also set aside lots and identified locations for important features including Protestant and Catholic churches and schools (First Protestant Church and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Resources 62A/NRHP 1971 and 54551A), buildings for the *Adelsverein* (not in the district and not extant), and a *Fleischalle* (meat market) located on a large open lot (Resource 442364) just off the main plaza. The *Fleischalle* plaza (present-day Market Plaza) and the *Marktplatz* (present-day Main Plaza) served different purposes, and the incorporation of both in the plan reflected the German influence. Main Plaza, the intentional center of town, was meant to remain open for trade, commerce, and gatherings, while present-day Market Plaza was set aside for colonists to bring their livestock to the *Adelsverein*-appointed butcher who operated at the site.<sup>26</sup>

The town plan represents Zink's attempt at creating a "nucleated farm village," similar to those in Germany where families lived in town and worked their fields outside of town.<sup>27</sup> As envisioned by the *Adelsverein*, colonists would receive both a town and farm lot and travel between the two. On town lots, colonists would build their houses on the front of the lot, and gardens, orchards, barns, and some livestock would be in the rear of the lot. The farm lots outside of town were intended for crops and livestock. The German villages where many of the colonists originated were unplanned, "irregular" farm villages, called *Haufendorfer*, with dwellings and farm buildings clustered together.<sup>28</sup> Though Zink's plan had residential and agricultural buildings clustered together in town, it departed from the *Haufendorfer*, by its orderly, regular grid pattern and wide streets, meant to accommodate wagons.<sup>29</sup> The neatness and

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<sup>23</sup> Dykes-Hoffman, "On the Edge of the Balcones Escarpment," 83.

<sup>24</sup> A year after the settlement of New Braunfels, the *Adelsverein* established another colony roughly 60 miles to the northwest, Fredericksburg, with some of the original New Braunfels's settlers. The *Adelsverein* selected the site of Fredericksburg, which was also located outside the Fisher-Miller grant, for its favorability for settlement. New Braunfels and Fredericksburg were the society's two most successful settlements. The society only established five settlements within the actual Fisher-Miller grant: Bettina, Castell, Leiningen, Meerholz, and Schoenburg. The small community of Castell is the only remaining town. The *Adelsverein*, facing bankruptcy, assigned all its properties and colonization rights to its creditors in 1853. Despite its short-lived colonization efforts, the *Adelsverein* brought more than 7,000 Germans to Texas, and ultimately established Texas as a destination for subsequent German emigration.

<sup>25</sup> Per scholar Terry Jordan, a Bavarian half-acre is more than 3,000 square feet smaller than an American acre. Terry G. Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1982) 157.

<sup>26</sup> Present-day Market Plaza (Resource 442364) is not to be confused with the *Marktplatz*, which denoted Main Plaza (Resource 442365) on early maps, despite literally translating to "Market Plaza." To avoid confusion, these resources will be referred to as their current names throughout the rest of the nomination.

<sup>27</sup> Jordan, *German Seed In Texas Soil*, 157

<sup>28</sup> Jordan, *German Seed In Texas Soil*, 157

<sup>29</sup> Jordan, *German Seed In Texas Soil*, 158.

layout of Zink's plan may have been influenced by popular contemporary German Neoclassical urban planning ideals, "visible in Baroque enlargements of existing German cities Berlin and Potsdam, and possibly much earlier gridded towns such as Bern, Switzerland."<sup>30</sup> In these plans, a central square set aside for commerce and social gatherings is fronted by a large religious or civic building and anchors an orthogonal street layout. This plan was repeated in many German cities, including Zink's native Bamberg.<sup>31</sup> Though many of the colonists came from *Haufendorfer* villages, the use of a formal grid in New Braunfels may reflect the aspirations of its settlers and their belief that an orderly and intentional town layout would lend itself to prosperity and success.

Shortly after laying out New Braunfels, the *Adelsverein* held a drawing for lots. In total, colonists received around 10.5 acres—less than the promised 40 acres in the larger Fisher-Miller grant. In the first few weeks, the *Adelsverein* parceled out 150 town lots. Those closest to the leaders in the society chose first, and some large extended families received lots next to one another. Most colonists selected lots along the main arteries, San Antonio Street and Seguin Avenue, and lots near Main Plaza. Though few in number, some families and men, including Ferdinand Lindheimer, were given multiple lots. Lindheimer, a botanist who had been active in political agitation in Germany, was given multiple lots southeast of Main Plaza on the Comal River for experimental and research gardens (outside the district).<sup>32</sup> Intending to employ several men, Lindheimer and the *Adelsverein* hoped that the research on his land would bestow the town a positive reputation and attract more people and businesses. The *Adelsverein* also allotted 218 farm lots for the colonists and intended to sell the rest. The farm lots along the Old San Antonio Road were the first selected.<sup>33</sup>

Despite the vision for a farm village, the German system failed in New Braunfels. Around a year after its founding, some settlers moved out of town and onto their farm lots, setting a trend that continued over the next few years.<sup>34</sup> The trend further accelerated when farmers outgrew their ten acres. At the time, the price of land was low, so many farmers sold their farm lots and purchased larger parcels further from New Braunfels where they lived and worked.<sup>35</sup> As settlers sold their farm lots throughout the nineteenth century, new residential areas south and southwest of the original town opened (Figure 16). Developers also laid out Comaltown and Hortontown (now part of New Braunfels) north of the district and the Comal River. Despite the failure of the farm village plan, the intent shaped the landscape of New Braunfels, particularly in the deep lot size in the original town. Additionally, some residents on town lots did engage in small-scale subsistence farming, growing garden vegetables and small yields of cotton into the twentieth century.<sup>36</sup>

Coinciding with the abandonment of the farm village plan, the *Adelsverein* faced bankruptcy after losing most of its investors following legal disputes over the Miller-Fisher grant. The society soon lost authority to the American systems of county and municipal government. In 1846, New Braunfels was incorporated in 1846 and designated as Comal County seat when the county separated from Bexar County. In 1852, the society deeded title and rights for all public streets and lands to the City of New Braunfels, and in 1853 the *Adelsverein* dissolved, and investors repossessed all remaining property.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> HHM & Associates, Inc, "Main Plaza," National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 2020, 8-10.

<sup>31</sup> HHM, "Main Plaza," 8-10.

<sup>32</sup> Dykes-Hoffman, "On the Edge of the Balcones Escarpment," 100

<sup>33</sup> Dykes-Hoffman, "On the Edge of the Balcones Escarpment," 100.

<sup>34</sup> Jordan, *German Seed In Texas Soil*, 160.

<sup>35</sup> Jordan, *German Seed In Texas Soil*, 160.

<sup>36</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-7.

<sup>37</sup> Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946*, (Austin: The Steck Company, 1968) 180.



## *German Settlement to Bustling Commercial, Industrial, and Tourism Center*

Despite the failure of the farm village plan and the demise of the *Adelsverein*, New Braunfels not only survived but also evolved into a prosperous industrial, commercial, and tourism center. By 1850, New Braunfels was the fourth largest town in Texas and by the close of the period of significance, its population nearly reached 20,000. Early success stemmed from the town's location on well-traveled routes, ideal climate, and abundant natural resources, and the skillset and charitability of the residents that allowed agriculture, industry, and commerce to thrive. Throughout the historic period, New Braunfels benefited from various influences and factors, including increased and improved transportation networks and influxes of new residents. However, the town's economic stability and prosperity remained rooted in the relationship between the town's natural resources, agriculture, industry, and German heritage.

### *Early Growth*

The early settlers, who included farmers, artisans, tradesmen, and professionals, quickly began building New Braunfels. Far enough removed from the nearest commercial centers, locals depended on themselves for food and supplies. As a result of this need and early ingenuity, a burgeoning economy developed within the first decade of settlement. In these early years, the economy centered on agriculture, especially cash crops and supplying the tools locals needed for personal and cash crops grown on town and farm lots. The largest early crops included corn, wheat, oats, and cotton, which the Germans planted and picked themselves, as they largely opposed slavery, but they also could sell it at a higher price than cotton grown by the enslaved.<sup>38</sup> John Torrey, a Connecticut native who contracted with the *Adelsverein* to lead the colonists to New Braunfels from Indianola in 1844, opened one of the first businesses, a general mercantile goods and trading house in 1845. He opened the store on land received from the *Adelsverein* in exchange for rifles and wagons (not extant).<sup>39</sup> The store also served as a makeshift bank where craftsmen could barter and trade their goods for store credit.<sup>40</sup> Johan Henne, a German colonist, opened another business, Henne Hardware at 246 W. San Antonio Street in 1846 (rebuilt in 1893 – Resource 833, Photo 39). A tinsman by trade, Henne opened a tin shop several lots over in 1851 at 264 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 834, Photo 40). The one-part commercial block building is the oldest extant commercial building in New Braunfels.

Quickly earning a reputation as a place of commerce, New Braunfels saw new settlers—entrepreneurs and laborers—arrive in the years following its founding. In addition to the German colonists, other Europeans, Anglo Americans, and at least one Mexican settled in New Braunfels, bringing the town's population to nearly 1,300 in 1850.<sup>41</sup> The Anglo settlers, coming from across the U. S., also brought with them 61 enslaved persons. By far the largest enslaver was William Merriwether, a Tennessee industrial, who purchased 480 acres northwest of town on Comal Springs (outside the district), the headwaters of the Comal River, in 1847 from the Veramendi family. That same year he also purchased over 2,800 acres southeast of the original town where he established a plantation. On the Comal Springs tract, the enslaved men constructed the town's first mill, the Merriwether Gin grist and sawmill in 1849, digging the mill race and constructing the associated buildings and structures.<sup>42</sup> Several years later, Torrey opened the town's second sawmill downstream (outside the district). At the mill, he added a door, sash, and blind factory, said to be the first such factory in the state.<sup>43</sup> By the time Frederick Law Olmsted traveled through New Braunfels in 1854, the town had four small grist mills and a cotton gin that served the local New Braunfels community. The town also boasted 20 carpenters and builders, 8 blacksmiths, 7 wagon manufacturers, 2 gun and locksmiths, 1 coppersmith, 2 tinsmiths, 1 machinist, 3

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<sup>38</sup> Haas, *History of New Braunfels*, 45-46.

<sup>39</sup> Haas, *History of New Braunfels*, 179.

<sup>40</sup> George R. Nielsen, "Torrey's Frontier Post No. 2: A Business History," *The Business History Review* vol. 37 no. 3 (Autumn 1963) 207.

<sup>41</sup> Dykes-Hoffman

<sup>42</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-18

<sup>43</sup> Henry C. Armbruster, "Torrey, John Frink," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024,

<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/torrey-john-frink>.

saddlers, 6 shoemakers, 2 turners, 5 tailors, 1 button and fringe-maker, 3 tanners, 3 butchers, and 4 bakers.<sup>44</sup> Many of these early businesses were on the same town lot as, or in, the owner's residence, located on and near Main Plaza, Market Plaza, and along Seguin Avenue and San Antonio Street.<sup>45</sup> One example is the Dr. Koester house at 421 S. Seguin (Resource 222A). Built in 1859, the house, in addition to serving as German physician Theodor Koester's residence, housed his offices and an apothecary. It also served as a distribution site for the *Adelsverein* baker.<sup>46</sup> In 1868, another German immigrant, Edward Naegelin, moved to New Braunfels from San Antonio and rented the space used by the former *Adelsverein* baker. Two years later, in 1870 he moved his business to its current location, the extant building at 129 S. Seguin Avenue, next to a circa 1845 house, where it remains in operation today (Resource 70B, Photo 41).

The town also had at least one hotel, where Olmsted stayed, a testament to the importance of travelers to the economy even this early in its history. Though tourism had yet to establish itself as an industry in New Braunfels, entrepreneurs recognized early on the importance of the town's location on the Camino Real between Austin and San Antonio, and the route German migrants used to head further west. As early as 1854, German colonist Jacob Schmitz owned and operated a hotel in New Braunfels on S. Seguin Street (exact location unknown). In 1858, Schmitz purchased a two-story commercial building, constructed in 1851, at 471 Main Plaza, and opened the Guadalupe Hotel (see Resource 859, Photo 9, NRHP 1975). Schmitz renamed the building the Schmitz Hotel and added a third story in 1873.<sup>47</sup>

As mentioned previously, many early businesses were on the same town lot as, or operated out of the same building, as the owner's residence. By the mid-1850s, some of the tents and temporary buildings first erected remained, but more and more residents began building permanent houses. In describing New Braunfels, Olmsted wrote:

The main street of town, which we soon entered upon, was very wide—three times as wide, in effect, as Broadway in New York. The houses, with which it was thickly lined on each side for a mile, were small, low cottages, of no pretensions to elegance, yet generally looking neat and comfortable. Many were either stuccoed or painted. There were many workshops of mechanics and small stores, with signs oftener in English than in German.<sup>48</sup>

As described by Olmsted, and still seen today, houses and commercial buildings were constructed side-by-side during this period. Though streets off the main arteries of Seguin Avenue and San Antonio Street had higher concentrations of dwellings, it was not uncommon for a house to stand next to a store on either street, a pattern that continued into the twentieth century. Extant examples of this trend include the Stephen Klein house, built around 1845, just several lots off Main Plaza at 129 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 70A, see Photo 41, NRHP 1970), and the Ulrich house, built around 1850 at 259 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 920, Photo 42). Forming the nucleus of future residential areas, settlers also built houses on Comal Avenue east of Main Plaza and on W. Mill and W. Bridge streets to the southwest. Extant examples include the houses at 354 and 394 W. Bridge Street (Resources 943 and 944C), both built in the 1850s. The two congregations in the district also built their churches among commercial and residential buildings (Figure 17). Both the First Protestant Church and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church first built log churches in the 1840s and replaced them in the 1870s with their current churches on S. Seguin Avenue and W. Bridge Street (Resources 62A/NRHP 1971 and 54551A). A reflection of the settlers' belief in education, they established the state's first tax-supported public school, New Braunfels Academy, in 1858 on a tract of land provided to them by the city at

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<sup>44</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-15.

<sup>45</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-15.

<sup>46</sup> Myra Lee Adams Goff, "Naegelin's Bakery still baking," Sophienburg Museum and Archives, December 28, 2014, <https://sophienburg.com/naegelins-bakery-still-baking/>.

<sup>47</sup> Marie D. Landon and Joe R. Williams, "Guadalupe Hotel/Schmitz Hotel," National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 1975.

<sup>48</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas Or, a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier*, Foreword by Larry McMurtry, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), 143.

430 W. Mill Street (current site of Resource 1292). Citizens also organized charitable institutions independent of any church, establishing an orphanage for children who lost parents during immigration (not extant).<sup>49</sup>

### Growth of New Braunfels: Late Nineteenth and Early to Mid-Twentieth Centuries

The relationship between agriculture, industry, and natural resources established in the mid-nineteenth century carried into the twentieth century and remained the foundation for New Braunfels's steady growth. The economy, while still rooted in agriculture, shifted more toward commerce—supplying farmers and ranchers with tools and supplies—and industry—processing raw goods and materials. Tourism as an industry also took root in this period. Enabling this growth were expanding transportation networks: the arrival of the railroad followed by a network of highways. Two railroads laid track through New Braunfels. In 1880, following a campaign for the railroad led by the mayor, the International and Great Northern Railroad acquired right-of-way through town and two town lots where a depot was built several years later (replaced with current depot in 1907). In 1900, a second railroad, the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad extended its tracks through New Braunfels. By the 1920s, a network of improved roadways, including a half dozen national highway routes, supplemented the railroad, further enabling the export of agricultural and manufactured goods and the import of raw materials and goods.

The town's population steadily grew over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from around 2,000 in 1880 to 3,590 in 1920. The 1920s saw explosive population growth, rising to 6,242 by 1930. Throughout this period, men and women of German heritage accounted for roughly 90 percent of New Braunfels's population. The remaining ten percent of the population was mostly white (non-German) and Mexican, with an even smaller percentage of Black men and women.<sup>50</sup> The town's evolution from a largely spontaneous settlement into a prosperous industrial center was somewhat unexpected, since its growth was “thought by many to have been fully grown a quarter of a century ago [1900].”<sup>51</sup> The citizens of New Braunfels, though, fully took advantage of their location and, as extolled in one newspaper, through “the energy, the enterprise and the pride of the people who make its citizenry,” they built a progressive and bustling small city during this period that is reflected in the extant resources in the district.<sup>52</sup>

### *Agriculture and Industry*

By the late nineteenth century, farmers in the county had moved from their town lots onto larger, rural properties. In town, though, gardening and some small-scale crop production persisted into the twentieth century.<sup>53</sup> To the south and east of New Braunfels, farmers grew cotton on the fertile Blackland Prairie in increasing numbers in the late nineteenth century. According to agricultural census schedules between 1860 and 1900, cotton production in Texas increased 605 percent and increased 983 percent in Comal County during the same period.<sup>54</sup> Across the county and state, cotton yields continued to grow in the early twentieth century. In the early twentieth century, farmers in the Blackland Prairie also increasingly grew corn and wheat, increasing production of corn by 300 percent and wheat by 900 percent between 1910 and 1920.<sup>55</sup> To the west of New Braunfels, in the rockier Hill Country, ranchers raised sheep as early as the 1850s, but with advances in sheep breeding that produced higher-quality wool and a growing demand for wool, the number of sheep in the county grew throughout the period.

The boom in agricultural production directly impacted the industrial sector in New Braunfels, and the two grew in correlation with one another. While most of the raw material manufactured in this period was provided locally, the

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<sup>49</sup> HHM, “New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey,” 3-26.

<sup>50</sup> “90 Per Cent of Inhabitants of City Germans,” *Albuquerque Journal*, June 8, 1925, 6.

<sup>51</sup> “New Braunfels Growth,” *Kerrville Mountain Sun*, June 5, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> “New Braunfels Growth,” *Kerrville Mountain Sun*, June 5, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> HHM, “New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey,” 3-7.

<sup>54</sup> HHM, “New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey,” 3-18.

<sup>55</sup> HHM, “New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey,” 3-20.

industrial sector was significantly aided by the railroads, and later the highways, by opening new markets and importing tools, goods, and other materials. During this period, industrialists followed in the footsteps of those who came earlier, harnessing the power of the town's two rivers to power mills before electric power supplanted water and steam by the turn of the twentieth century. Industrial production, which centered on cotton, corn, wheat, and wool, rose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1920, the value of goods manufactured in the county was around \$5 million and New Braunfels was the fourth largest shipping point of outbound tonnage southwest of St. Louis.<sup>56</sup>

One of the most prosperous industries to develop over the period was the textile industry. Beginning in earnest during the Civil War when demand for wool increased, the industry took advantage of the larger yields of wool and cotton and entrepreneurs opened more cotton gins, spinning mills, wool processing factories, a mattress factory, and yarn mills in town. By the end of the period, the Planters and Merchants Mill, a cotton fabric manufacturer and the only gingham mill in the state, was the largest employer in the county.<sup>57</sup> Opened east of downtown on the Guadalupe River in 1923, like other mills and factories, it was located outside the district, on the railroad and rivers. Though major manufacturing and cotton processing occurred outside the district, at least several small cotton gins, including the Reinhart Cotton Gin, operated downtown in the late nineteenth century (at the current site of the courthouse annex), and Market Plaza (Resource 442364) was one of several cotton storage yards downtown in the early nineteenth century (Figure 18).<sup>58</sup>

Local cotton was also milled for cottonseed. In 1893, the first cottonseed mill opened at Landa Industries west of downtown at the old Merriwether mill.<sup>59</sup> Purchased by Joseph Landa, a German-born San Antonio merchant, from Merriwether, the Landa Industries complex expanded over the period to include a steam power plant, flour roller mills, and a corn sheller facility. In addition to the Landa family, Hippolyt Dittlinger—who arrived in New Braunfels from Missouri as a child with his German parents—also contributed to the expansion of mills and industry in New Braunfels. Around 1901, Dittlinger took sole control of the late-nineteenth-century flour mill at 401 E. San Antonio Street just west of the district where they expanded into poultry and stock feed in addition to flour.<sup>60</sup> Dittlinger also operated a cotton gin along the railroad tracks just outside the district, and by 1930, he had also acquired Landa Industries and operated the Dittlinger Lime Company, a lime and rock-crushing plant that opened in 1907 four miles southwest of New Braunfels. The office for Dittlinger Lime Co. and Roller Mills (Resource 106), was built in the district, across from the roller mills, in 1923. The success of these industries spawned more businesses and by the mid-1920s New Braunfels boasted a number of other small industrial and manufacturing business, including a brewery, botting works, an ice plant, two tanneries, and a whip and harness factory (none in the district) during the period.<sup>61</sup>

### *Tourism*

New Braunfels also established itself as a tourist destination during this period. Centered on its open spaces, natural beauty, and waterways, tourism in New Braunfels was aided in this period by the railroad and a larger train depot (1907, Resource 840), the growing number of automobiles, and its active citizens. A significant element of the town since its founding, Main Plaza was enhanced with landscaping, a bandstand, and a fountain between 1896 and 1905. Though increasing tourism was not the intent, the city's beautification of Main Plaza added to the town's reputation as an attractive destination to tourists (Figure 19). One of the first, and the most popular, tourist attractions in New

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<sup>56</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-18.; *The Austin American*, June 28, 1925, 8.

<sup>57</sup> Lauren Canterbury, "Historic River Mill to become mixed-use development," *Community Impact*, February 10, 2020, <https://communityimpact.com/austin/new-braunfels/2020/02/10/historic-river-mill-to-become-mixed-use-development/>.

<sup>58</sup> No mills are included in this district as extant resources associated with this industry are located far from the boundaries. The Dittlinger mill site is excluded as it lacks integrity.

<sup>59</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-19.

<sup>60</sup> The mill site is excluded from the district due to its lack of integrity.

<sup>61</sup> "New Braunfels Growing Into Industrial Center," *The Austin American*, June 28, 1925, 8.



Braunfels developed around the same time as Main Plaza's beautification. Landa Park, located north of Landa Industries, opened in 1899 at the suggestion of railroad heiress Helen Gould, who, along with her husband Jay Gould, built a railroad spur into the park for excursion trips. Developed and improved over the period by Harry Landa, son of Joseph, with pavilions, footbridges, baseball fields, and a spring-fed pool with a two-story bathhouse, Landa Park became "one of the most popular resorts of the Southwest."<sup>62</sup> Though marketing was limited to advertisements placed in local newspapers in the region, Landa Park counted around 300,000 annual visitors by the mid-1920s.<sup>63</sup> The switch to electric power from steam and coal at the turn of the century, which cleaned the river water and opened up land along the rivers for public use, also facilitated the opening of other water attractions, including Comal Baths and Camp Warnecke, a family resort opened in 1918 with over 100 cottages on the northern banks of the Comal River northeast of the district.<sup>64</sup> These attractions and the city's parks, including Main Plaza, Market Plaza, and Landa Park, helped earn New Braunfels the title of "Beauty Spot of Texas," a term used by the Chamber of Commerce in later promotional materials.<sup>65</sup>

Hotels had operated in New Braunfels since the mid-nineteenth century, but the opening of the Faust Hotel (Resource 61, NRHP 1985) in 1929 highlights the importance the community placed tourism as a significant part of its economic prosperity. A group of citizens working through the Chamber of Commerce spearheaded and raised the funds for the opening of the modern hotel, originally named the Travelers Hotel, which would attract tourists and conventions and ensure that New Braunfels's economy remained buoyant during periods of agricultural depressions.<sup>66</sup>

### *Commercial Development*

The emergence of New Braunfels as an industrial and tourist center directly contributed to the town's commercial, residential, social, and cultural development. Though the expansion of mills and factories occurred outside the district, the industry's impact can be seen in the commercial development of downtown. Over the period, downtown—around and in the adjacent blocks off Main Plaza—transformed with increasingly dense commercial development. A reflection of the town's agricultural processing, downtown counted a number of stores and warehouses for agricultural implements, harness shops, and hardware, including the 1893 Henne Hardware store on W. San Antonio Street (Resource 833) and the circa 1900 warehouse to its rear (Resource 849). Other businesses opened over the period, offering a variety of goods and services, including several general stores, drug stores, a pool hall, a jewelry store, sausage makers and meat markets, grocers, and an opera house. Several banks, including the 1890 Clemens and Faust Bank at 278 W. San Antonio (Resource 839) and the circa 1925 Guaranty State Bank, of which only the front façade remains, at 443 Main Plaza (Resource 44895) also supported the town's growing economy. The first English-language newspaper, *The New Braunfels Herald*, also established itself downtown at 367 Main Plaza in 1896, four years after it began publication.<sup>67</sup> First located in a small wooden building, the newspaper built the present brick building (Resource 49) in 1924. By the 1910s and 1920s, the expansion of auto-oriented businesses—gas stations, car dealerships, and service and repair shops—in the city is reflected on the 1922 Sanborn maps. This development occurred particularly on Seguin Avenue and San Antonio Street, where first-generation German Texan Walter Gerlich opened the town's first car dealership at 386 W. San Antonio (Resource 842) in 1912.<sup>68</sup> In the mid-1920s on Seguin Avenue, which would

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<sup>62</sup> Harry Landa quote from Myra Lee Adams Goff, "Railroad transforms New Braunfels," *Herald-Zeitung*, September 8, 2013, 4C.

<sup>63</sup> Rosemarie Leissner Gregory and Arlene Krueger Seales, *New Braunfels's Historic Landa Park: Its Springs and Its People* (Friends of Landa Park, 2015), 95.

<sup>64</sup> Myra Lee Adams Goff, "Tubing at Camp Warnecke?," Sophienburg Museum and Archives, August 23, 2006, <https://sophienburg.com/tubing-at-camp-warnecke-those-were-the-days-my-friend/>.

<sup>65</sup> *New Braunfels Herald Zeitung*, April 23, 1997, 4.

<sup>66</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-28.

<sup>67</sup> John and Cindy Coers, "The New Braunfels Herald," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 1, 2024, <https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/NewBraunfelsHerald/Herald%20Building%20and%20the%20Black%20Whale%20Website.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> Myra Lee Adams Goff, "Tenacity leads to progress," Sophienburg Museum and Archives, January 11, 2015, <https://sophienburg.com/tenacity-leads-to-progress/>.

evolve in the post-war period as the town's automobile row, a gas station replaced a saloon on Main Plaza (Resource 52), and a Greyhound bus station (Resource 94) replaced a house.

Particularly in the late nineteenth century, but even into the 1920s, a number of businesses in New Braunfels were run by local entrepreneurs, craftsmen, and artisans, including cobblers, photographers, and tailors, of German heritage. Among the German-run businesses include the Plumeyer Bakery at 239 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 32A, Photo 43). Proprietors A. C. and Helen Plumeyer, first-generation German Texans, built the current building in 1913, replacing a 1908 one-story wood-frame building that housed the Welsch Bakery (Figures 20-21). In this building the Plumeyers operated the bakery and lived on the second floor until 1926.<sup>69</sup> A number of business owners, including the Richters, Hinmans, Wiedermanns, Naegelins, and Willes—all of German heritage—lived on the second floor above their businesses during this period.<sup>70</sup> The building at 193 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 47) also represents German entrepreneurship, as more than 15 businessmen of German heritage ran businesses in the building over the period.<sup>71</sup> Built in the 1870s and expanded and renovated in the 1920s, the commercial building operated a brewery before becoming the Phoenix Saloon in 1895. The saloon, which was run by a series of proprietors, it was known for its German-speaking parrot and for being the first bar in Texas to serve women.<sup>72</sup> Adding to its significance, it was in the café at the back of the saloon where proprietor William Gebhart, a German-born entrepreneur, is credited with developing chili powder in 1894. Shortly thereafter, Gebhardt moved to San Antonio and established the Gebhardt Chili Powder Company, where the powder was made into the 1990s.<sup>73</sup>

### *Residential Development*

Similar to the commercial growth in this period, residential construction grew in relation to the town's economic and population growth. Reflective of the town's demographics, the occupants in the district were predominantly of German heritage.<sup>74</sup> Within the district lived merchants, politicians, industrialists, laborers, and doctors. During this period some early haphazard residential development was replaced with permanent houses as the population grew more financially stable. The residential areas southwest and northeast of Main Plaza filled in new houses, and Seguin Avenue and San Antonio Street also saw pockets of continued residential construction intermixed with commercial development. Throughout the period, newspapers and visitor accounts reported on the city's "attractive" and "tidy" houses that made the town "a magnet for home lovers."<sup>75</sup> Houses from this period were set further back from the street than in the mid-nineteenth century, as residents were no longer pursuing agricultural pursuits in town, and built in the popular forms and styles of the day, including Folk Victorian and Craftsman.

Within the district, large high-style residences and smaller, more modest houses like the 1880s hall-and-parlor house at 325 S. Castell Avenue (Resource 160) and the circa 1920 Craftsman bungalow at 364 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 103B) (Photo 44). Several of the large, high-style houses reflect the wealth of some of New Braunfels's prominent citizens, including the houses of brothers Joseph and John Faust, bankers (Clemens and Faust bank/Resource 839), and businessmen. Joseph, who built the house now located at 305 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 150A, NRHP 2024) in

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<sup>69</sup> Nancy Bower, "The Plumeyer Bakery Building," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 3, 2024, [https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Plumeyer\\_Bakery\\_Building/Plumeyer%20Bakery%20Building.PDF](https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Plumeyer_Bakery_Building/Plumeyer%20Bakery%20Building.PDF).

<sup>70</sup> Bower, "The Plumeyer Bakery Building."

<sup>71</sup> Myra Lee Goff, "Phoenix Saloon," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 13, 2024, [https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Phoenix\\_Saloon/Phoenix%20Saloon%20Narrative%20.pdf](https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Phoenix_Saloon/Phoenix%20Saloon%20Narrative%20.pdf).

<sup>72</sup> "Jacob Schmidt Building," Walking Tour In New Braunfels, accessed July 2, 2024, [https://walkingtourinnewbraunfels.com/tour/dw36-jacob-schmidt-building-1922/?cat\\_id=5&ppp=-1](https://walkingtourinnewbraunfels.com/tour/dw36-jacob-schmidt-building-1922/?cat_id=5&ppp=-1).

<sup>73</sup> Ryan Schoensee, "Gebhardt Mexican Foods Company," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/gebhardt-mexican-foods-company>.

<sup>74</sup> The town's Mexican population, which accounted for roughly nine percent of the total population, lived predominantly in the West End, southwest of the district. The Mexicans who worked at the lime and stone plant lived in worker housing provided. The town's small Black population, around one-percent of the total population, lived southeast of the district, on S. Seguin Avenue and Comal Avenue.

<sup>75</sup> "New Braunfels Growth," *The Hondo Anvil Herald*, June 6, 1930, 1.

1880, was also a politician, serving as mayor, regent for the University of Texas, and as a state senator in the early 1900s.<sup>76</sup> John, who lived at the circa 1905 residence at 361 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 6A), was involved with the management of Dittlinger Roller Mills, and his wife, Emmie Seele Faust was instrumental in establishing and constructing the first public library in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>77</sup> Other examples include Dr. M. C. Hagler, who built the Craftsman bungalow at 285 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 937A, Photo 45) in 1919 upon moving to New Braunfels after graduating from school in Chicago. Prominent merchant Somers Pfeuffer, a lumber yard owner and politician, lived at the Classical Revival-style residence at 170 E. San Antonio Street (circa 1910, Resource 68A). A. Eiband, co-owner of the Eiband and Fisher general store on Main Plaza (burned in 1947), lived at the Prairie-style influenced house at 447 S. Seguin Avenue (1913, Resource 223A) (Photos 32, 46).

### *Civic Development*

As New Braunfels's population grew, so too did the need for new civic buildings and services. During this period of growth, the progressive spirit that characterized early educational, religious, and charitable development of New Braunfels persisted, contributing to the town's governmental, educational, and social development. These developments also directly impacted the built environment of the district. In some instances, like the construction of the New Braunfels Social Club (Resource 149) in 1910, they also reflect the persistence of German heritage and cultural traditions in the fabric of New Braunfels. The meeting hall was used by the German population for various activities, including bowling, billiards, card games, and dancing.<sup>78</sup> The construction of the current courthouse also highlights the persistence of the German influence. Part of an expansion and centralization of government buildings on and near Main Plaza, the courthouse was constructed in 1898 at the northwest corner of Main Plaza. The new courthouse, designed by architect J. Riely Gordon, reflected the town and county's growth, and it reaffirmed the importance New Braunfels and its citizens placed on preserving the openness of Main Plaza. Despite being offered land in the middle of the plaza, and Gordon's courthouse design with four entrances at its corners, the city insisted on maintaining the German-style plaza and main axis rather than adopting the more common courthouse square of many Texas towns.<sup>79</sup> In 1915, a new post office (Resource 854) was constructed on the site of a former residence a block from Main Plaza on N. Castell Avenue, and in 1918 the city's first modern fire station, Central Fire Station, was built along the railroad tracks on Hill Avenue (Resource 45, NRHP 2019) (Photo 33). The fire station, in particular, reflects a trend in investing in the city's infrastructure, funded through voter-approved bonds, a tax increase, and donations for purchase of the land on which a house and barn stood.<sup>80</sup> In the late-1920s, voters approved the use of tax money for a new city hall building (Resource 899) a block from Main Plaza where a small two-story building stood, and a utilities building (Resource 69) on Main Plaza.<sup>81</sup> The progressive spirit was also reflected in education, as the public school system expanded over the period. By the turn of the twentieth century, the school district oversaw four schools, including the small school building, constructed in 1900, across the street from the nineteenth-century high school at 407 W. Mill Street (not extant).<sup>82</sup> Space was a problem, though, as the number of students grew, and in 1910 the

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<sup>76</sup> The house was originally located at 240 S. Seguin Avenue and built in a more modest style. When Faust was reelected to the Texas legislature, he hired architects Coughlin and Ayres to transform the dwelling into its current style. The house was relocated in 1929 to its current location when Drs. Frederick and Bertha Frueholz purchased the house to serve as their residence and medical offices.

<sup>77</sup> Comal County Historical Commission, "Emmie Seele Faust Memorial Library," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 25, 2024, [https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Emmie\\_Seele\\_Faust\\_Memorial\\_Library/EMMIE%20SEELE%20FAUST%20MEMORIAL%20LIBRARY.pdf](https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Emmie_Seele_Faust_Memorial_Library/EMMIE%20SEELE%20FAUST%20MEMORIAL%20LIBRARY.pdf).

<sup>78</sup> "New Braunfels Social Club," Walking Tour in New Braunfels, accessed July 26, 2024, [https://walkingtourinnewbraunfels.com/tour/dw44-new-braunfels-social-club-1910/?cat\\_id=4&ppp=-1](https://walkingtourinnewbraunfels.com/tour/dw44-new-braunfels-social-club-1910/?cat_id=4&ppp=-1).

<sup>79</sup> HHM, "Main Plaza," 8-11.

<sup>80</sup> HHM and Associates, Inc., "Central Fire Station," National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 2019, 14.

<sup>81</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-27.

<sup>82</sup> Iris T. Schumann, "Old New Braunfels High School," Comal County Historical Commission, Historical Markers, accessed July 27, 2024, [https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Old\\_New\\_Braunfels\\_High\\_School/New%20Braunfels%20High%20School,%20Old.pdf](https://www.co.comal.tx.us/Historical/Markers/Old_New_Braunfels_High_School/New%20Braunfels%20High%20School,%20Old.pdf).

school board moved forward with building a new school for Mexican children (outside the district) and a new high school for white students to replace the nineteenth-century building at 430 W. Mill Street.<sup>83</sup> The new New Braunfels High School was funded through the issuance of bonds and completed in 1913 (Resource 1292).

## World War II and The Post-War Period in New Braunfels

The prosperity of the 1920s carried New Braunfels through the Depression and into World War II. The town's industry, which landed New Braunfels's the nickname "Little Industrial Giant of the Southwest," proved beneficial during the war when demand for products, particularly textiles, grew and continued to serve as the economic backbone of the community throughout the historic period.<sup>84</sup> Despite the decline in local farming production—cotton production in the county ceased by the 1950s—ranching remained stable and the railroads and road network allowed raw other goods, particularly cotton, to be transported into the county and city.<sup>85</sup> Around a quarter of the town's population worked in the industrial sector—higher than the statewide 16 percent—in plant manufacturing: flour and feed, cotton textile, silk and nylon hosiery, gauze, women's and children's clothing, mattresses, cedar oil, wool, and leather goods.<sup>86</sup> Mission Valley Mill, established as Planters and Merchants Mill in the 1920s, remained one of the largest employers in New Braunfels throughout the period. Gypsum and crushed rock also remained viable during the postwar growth, used in building and road construction. Though the location of the mills remained largely outside the district, the industrial boom found its way into the district in the postwar period. By 1949, the early twentieth-century house at 373 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 148) was operating as a Venetian blind manufacturer, per Sanborn maps.

The tourism industry also expanded, due in part to expanded promotional efforts, new attractions, and the construction of Interstate Highway 35 in the 1960s. Throughout the period the Chamber of Commerce expanded its marketing efforts, creating promotional materials that focused on the town's natural beauty and water, its parks, its German heritage, and new attractions (Figures 22-23). Leaning into the town's German heritage, the Chamber also created the Opa icon, a traditional German man installed on road signs directing tourists to attractions (Figure 24).<sup>87</sup> The New Braunfels Conservation Society, which was founded in 1964 to preserve the town's historic homes, also promoted the town's German heritage and architecture as a tourist attraction. New attractions and events, including Wurstfest, also celebrated the town's heritage. Founded in 1961 as Sausage Week, the week-long event celebrated the town's sausage makers. The fest was held in Main Plaza from 1963 to 1966 before moving to its current home at Landa Park (Figure 25).<sup>88</sup> Other new attractions, including Natural Bridge Caverns (1964) and Canyon Lake (1968), capitalized on the area's natural beauty and recreational potential, which also benefited from IH 35. More tourists visited New Braunfels throughout the period, with 100,000 visitors attending Wurstfest alone by the 1970s.<sup>89</sup>

The town's booming industry, tourism, and expanded roadway contributed to significant population growth. Between 1930 and 1970, New Braunfels's population grew at a faster rate than the rest of the country, rising from 6,242 to 17,859. Industrial and tourism jobs brought in new workers, and the completion of IH 35 allowed a number of people to live in New Braunfels and commute to nearby cities, including San Antonio where a number of military personnel worked. The town's population remained predominantly white and ethnically German, but it grew more diverse with an influx of non-German residents, the majority of whom were Hispanic.<sup>90</sup> Despite the dramatic population growth and

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<sup>83</sup> Schumann, "Old New Braunfels High School."

<sup>84</sup> "Industry Booms in New Braunfels," *Express and News*, March 16, 1963, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Daniel P. Greene, "Comal County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/comal-county>.

<sup>86</sup> Keva Boardman, "Just a Grand Place to make a Living and a Grand Place to Live" Sophienburg Museum and Archives, August 6, 2017, <https://sophienburg.com/just-a-grand-place-to-make-a-living-and-a-grand-place-to-live/>.

<sup>87</sup> Alton J. Rahe, *Wurstfest: The First Fifty Years*, (unpublished book, 2011), 56.

<sup>88</sup> Kristina Kupferschmid, "Landa Park and Industrial Historic District," Determination of Eligibility to the Texas Historical Commission, July 31, 2020, 9.

<sup>89</sup> Rahe, *Wurstfest: The First Fifty Years*, 39.

<sup>90</sup> Comal County Program Building Committee, *Long Range County Program: Comal County*, prepared for Comal County (September 1967), 22, [https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph636942/m2/1/high\\_res\\_d/TXPUB\\_00145.pdf](https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph636942/m2/1/high_res_d/TXPUB_00145.pdf).



the need it created for more residences, schools, and goods and services, little development occurred in the historic district, having been largely developed in previous periods. As a result, the city's attempts at controlling and regulating growth, through its first city plan and zoning ordinances in the 1960s, did little to change the mixed-use pattern of development that already existed in the district.<sup>91</sup> Residentially, new suburbs opened northwest of town, while in the district, only three new houses, including the Ranch house at 324 W. Mill Street (Resource 928), were built; all in the residential areas that developed earlier. Similarly, new schools and churches opened in new residential areas, with the only religious or educational building added to the district in this period being the circa 1970 school building (Resource 54551B) at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church. Commercially, new business nodes developed along and near IH 35, and in the district a mix of stores in commercial-block buildings, like the 1959 building at 139 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 848) opened and free-standing commercial boxes, many of them offices, opened throughout the district. The modern commercial building at 210 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 431521), built around 1950, was built for the telephone company and is representative of the types of free-standing commercial buildings constructed in the district in the postwar period.

The biggest impact to the district during this period was the change in use from residential to commercial of a number of houses. As the population grew, so too did the need for goods and services, and businesses began encroaching into residences beginning in the 1950s and continued throughout and past the period of significance. In the district, there are nearly 40 examples of this trend, on S. Seguin Avenue, Comal Avenue, E. San Antonio Street, W. Mill Street, and W. Bridge Street. Businesses moved into all types and forms of houses, including mid-nineteenth-century German vernacular houses like the 1850 Ulrich House at 259 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 920, Figure 26), and Craftsman bungalows. Many of the residences were repurposed as offices. Meanwhile, the existing commercial buildings downtown reflected another shift in commerce. Though a number of German families retained ownership of some houses and commercial buildings and businesses in the district, such as Naegelin's Bakery at 129 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 70B), national chains and typical American businesses began replacing smaller traditional businesses.<sup>92</sup> One example is the Jahn Building at 494 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 207, see Photo 23). The building was constructed and occupied by descendants of prominent furniture maker Johann Jahn, who, carrying on Johann's legacy, sold handmade furniture there until the 1940s. By the 1950s a Piggly Wiggly grocery store occupied the building.<sup>93</sup> The town's new movie theater, the 1942 Brauntex Theatre at 290 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 837, NRHP 2008, Figure 27), was also opened by a Southwestern U. S. theater chain, Griffith Consolidated Theaters, Inc (Photo 47). Throughout the postwar period, other national chains, including JC Penney (209 W. San Antonio Street, Resource 31) and Woolworths (239 W. San Antonio, Resource 32A) moved into downtown. Unlike many downtowns during this period, New Braunfels retained its vitality (Figure 28).

### Modern New Braunfels

At the end of the period of significance, New Braunfels was on the precipice of explosive growth. Between 1970 and 2020, the town's population grew from 17,859 to 90,403. This growth undoubtedly impacted downtown New Braunfels. Despite several major projects downtown, including the First Federal Savings and Loan Association (now the Comal County Landa Annex) northeast of the courthouse (just outside the district) in 1978, the Comal County Courthouse Annex (Resource 863) in 1990, and various façade renovations, New Braunfels has managed to retain the same charm and character that defined it early on and influenced its development over time. The citizens of New Braunfels, some of whom can trace their ancestry back to Germany and the town's early settlers, have successfully spearheaded preservation efforts since the 1960s when the New Braunfels Conservation Society formed. Over time and through collaborative efforts, the people and the city and county governments designated a local Downtown Historic District, designated 24 local landmarks, and listed 19 resources in the National Register of Historic Places within the

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<sup>91</sup> Tony Proffitt, "New Braunfels City Plan 'Pay As You Go,'" *The Austin American*, May 28, 1963, 13.

<sup>92</sup> Review of deed chronologies in HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey."

<sup>93</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 417 of pdf.

boundaries of the district alone.<sup>94</sup> Other efforts have seen the preservation and reuse of the train depot and Central Fire Station as museums. This nomination aims to aid in the city and county's continuing efforts at preserving New Braunfels's unique history.

## Criterion C

The Central New Braunfels Historic District contains a diverse collection of vernacular buildings and popular architectural styles. The more than 20 different architectural styles in the district represent trends in New Braunfels's architectural history between 1845 and 1975. Together, the architectural styles, forms, and materials of the buildings in the district illustrate the trends related to German settlement in Texas in the mid-nineteenth century, the arrival of the railroad in the late-nineteenth century, and nationwide shifts in stylistic preferences in the twentieth century, including American Movements and Modernism. The district brings together commercial, residential, religious, educational, and governmental buildings, showcasing high-style and architect-designed buildings alongside more humble storefronts and residences. The district also includes works by prominent Texas architects including James Riely Gordon and Leo M. J. Dielmann, as well as locally significant builders, including brothers Alwin and Adolph Moeller. Reflecting the architectural significance of the district are the 43 resources within its boundaries that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (19) and/or as local landmarks (24).<sup>95</sup>

### Association with Significant Architectural Styles

#### *Nineteenth-Century Folk Houses*

New Braunfels is home to significant examples of surviving nineteenth-century German vernacular buildings, in particular *fachwerk* houses, that highlight how German migrants and first-generation German Texans adapted traditional building traditions and techniques to south central Texas. *Fachwerk*, a traditional vernacular building method commonly used by German migrants in Texas in the nineteenth century, is characterized by its use of half-timbering connected with mortise and tenon joinery and infilled with stone, brick, or adobe.<sup>96</sup> Some owners covered the framing and infill with plaster or clapboard, though the framing and infill remained exposed on simpler dwellings. The building method was popular in some parts of Germany, as well as other European countries, including in England. Though some settlers were likely familiar with the method, it is likely that the tradition, particularly in New Braunfels took root and evolved from oral tradition and written documents like *Colonization in General and German Colonization in Particular*. This document, prepared by Prince Solms, detailed how German colonists should build their houses, including recommendations on the tools to use and room dimensions.<sup>97</sup> House plans reflected traditional German layouts and organization, and included variations of one-room and double-pen arrangements including: one front room, one back, lean-to roof; two front rooms, two doors; two front rooms, one door; dogtrot; enclosed central passage.<sup>98</sup> Using these guidelines as a basic model for domestic buildings, German settlers in New Braunfels adapted the technique to the local environment and personal preferences over a roughly 20-year period.

In New Braunfels, German Texans built *fachwerk* houses from 1845 to around 1880, with an estimated 90 percent of all buildings, including residences and commercial buildings, constructed during this period being *fachwerk*.<sup>99</sup> Builders used limestone for foundations, clay for bricks, and cedar timbers for framing. By the late-1800s, following the passage of a city ordinance prohibiting the use of combustible roofing materials, tin roofs grew more common,

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<sup>94</sup> Note that 3 of the 19 resources are noncontributing resources to the district and were previously listed as noncontributing resources.

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<sup>96</sup> Kenneth Hafertepe, *The Material Culture of German Texans* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2016), 74.

<sup>97</sup> HHM, "New Braunfels Historic Resources Survey," 3-11.

<sup>98</sup> Hafertepe, *The Material Culture of German Texans*, 19.

<sup>99</sup> Jo Lee Ferguson, "Stand the test of time," *Herald Zeitung*, October 7, 2000, 1A-3A.

replacing cypress shingles.<sup>100</sup> Due to their age, many of the *fachwerk* houses changed over time. Many were added onto—one-room wide houses becoming two-room wide, one-room deep becoming two- or three-room deep—while others had stucco or wood siding added to their facades. In the late nineteenth century, owners often added Folk Victorian decorative woodwork and trims to these houses. The district contains eight known *fachwerk* buildings that not only reflect this significant ethnic building heritage but also highlight the various adaptations and evolutions common to the type.<sup>101</sup> The two houses on W. Bridge Street (Resources 944C and 943, see Photos 9-10) are two examples of one-room width *fachwerk* houses. Both built in the 1850s, the houses both have front porches inset under their side-gabled roofs. This feature is once believed to have been incorporated from aspects of Creole houses found along the Gulf coast and seen by Germans during their migration to Central Texas.<sup>102</sup> The addition of a porch was a welcome feature due to the region’s weather. Also with an inset front porch, the Ulrich House at 259 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 920, see Photo 42) was built in 1859 and is two rooms wide. The house is now clad in wood siding and a historic-age rear addition incorporated the stone barn into the main house. Folk Victorian gingerbread wood trim was also added in the late nineteenth century.

Between 1845 and roughly 1880, builders also constructed non-*fachwerk* houses in these traditional forms and plans. The Friedrich Geue House (Resource 932) at 256 W. Mill Street is an example of a traditional German house in plan but built only of brick. Constructed by a master mason around 1871, the one-room width-plan house was constructed without studs and originally only had wood around its window and door frames; a porch with Folk Victorian wood trim was added in the late nineteenth century. The wood-frame, two-room wide house at 374 W. Mill Street (Resource 923) is another example of this variation (Photo 48). Built around 1870, the gingerbread trim at the front porch was likely added later.

Another German contribution to the New Braunfels built environment included “rock houses.”<sup>103</sup> Built by German Texan stone masons using traditional techniques, these houses “combined German notions of organizing living spaces” with locally available materials, such as limestone.<sup>104</sup> Built between the 1840s and 1895, many of these houses were one-and-a-half to two stories tall but had the same floor plans as the *fachwerk* houses. The 1868 Hinmann House (Resource 65) and the 1850s Dr. Theodore Koester House (Resource 222) are two examples of two-story German “rock houses” in the district. The Koester House at 421 S. Seguin Avenue is the lone example of an architect-designed German vernacular residence (Photo 49). The two-story limestone house with a full-width porch is attributed to W. C. A. Thielepape.<sup>105</sup> Born and educated in Germany, Thielepape, who was also a surveyor, lithographer, attorney, and photographer in addition to an architect, immigrated to Texas with the *Adelsverein*. In New Braunfels, Thielepape designed this residence and the first Comal County Courthouse in 1860. Elsewhere in Texas, Thielepape surveyed the town of Uvalde in 1855 and designed the Casino Club, a German men’s club, in San Antonio in 1857. Thielepape also served as San Antonio’s mayor between 1867 and 1872.<sup>106</sup> Stone was also used for large, institutional and religious buildings, including the First Protestant Church (Resource 62A, NRHP 1971). As described in the National Register nomination for the church, it is “strongly German in character and probably not so much Gothic Revival as a

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<sup>100</sup> Ferguson, “Stand the test of time,” *Herald Zeitung*.

<sup>101</sup> Research revealed eight *fachwerk* houses, but further investigation may identify more in the district.

<sup>102</sup> Hafertepe, *The Material Culture of German Texans*, 17.

<sup>103</sup> Per Hafertepe, the term “rock house” was the vernacular used throughout history, and therefore these houses are called “rock houses” rather than stone houses.; Hafertepe, *The Material Culture of German Texans*, 111.

<sup>104</sup> Hafertepe, *The Material Culture of German Texans*, 111

<sup>105</sup> Texas Historical Commission. [Historic Marker Application: Dr. Theodore Koester Home], text, 1970; <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth488924/>; accessed July 28, 2024), University of North Texas Libraries, *The Portal to Texas History*, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Texas Historical Commission.

<sup>106</sup> Theodore Albrecht, “Thielepape, Wilhelm Carl August,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 05, 2024, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/thielepape-wilhelm-carl-august>.

continuation of a traditional German vernacular.”<sup>107</sup> Jacob Langkopf, a German immigrant in New Braunfels, is attributed with designing the 1875 church.<sup>108</sup>

### *Late-Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Styles*

In the late nineteenth century, after the arrival of the railroad, popular American building patterns and styles grew more ubiquitous in New Braunfels. Popular Late Victorian styles, including Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Romanesque Revival, and revival styles including Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and eclectic mixes of styles replaced the vernacular styles of the mid-nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, new American forms and styles, including the Prairie, Craftsman, and Commercial styles, also gained traction in the district. These new styles were used for residential, commercial, governmental, and educational buildings. The shift from vernacular to these new styles was enabled by several factors. Lumber yards sold pre-cut and measured lumber, nails, and standardized plans and kits of parts that enabled builders to construct houses found in pattern books. They also prefabricated decorative millwork characteristic of Folk Victorian and Queen Anne houses. New Braunfels had several lumber and Henne Hardware Company in the district sold tools, supplies, and materials to builders. Not only did the railroad bring with it new building materials and exposure to popular architectural styles, but this period coincided with one of assimilation for German Texans. Though German culture was far from abandoned—the German language, cultural traditions, and societies persisted in New Braunfels—the move away from *fachwerk* and traditional building to new styles and methods was easier and more economical, but it also represents the German Texans’ alignment with contemporary American tastes.

These buildings, a number of them high style, were a departure from the typically small, unembellished buildings of the previous period. This period, the roughly fifty-year period between 1881 through the 1920s, also saw the highest number of architects working in the district. Construction of these buildings reflects the prosperity of New Braunfels during the period, and they contribute to the diverse architectural identity that characterizes the district today. Representative and unique examples of Late Victorian, Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Revival styles, and Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth American Movement styles are discussed below.

Late Victorian style examples include:

- The 1896 Folk Victorian House at 392 W. Mill Street (Resource 922) is constructed of brick and has an L-plan, a popular form among Folk Victorian houses (Photo 50). The house has intricate Gingerbread trim and railings at its front porch, as well as on its gable end. The size of the house and ornamentation represent a departure from the mid-nineteenth-century vernacular residences.
- The 1905 residence at 361 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 6A) is a brick Queen Anne house (see Photo 13). Like many houses in this style, the John Faust House has an irregular plan. The house, one of the largest and most ornate in the district, features a wraparound porch with spindlework, a Palladian window in the gable end, and a corner tower with a domed roof.
- The brick-lined Second Empire and Colonial Revival style house at 308 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 99A) was built around 1880 and is distinguished by its wood-shingled mansard roof and symmetrical façade (Photo 51). The house is the only example of a Second Empire inspired house in the district.
- The Comal County Courthouse at 100 Main Plaza (Resource 864, NRHP 1976) is an example of a Romanesque Revival building in the district (see Photo 4). Constructed in 1898 of rusticated local limestone with a Greek cross-plan, the courthouse was designed by San Antonio architect James Riely Gordon. Gordon’s Comal County Courthouse design reflected popular trends in Texas county courthouse design in terms of its plan, materials, and style. Gordon was a prominent architect in Texas during this period, known particularly for

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<sup>107</sup> “First Protestant Church/United Church of Christ,” National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 1971.3.

<sup>108</sup> Both the NR nomination and the RTHL nomination call him an architect, but he is listed as a carpenter in the 1860 census.



designing courthouses. Among the more than a dozen counties with Gordon-designed courthouses include Bexar, Ellis, Erath, Fayette, Gonzales, Harrison, and Victoria.

Late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century revival style examples include:

- The Henne Hardware Building at 246 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 833), constructed in 1893, is one of several Eclectic commercial buildings in the district. The brick, two-part commercial block store has modillions and a cast iron parapet with a cupola, decorative molding, and pinnacles. The façade has decorative brickwork and windows have cast stone moldings (Photo 39).
- The old Post Office at 196 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 854) is one of several Classical Revival style buildings in the district. Built in 1915, the brick building has a temple front with Tuscan-style columns (Photo 33). The building was designed by James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect of the U. S. Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department. Serving in this role from 1915 to 1933, Wetmore advocated for standardization in scale, materials, and finishes for government buildings. As a result, many of the post offices from this period are similar in design to the one in New Braunfels.
- The Faust Hotel at 240 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 61, NRHP 1985) is one of several commercial buildings with eclectic ornamentation, influenced by the Italian Renaissance Revival style (see Photo 24). Built in 1929, the four-story, brick hotel has slightly projecting pilasters and ornamental cast-concrete panels with floral and heraldic designs at the ground floor and in the parapet. Architect Harvey Partridge Smith of San Antonio designed the hotel. Smith was a prominent early twentieth-century Texas architect. Educated at the Chicago Institute of Art, Northwestern University, and the University of Arizona, Smith worked with several other architects in San Antonio before practicing alone in 1925. Working until his death in 1964, Smith's designs include the Boys Scouts Headquarters (1925) and Sunken Garden Theater (1930) in San Antonio, and restoration work on the Governor's Palace (1928) and several missions in San Antonio in the 1930s.
- The Classical Revival residence at 305 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 150A; NRHP 2024) was originally built in 1880 with Italianate ornamentation (Photo 52). In 1905, owner Joseph Faust hired prominent San Antonio architect Atlee B. Ayers with the firm Coughlin and Ayers to remodel the house. Ayers transformed the house into the Neoclassical residence of today by adding a full-height entry porch with Corinthian columns, a semicircular entryway, and an octagonal cupola. Ayers graduated from the Metropolitan School of Architecture in New York in 1894 and worked for several architects in San Antonio before forming a practice with Charles A. Coughlin in 1900. After Coughlin died in 1905, Ayers worked alone until forming another partnership with his son, Rober Moss Ayers, in 1921. Ayers designed more than two dozen grand residences in San Antonio (two of which are listed in the National Register).<sup>109</sup> In addition to the Classical and Neoclassical styles, Ayers designed houses in the Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance, English Tudor, Craftsman, and Prairie styles. Ayers also several buildings at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1900s and served as the state architect of Texas where he designed the Texas School for the Blind and other public buildings.<sup>110</sup>

Late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century American Movement examples include:

- The old New Braunfels High School at 430 W. Mill Street (Resource 1292), built in 1913, is one example of an institutional Prairie-style building with Classical Revival influences in the district (see Photo 14). The brick building features banks of windows, decorative multi-light windows, horizontal banding, and Wrightian-inspired cast stone embellishment on the massive portico walls. Architects Allister Shand and C. V. Seutter of San Antonio designed the school. While little is known of Shand, Seutter designed the Southwestern Insane

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<sup>109</sup> See Ayers's residential designs in San Antonio: <https://www.sahouseregistry.com/atlee-b-ayers>. The two houses listed in the National Register include the A. H. Half house and the Hiram Partee house.

<sup>110</sup> HHM and Associates, Inc., "Faust-Frueholz House and Medical Building," National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 2023, 21.

Asylum in San Antonio in 1915 and was elected president of the San Antonio Society of Architects in 1916. Seutter also worked on the remodel of several buildings in San Antonio in the 1910s and 1920s.

- Displaying Prairie and Mission Revival styles, the Central Fire Station at 131 Hill Avenue (Resource 45, NRHP 2019) was built in 1918 and designed by renowned San Antonio architect Leo M. J. Dielmann (see Photo 28). Dielmann practiced from 1902 until 1957 during which time he designed more than 100 church buildings across the state, as well as landmarks like the Fort Sam Houston Post Chapel in San Antonio, St. Mary's Catholic Church in Fredericksburg, and 10 NRHP-listed buildings, most of them churches.
- The 1920 foursquare at 328 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 158) is a residential example of the Prairie style in the district. The house has a front porch with a low-pitched hipped roof that mimics the main roof; both are clad in red clay tiles. The geometric embellishments of the porch supports and horizontal banding of the house are indicative of the Prairie style (Photo 53).
- At 285 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 937A), the brick bungalow built around 1919 communicates the Craftsman style through its modest scale, tapered brick porch posts atop brick half-piers, and wide eaves with brackets and exposed rafters (see Photo 45). The fenestration pattern and double windows—eight-over-one—also communicate the style.
- One- and two-part commercial block buildings with various stylistic ornamentation constructed in the district beginning in the early twentieth century increasingly used the Commercial style. The building at 494 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 207), built in 1910, is an embellished example of the style with decorative brickwork in the entablature and around the windows (see Photo 23). The building at 283 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 85A) is another representative example of the style in its use of brick, minimal ornamentation, and parapet with flat cornice (Photo 54). Architect Jeremiah Schmidt of New Braunfels designed this, and two other buildings in the district: the gymnasium at 260 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 62B) in 1920 and the old City Hall at 105 E. Mill Street (Resource 899) in 1929. Born in 1903, Schmidt began his career in New Braunfels in the 1920s. In the city, he designed several schools, the civic center, the courthouse annex, Fire Station No. 2, the open-air theater in Landa Park, and multiple houses. Schmidt also worked in Lockhart, designing several commercial buildings.

### *Modern Architecture*

By the 1920s, the global popularity of modern architectural styles began to influence commercial and institutional architecture in the district, with examples of Art Deco and Moderne buildings constructed in the district. The few (four) houses constructed in the district after World War include simple bungalows with no stylistic influences and simple Ranch-style houses. Examples of the Modern Movement in the district include:

- The 1936 gymnasium for the old New Braunfels High School is an educational example of the Italianate style. Located at 407 W. Mill Street (Resource 1042B), the brick building's stylistic influences are subtle and include the stepped door surrounds. The architectural firm of Phelps and Dewees of San Antonio designed the building. Other work by the firm includes the Gonzalez Memorial Building and Amphitheatre in Gonzalez (1936), the Administration Building at Kilgore College (1936), and the 1926 additions to the Bexar County Courthouse.
- The Brauntex Theater at 290 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 837, NRHP 2008) is an Art Moderne commercial building (see Photo 47). Constructed in 1942, the building is characterized by its porthole windows, vertical blade sign, and projecting marquee. Known for their theater designs, architects Jack Corgan and W. J. Moore of Dallas designed the Brauntex Theater. Together and individually, the two designed a number of theaters in Texas and the Southwest, including the Border Theater in Mission, the National Theater in Graham, the Oklahoma Opry in Oklahoma City, and the Will Rogers Theatre in Oklahoma City. Corgan, an

Oklahoma native, also designed the first drive-in theater.<sup>111</sup> For his part, Moore designed theaters for his uncles' theater business and was influential in their development of the Las Vegas Strip.<sup>112</sup>

- The house at 324 W. Mill Street is one of the few Ranch-style houses in the district (Resource 928). Built in 1962, the house has a low-pitched roof, low profile, and linear form characteristic of the style (Photo 55).

### Significant Local Builders

Local builders were also responsible for creating the district's architectural significance. Property owners who were carpenters and masons are attributed with the construction of a handful of mid-nineteenth-century houses, but by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, professional contractors began working in the district. Among the dozen builders known to have contributed to the construction of the district's resources, the most prolific were brothers Adolph F. and Alwin Carl Moeller, who between the two worked on 16 construction projects in the district between 1890 and 1929.

Brothers Adolph (1871-1922) and Alwin (1883-1936) were two of four brothers born in New Braunfels to second-generation German Texans. Their grandfather, Johann Georg, immigrated with the *Adelsverein* and built the rock house in Comaltown north of the river at 212 W. Austin Street. Their father, John Moeller, had a small lumber mill in the backyard and built several houses in New Braunfels. Continuing the building tradition, Adolph became a contractor, building a number of public buildings and residences in New Braunfels. Also a "concrete worker," Moeller built bridges, culverts, and cisterns in the city.<sup>113</sup> According to one account, Moeller was part of Moeller, Mordhurst and Blumberg, the firm that made the concrete blocks for the train depot in 1907. In the historic district, Adolph Moeller built Central Fire Station No. 1 in 1918 (Resource 45, NRHP 2019) and the old New Braunfels High School in 1913 (Resource 1292). Alwin (A. C.) was also a contractor, working first with Adolph before starting his own business. A contractor and prolific house builder, A. C. Moeller constructed more than 300 residences in the city, many in the Prairie and Craftsman styles, until his death in 1936.<sup>114</sup> In the district, A. C. Moeller built two houses: the Prairie-style house at 328 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 158) in 1920 and the Craftsman-style house at 408 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 213A) in 1926. A. C. Moeller also left his imprint on downtown New Braunfels, where he built around 17 buildings.<sup>115</sup> Of the seven extant buildings downtown attributed to A. C. Moeller are the 1924 New Braunfels Herald Building at 367 Main Plaza (Resource 49) and the adjacent building at 343 Main Plaza (Resource 50), built in 1925. A. C. Moeller also constructed the auditorium for the First Protestant Church at 260 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 62B) in 1920. Moeller also built the bandstand in Main Plaza in 1905 (Resource 442365C, NRHP 2021) and the first annex to the courthouse in 1930. Outside of the district, Moeller built several schools in New Braunfels, the Garden Street Bridge, and a textile mill on the Guadalupe River.

### **Conclusion**

From its mid-nineteenth century founding to its growth as an industrial center, and to its enduring place as a tourist destination, New Braunfels created and maintained a strong identity that reflects its complex and layered history. The resources in the district reflect this identity, which was shaped by its German heritage and natural beauty. The city has managed to retain its early character-defining charm that influenced its development over time. As described in the 1960s by the Comal County Program Building Committee, New Braunfels was and remains:

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<sup>111</sup> Mac McCoy, "Brauntex Theater" National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 2008, 8-9.

<sup>112</sup> Elizabeth Nelson Patrick, interview with William J. Moore, 1981, accessed July 1, 2024, <https://archive.org/details/MooreWilliam>.

<sup>113</sup> New Braunfels Herald, March 19, 1915, 8.

<sup>114</sup> Marie Offerman, "Decorated cutout cookies a favorite of Goff family," *Herald Zeitung*, April 15, 1992, 11.

<sup>115</sup> Myra Lee Adams Goff, "The Moeller family of Comaltown," Sophienburg Museum and Archives, February 16, 2020, <https://sophienburg.com/the-moeller-family-of-comaltown/>.

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A city of contrasts. It is a modern American city as is reflected in its busy factories, new homes, schools and churches, and yet, much of its old-world charm is retained in the German architecture of the buildings that remain from its early period, the cleanliness, the beauty of the dooryard flower gardens seen everywhere. The same contrast is heard in the language—the crisp English of business; the often heard sound of German lending the illusion of being in another world; and an occasional seasoning of Spanish giving zest to the whole and reminding us that we are still in Texas and all the possessors of a proud heritage.<sup>116</sup>

As such, the Central New Braunfels Historic District is eligible for listing under Criteria A in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Ethic Heritage: German, and Criteria C in the area of Architecture; both at the local level of significance. The period of significance spans from 1845 to 1975.

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<sup>116</sup> Comal County Program Building Committee, *Long Range County Program: Comal County*, prepared for Comal County (September 1967), 13, [https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph636942/m2/1/high\\_res\\_d/TXPUB\\_00145.pdf](https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph636942/m2/1/high_res_d/TXPUB_00145.pdf).



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Central New Braunfels Historic District, New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** 99.5

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 29.704594°N Longitude: -98.127756°W
2. Latitude: 29.705396°N Longitude: -98.122242°W
3. Latitude: 29.702917°N Longitude: -98.123250°W
4. Latitude: 29.701854°N Longitude: -98.120782°W
5. Latitude: 29.700084°N Longitude: -98.119237°W
6. Latitude: 29.699785°N Longitude: -98.121147°W
7. Latitude: 29.701575°N Longitude: -98.124956°W
8. Latitude: 29.700661°N Longitude: -98.127729°W
9. Latitude: 29.700843°N Longitude: -98.129339°W

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The Central New Braunfels Historic District includes 99.5 acres and is roughly rounded by S. Gilbert Avenue to the northeast, Butcher Street to the southeast, the southwest property lines along N. Academy Avenue to the southwest, the former International and Great Northern Railroad tracks to the west, and W. Zink Street to the northwest. The boundary of the district is shown as the yellow lines on Maps 3-5 on pages 57-59.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundaries of the Central New Braunfels Historic District include the highest concentration of contributing properties with good integrity associated with the growth and development of downtown New Braunfels as a commercial and governmental center between 1845 and 1975. Properties excluded from the boundaries lack integrity, are less than 50 years old, or are parking lots. Though pockets of historic-age buildings associated with the significance of the district are scattered beyond the boundaries, the non-historic and non-contributing resources at the edges disrupt the spatial and visual cohesion of district, and thus are excluded.

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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## Additional Documentation

### Maps

Map 1. County map of Texas with Comal County highlighted in red.



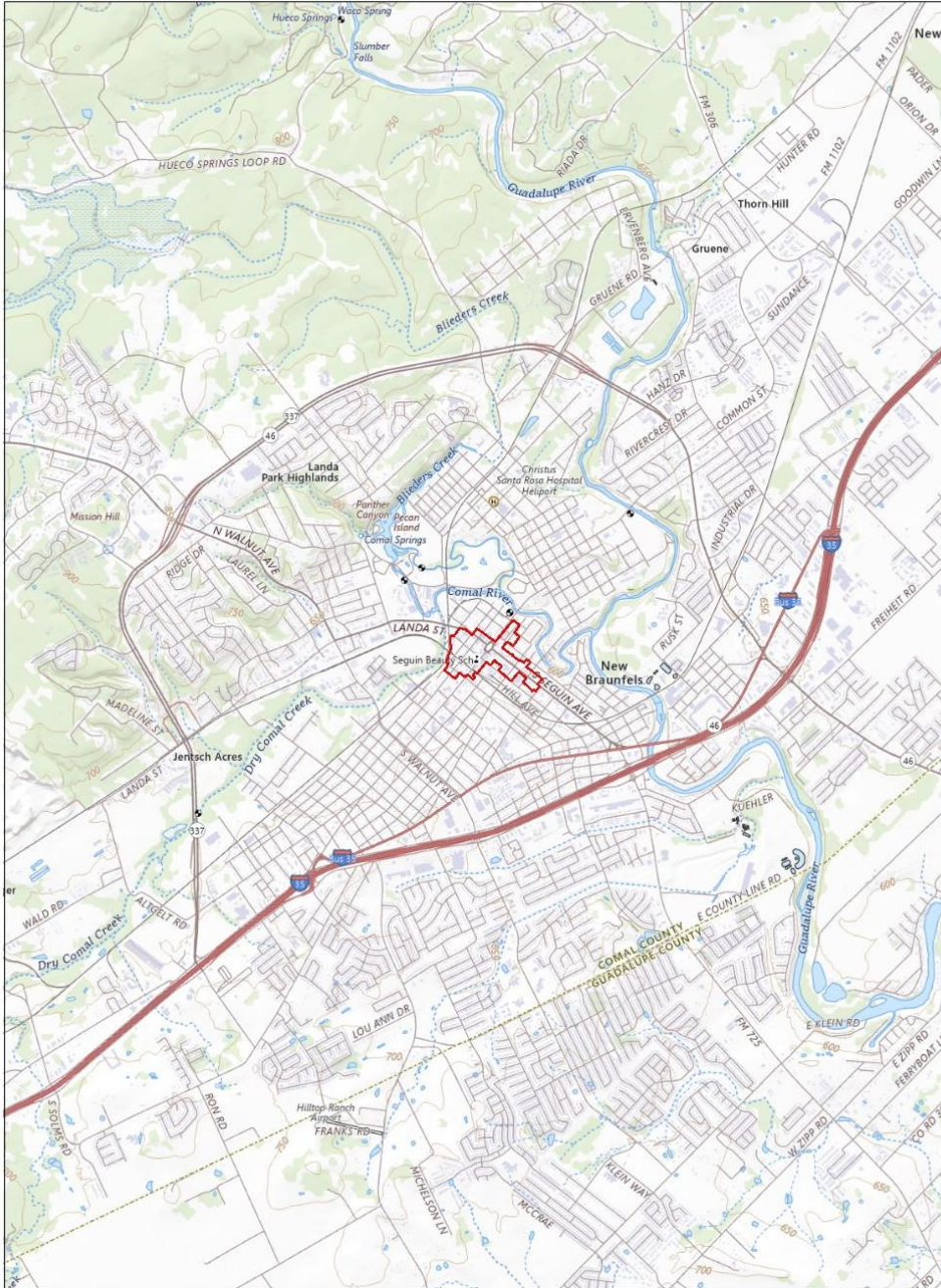


# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

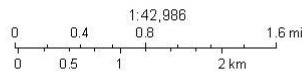
Map 2. Current topographic map showing historic district boundaries (in red) in a wider context. Source: HHM, March 2025.

### Central New Braunfels Historic District



3/3/2025

 Historic District Boundary



USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGERLine data;

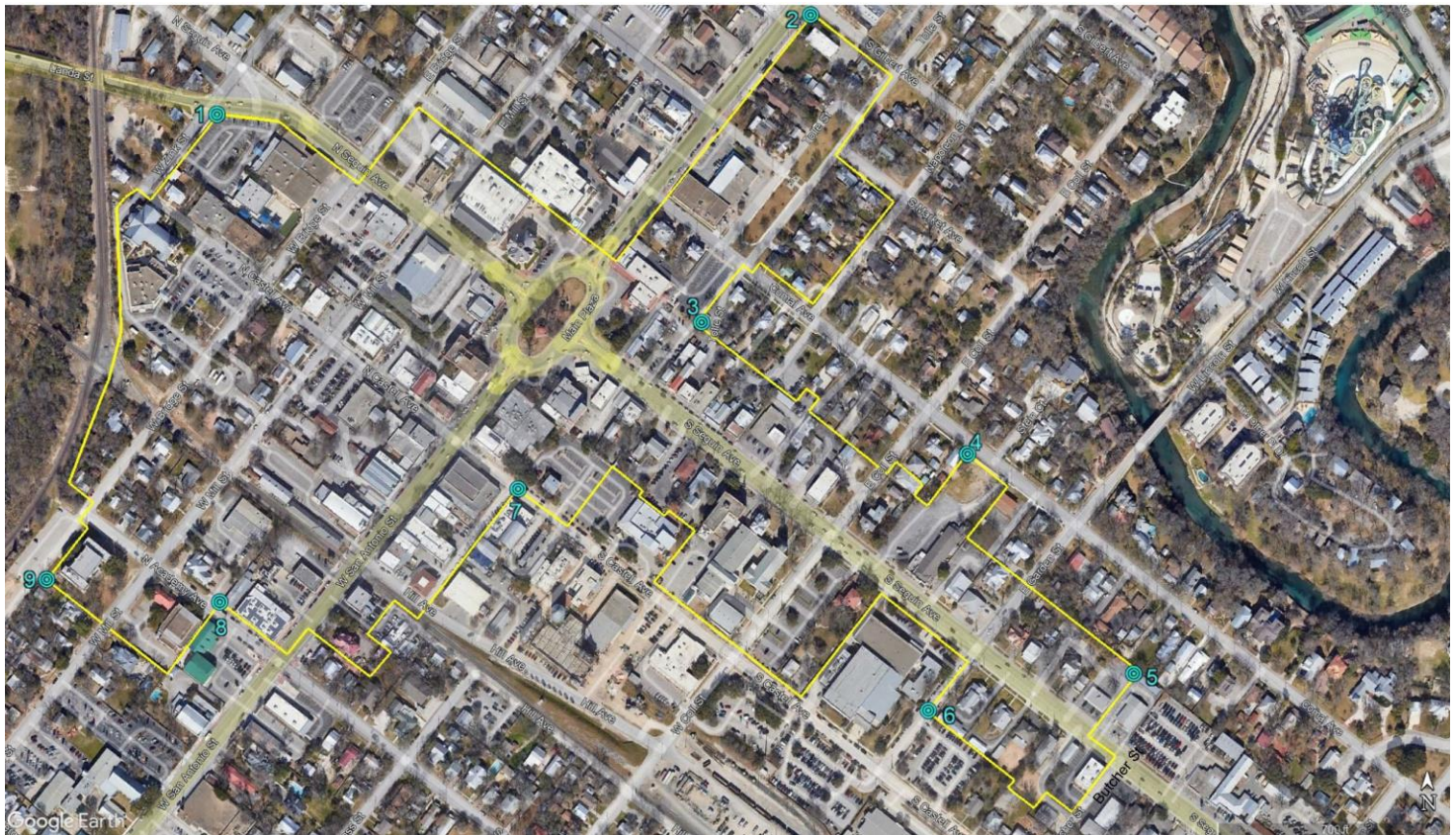


# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 3. Aerial view of the Central New Braunfels Historic District showing vertices in blue and boundary in yellow.  
 Source: HHM, March 2025.

Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	29.704594	-98.127756
2	29.705396	-98.122242
3	29.702917	-98.123250
4	29.701854	-98.120782
5	29.700084	-98.119237
6	29.699785	-98.121147
7	29.701575	-98.124956
8	29.700661	-98.127729
9	29.700843	-98.129339

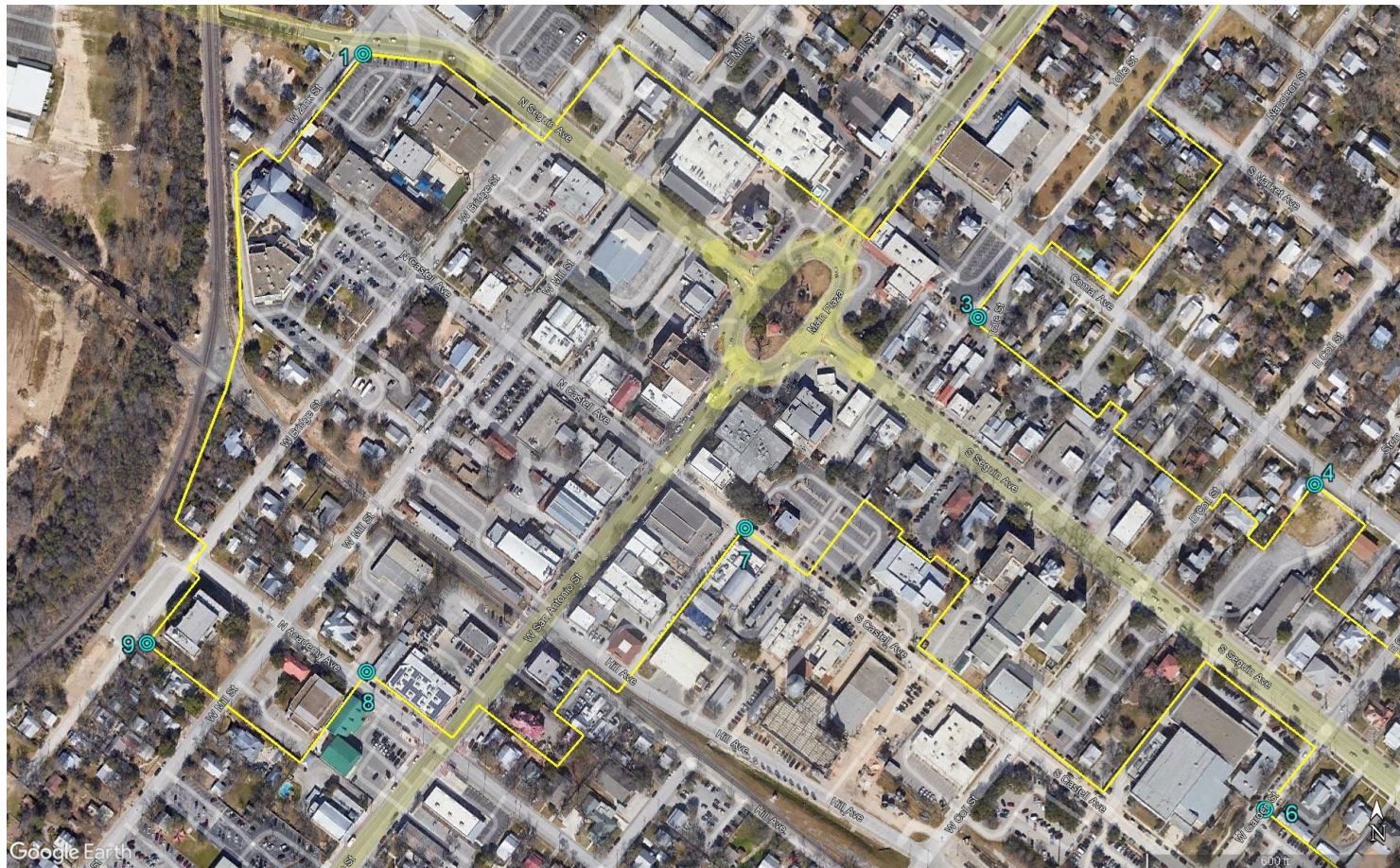




# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 4. Aerial view of the western half of the Central New Braunfels Historic District showing vertices in blue and boundary in yellow. Source: HHM, March 2025.

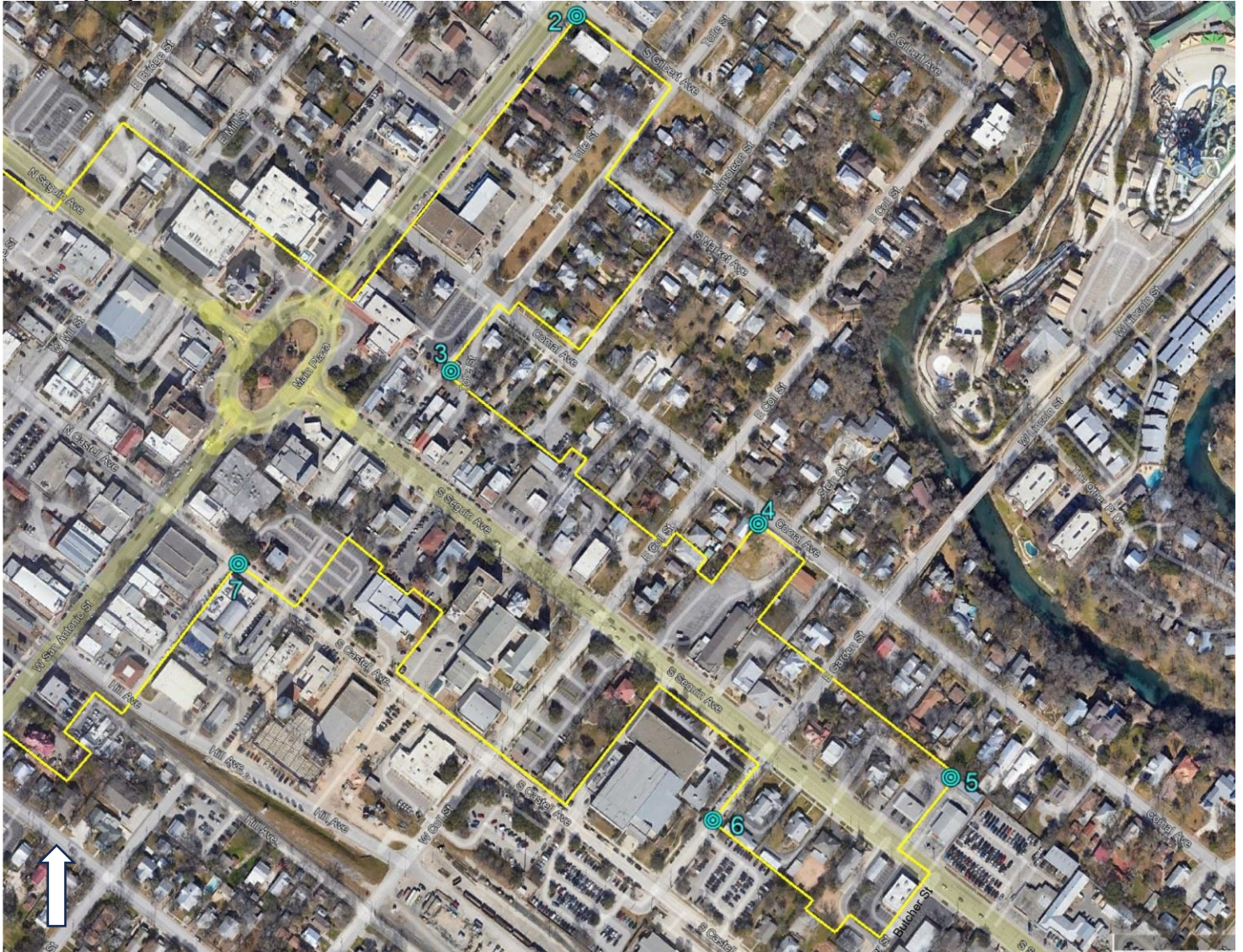




# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 5. Aerial view of the eastern half of the Central New Braunfels Historic District showing vertices in blue and boundary in yellow. Source: HHM, March 2025.



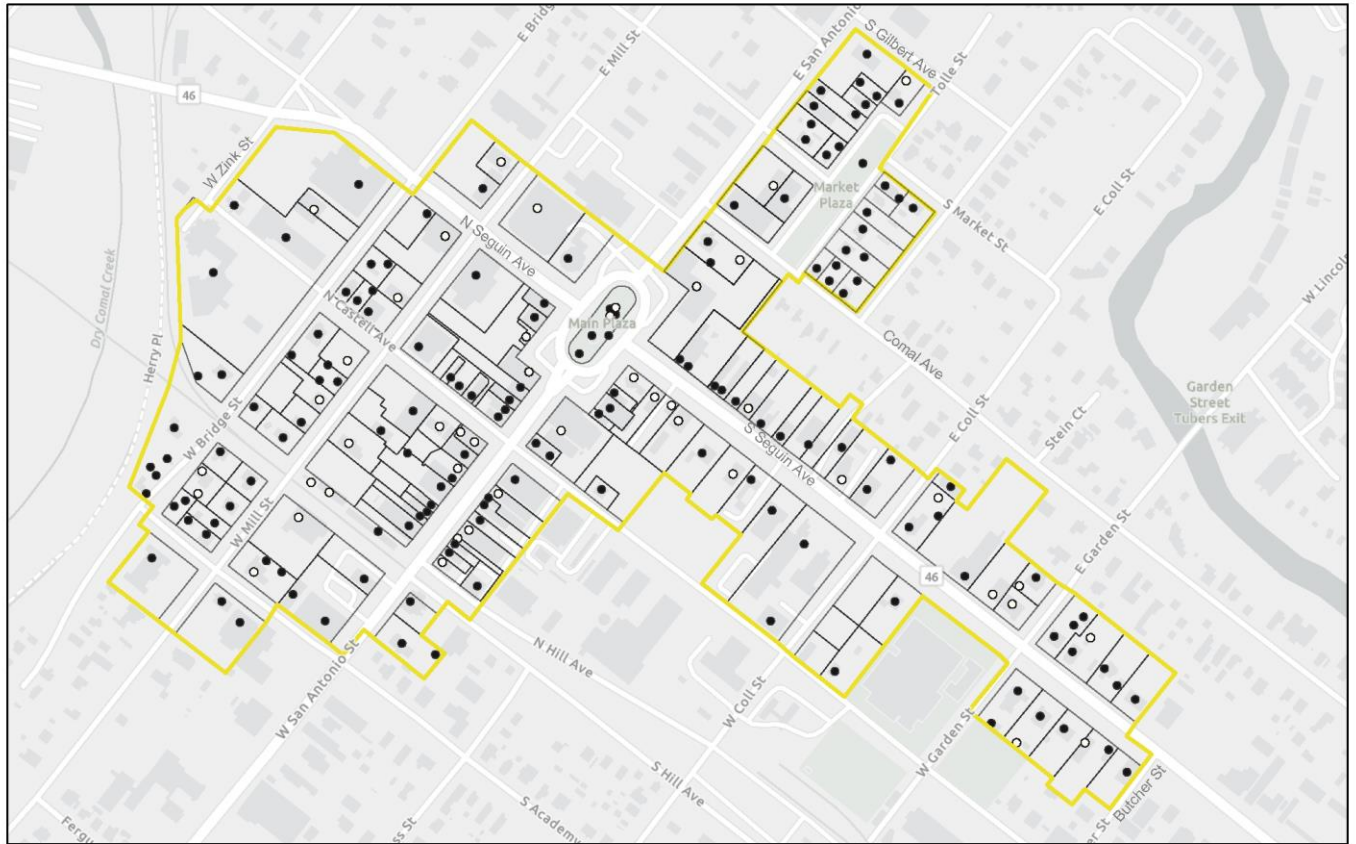


# SBR Draft

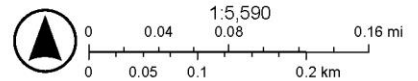
## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 6. Overview map showing the contributing and noncontributing resources within the Central New Braunfels Historic District. Source: HHM, March 2025.

### Central New Braunfels Historic District C/NC Map



- Historic District Boundary
- Contributing Resource
- Noncontributing Resource



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USCS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin,

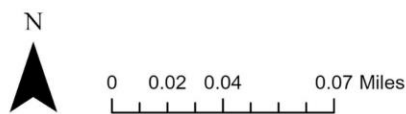
# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 7. Inset map showing the contributing and noncontributing resources in the western half of the Central New Braunfels Historic District. Source: HHM, March 2025.



**Historic District C/NC Inset  
 Map 1**



**Legend**

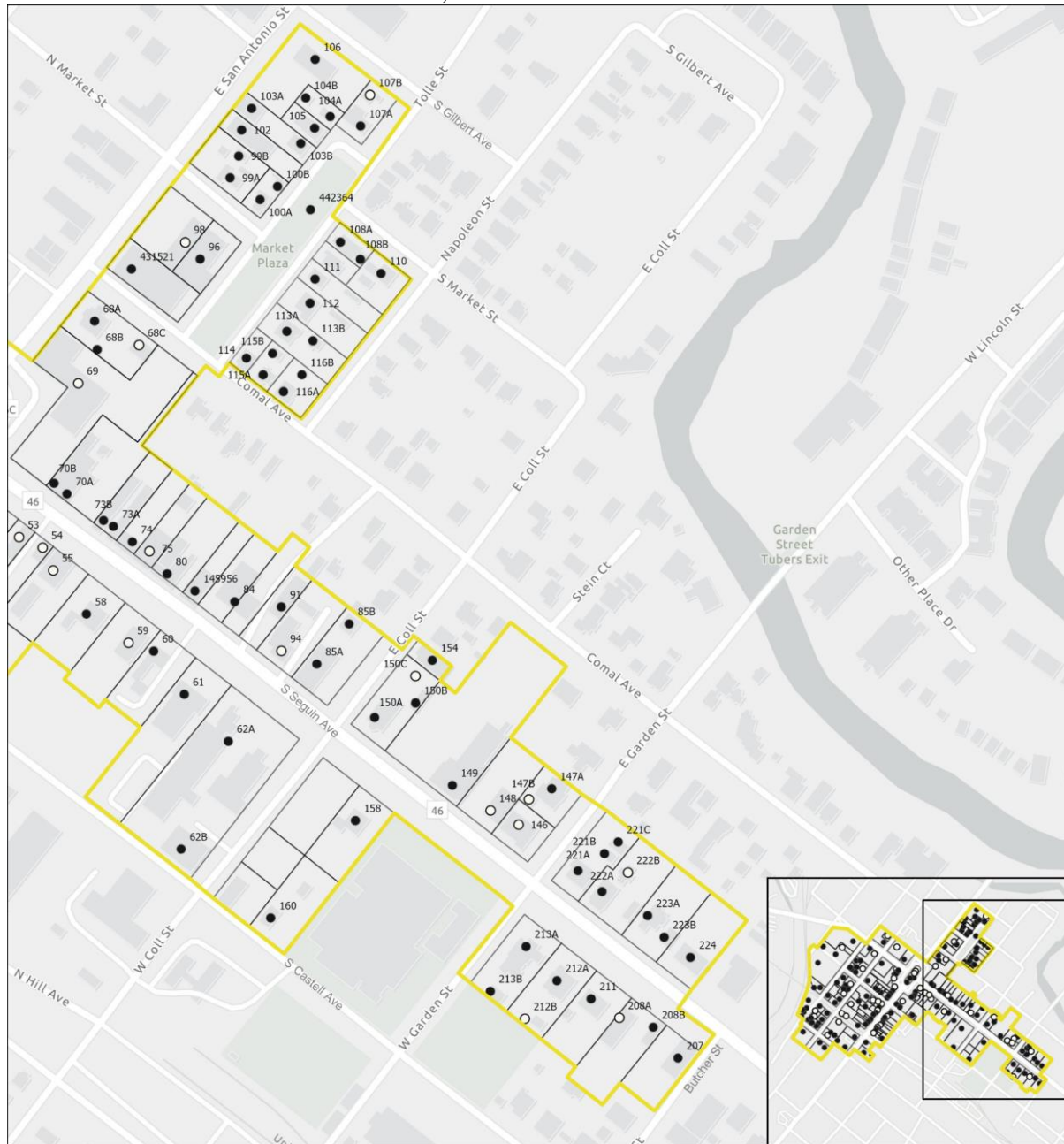
- Historic District Boundary
- Contributing Resource
- Noncontributing Resource



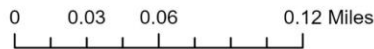
# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Map 8. Inset map showing the contributing and noncontributing resources in the eastern half of the Central New Braunfels Historic District. Source: HHM, March 2025.



**Historic District C/NC Inset  
 Map 2**



**Legend**

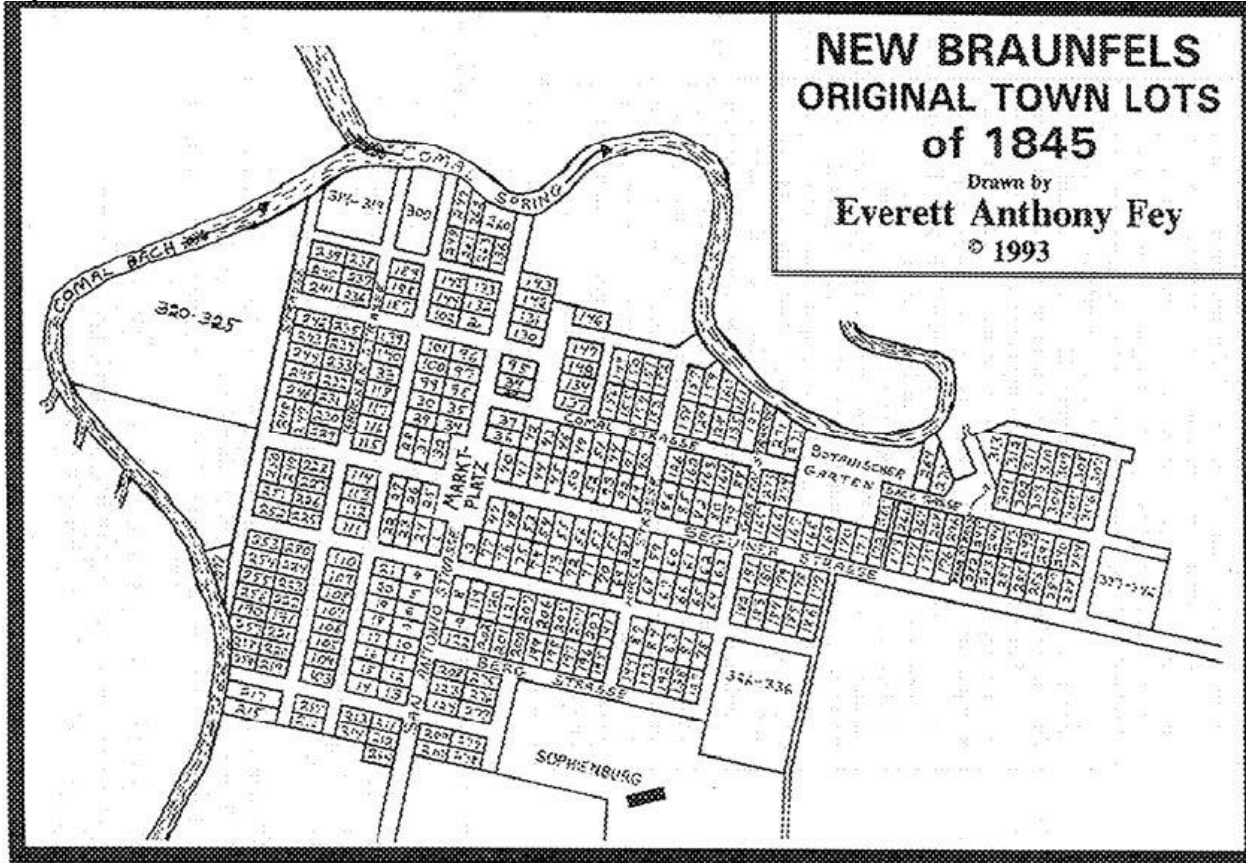
- Historic District Boundary
- Contributing Resource
- Noncontributing Resource

# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

## Figures

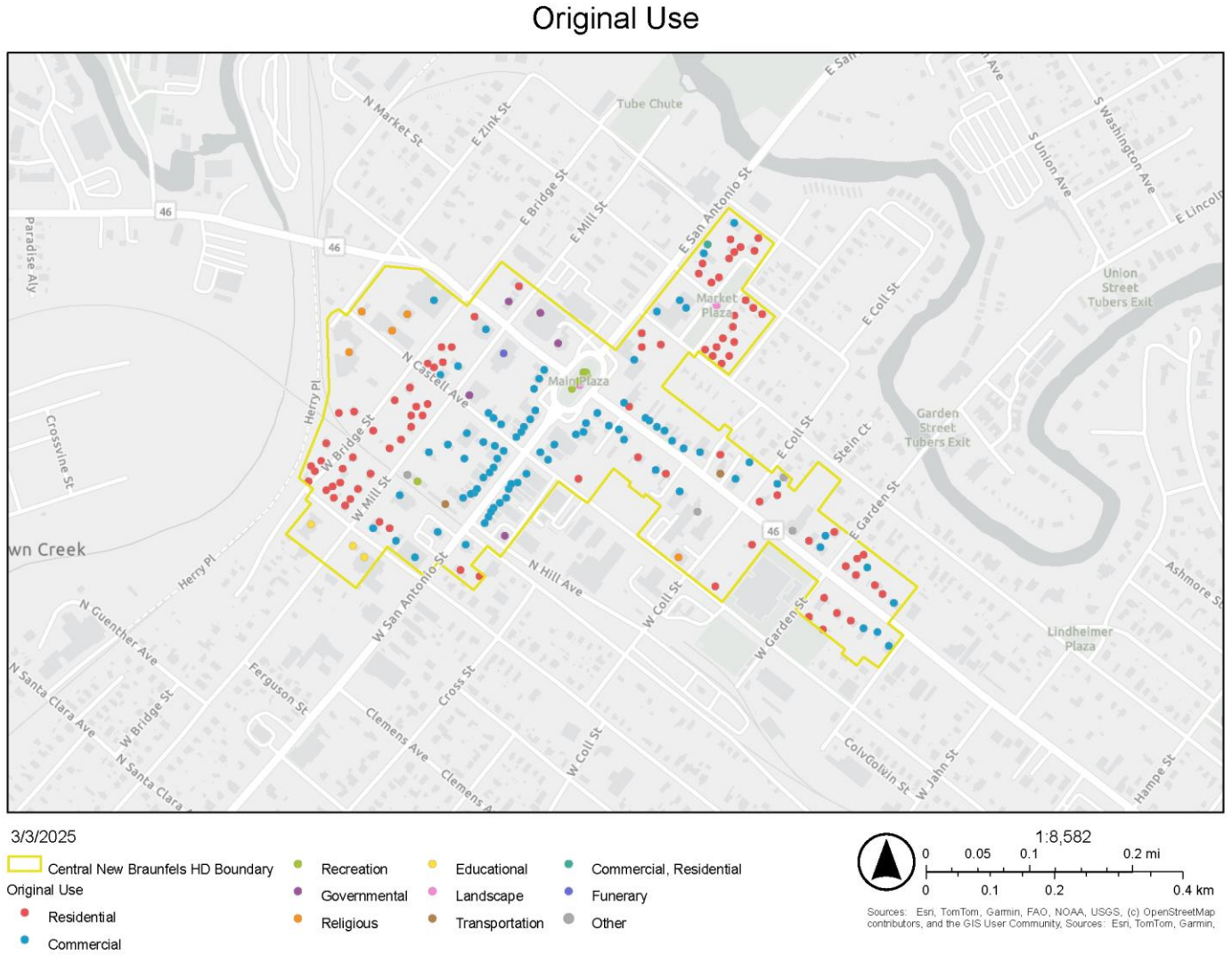
Figure 1. Layout of the Original Town Lots of 1845, drawn by Everett Anthony Fey, 1993. Source: Everett Anthony Fey.



# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 2. Map showing the original use of resources by color in the historic district. Source: HHM, 2025.

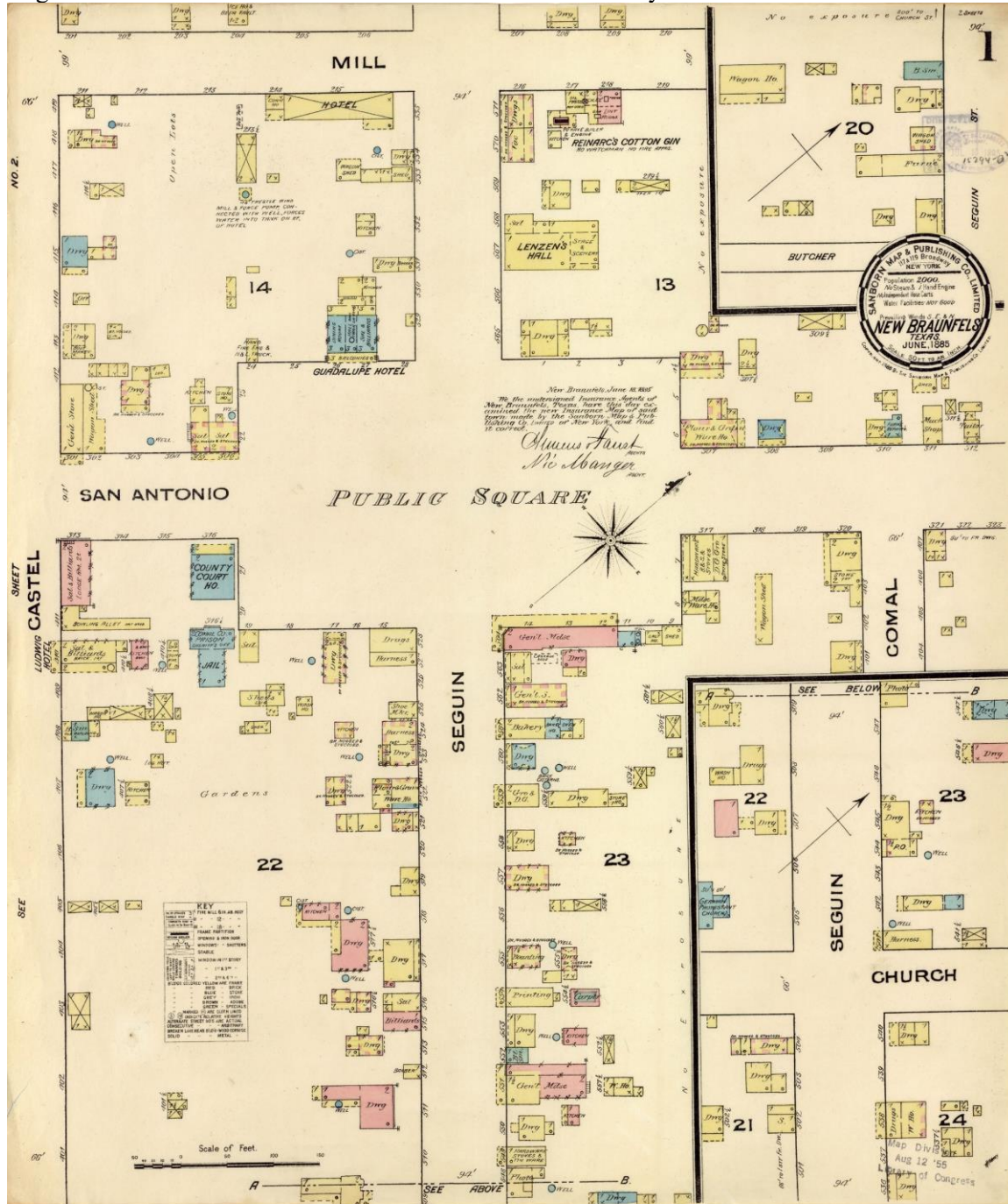




# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 3. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1885, Sheet 1 showing early development around Main Plaza, as well as the origins of the district's mixed-use character. Source: University of Texas Libraries.

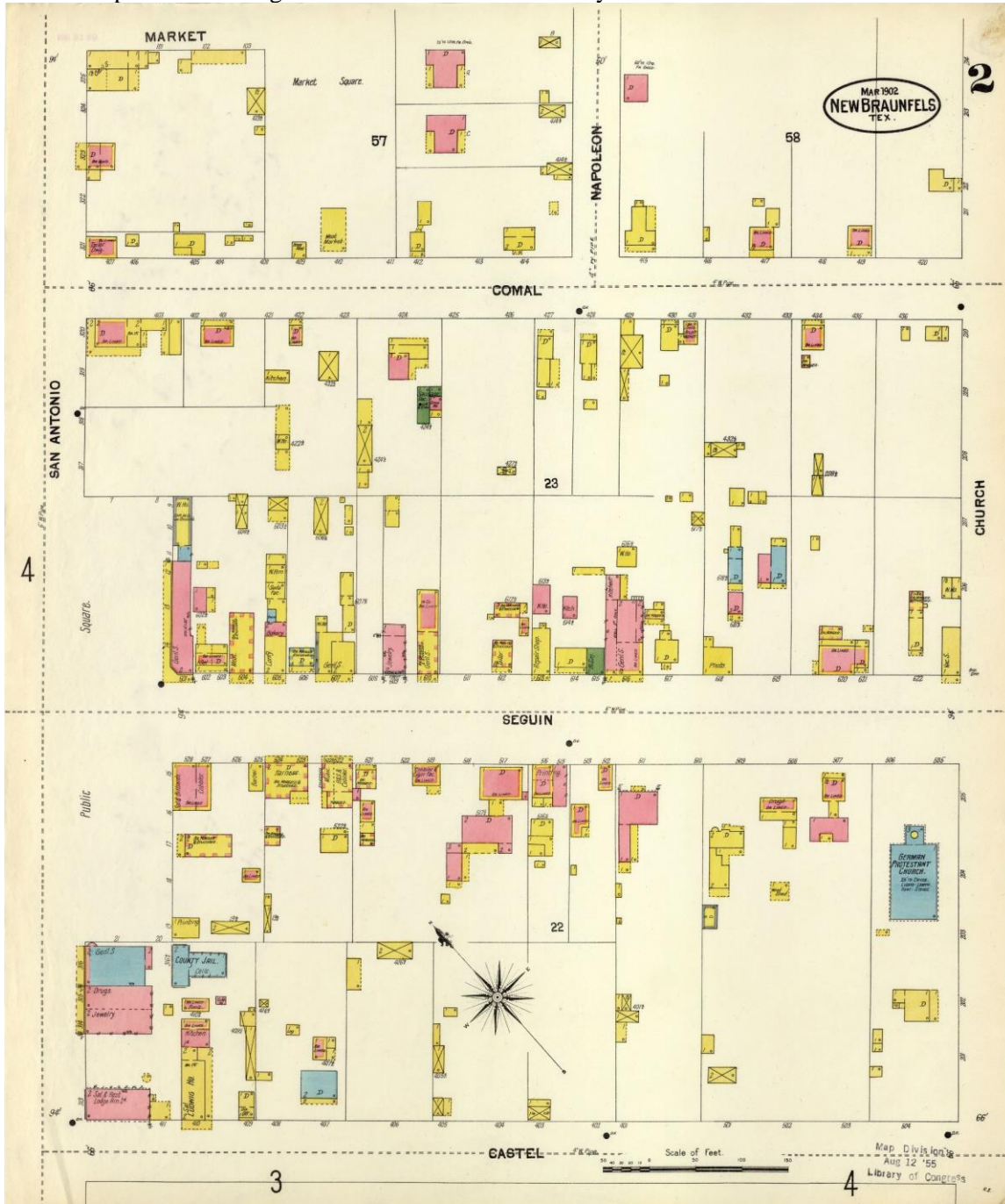


Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 4. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1902, Sheet 2 showing lots with multiple buildings and the continued mixed-use development on S. Seguin Avenue. Source: University of Texas Libraries.



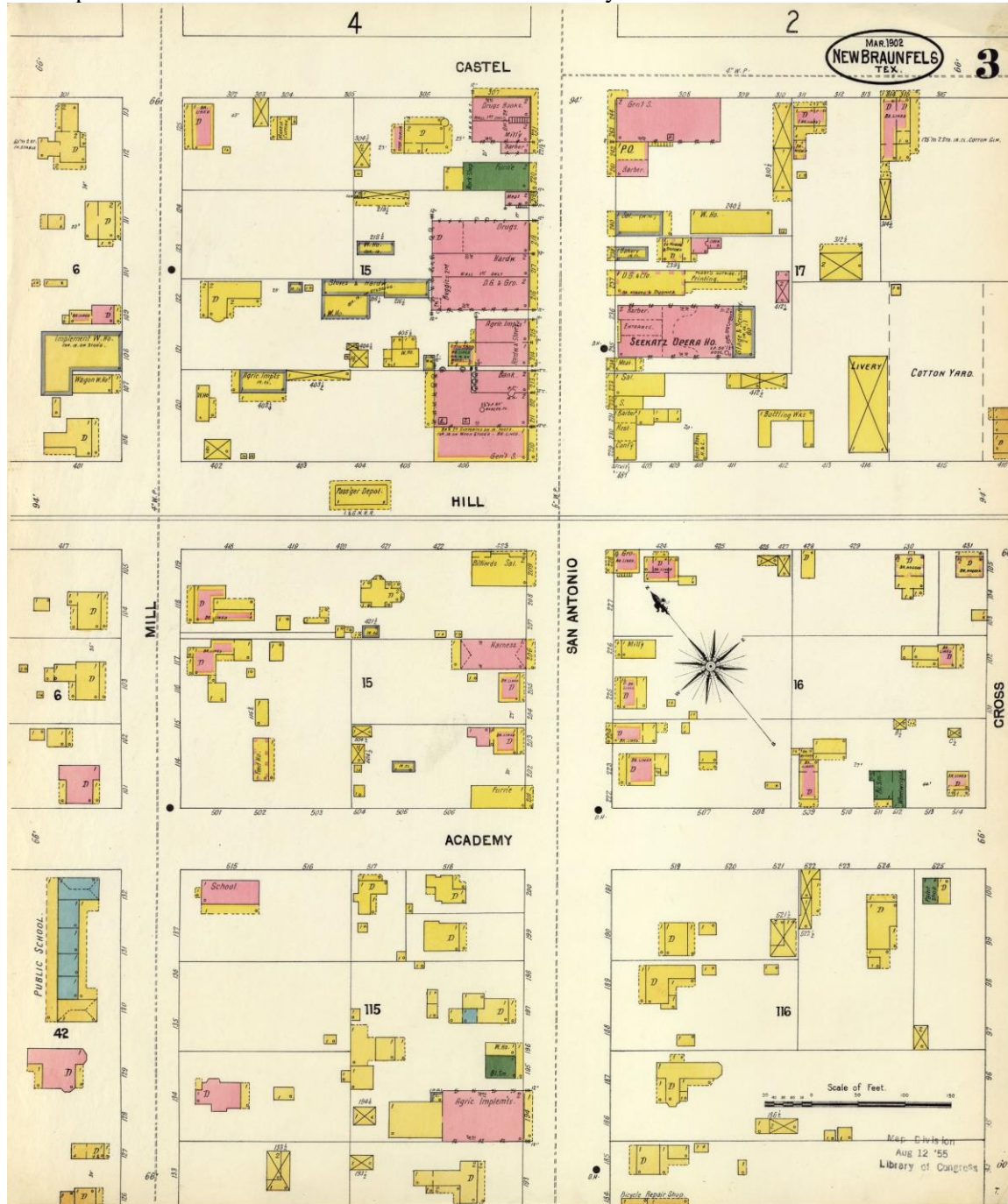
Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 5. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1902, Sheet 3 showing lots with multiple buildings and the dense commercial development on W. San Antonio Street. Source: University of Texas Libraries.

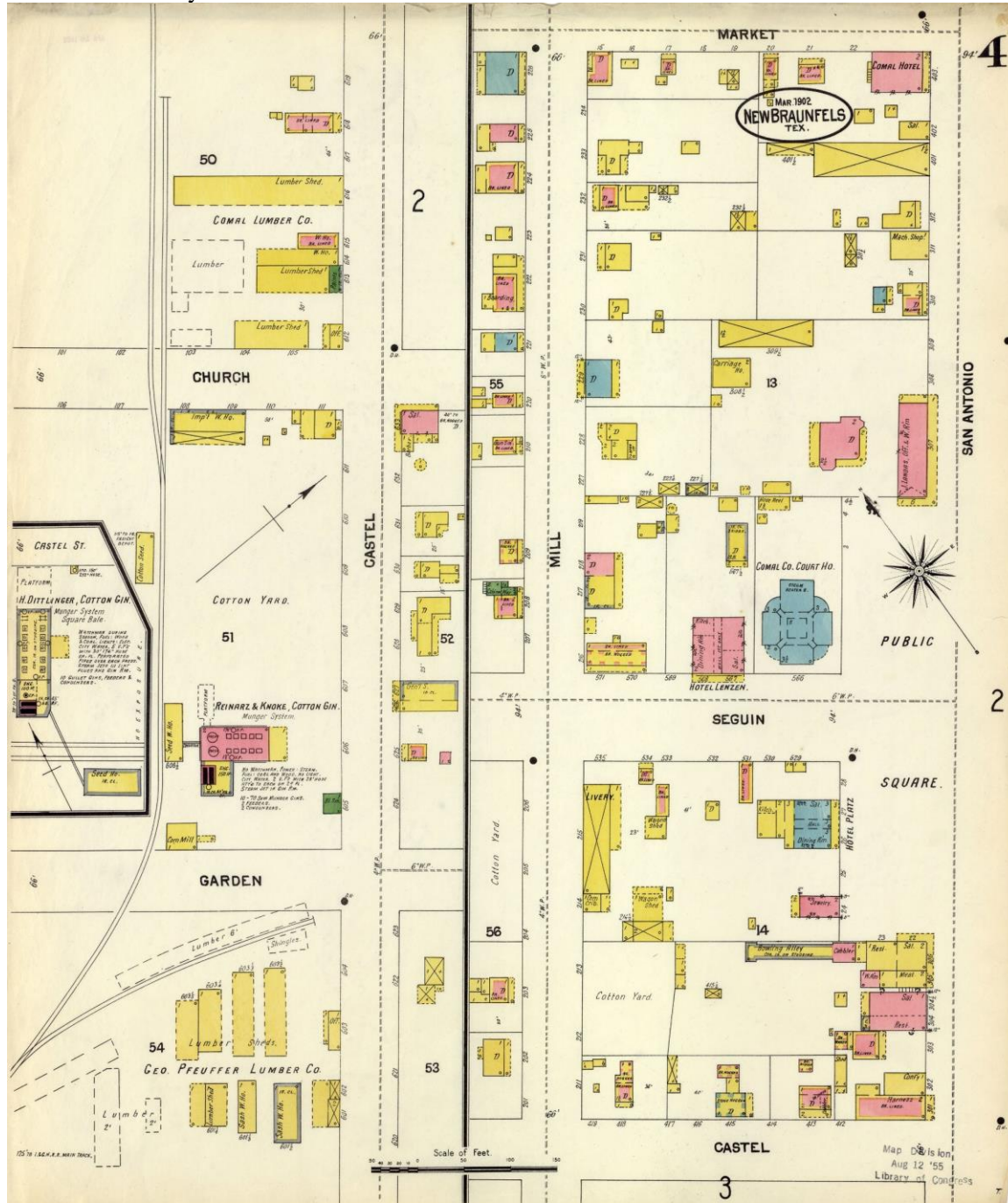


Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 6. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1902, Sheet 4 showing lots with multiple buildings around Main Plaza. Source: University of Texas Libraries.



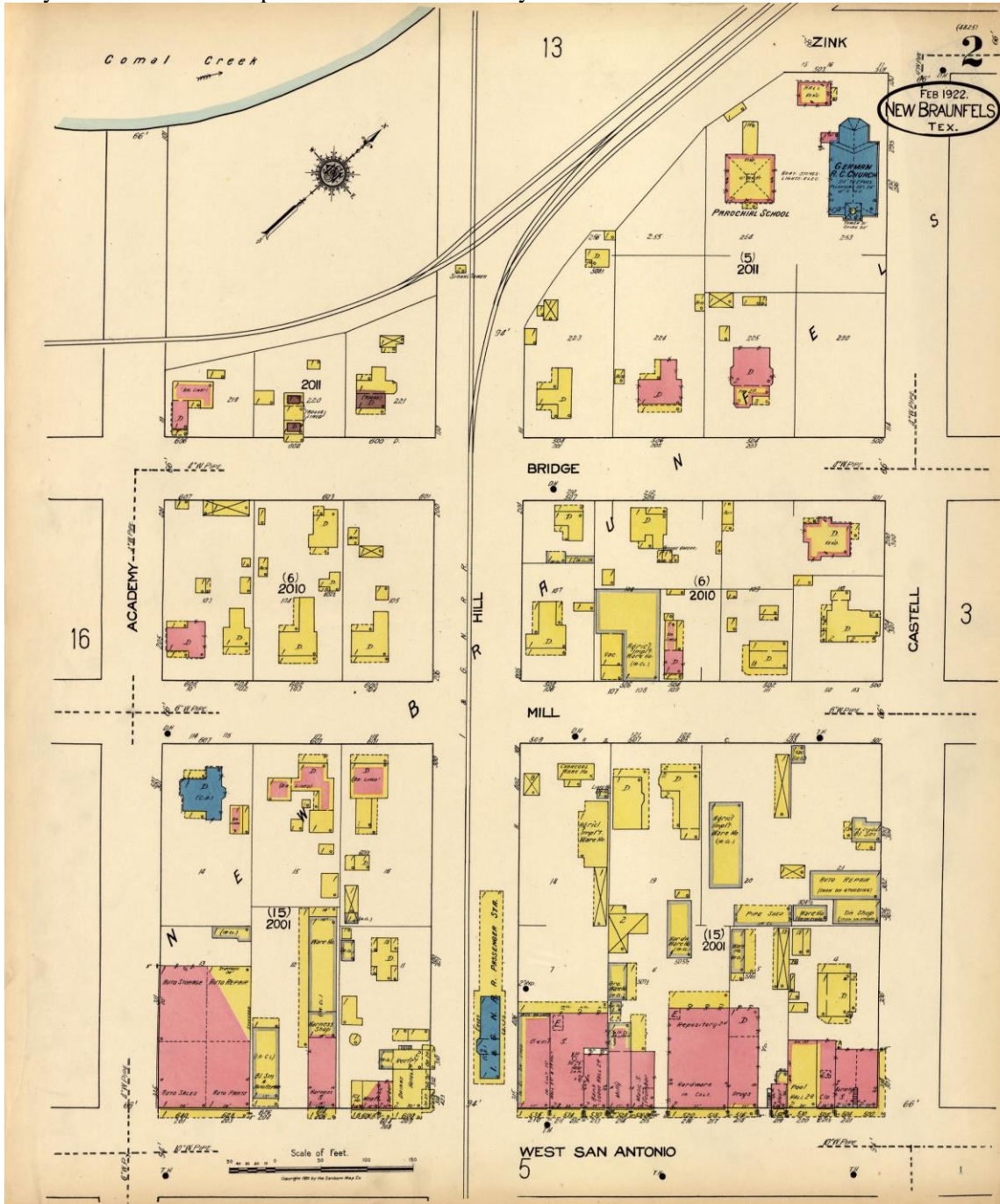
Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin



# SBR Draft

## Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 7. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1922, Sheet 2 showing dense development on W. San Antonio Street and early auto-related development. Source: University of Texas Libraries.

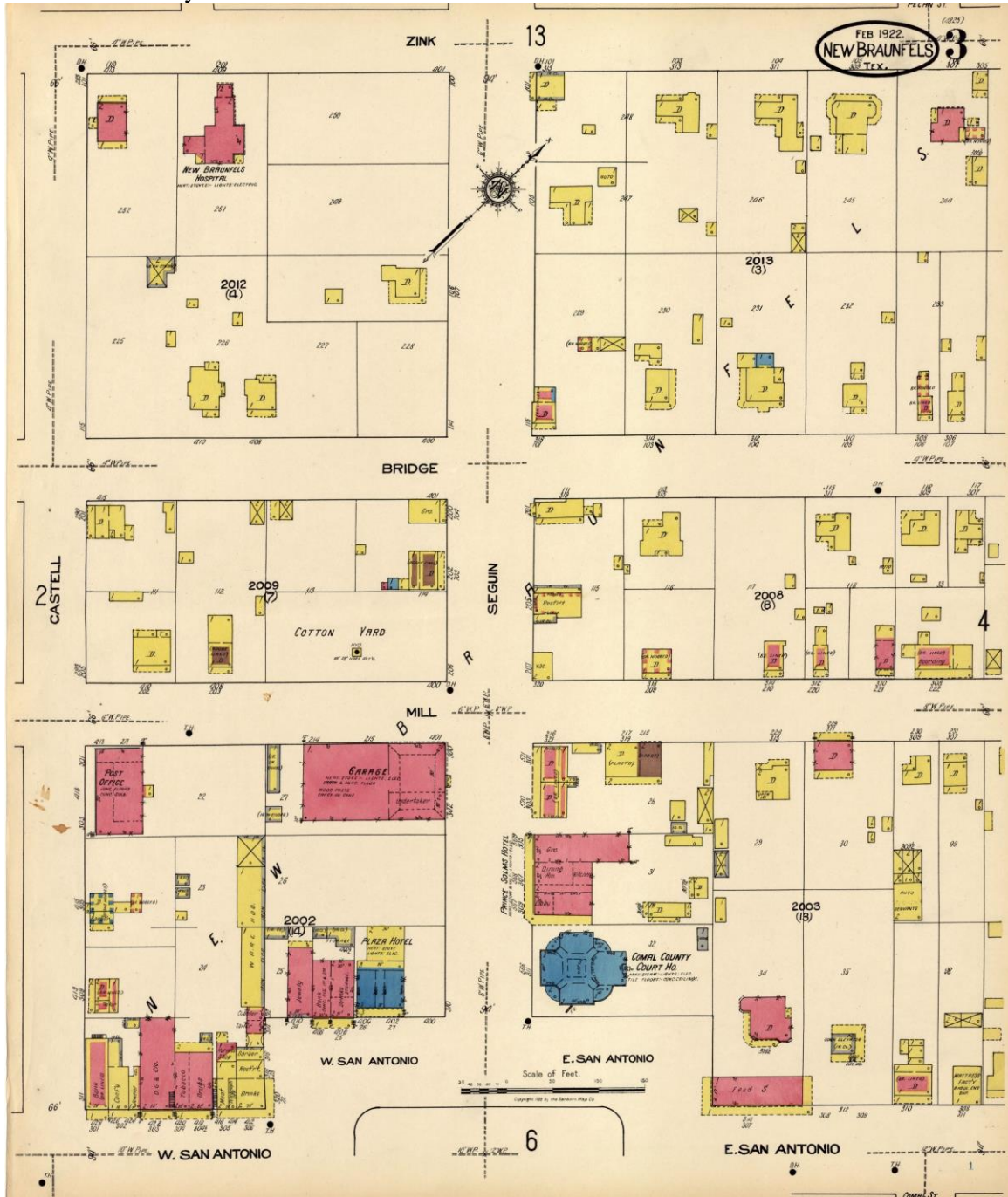


Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 8. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1922, Sheet 3 showing less dense development on N. Seguin Avenue.  
Source: University of Texas Libraries.

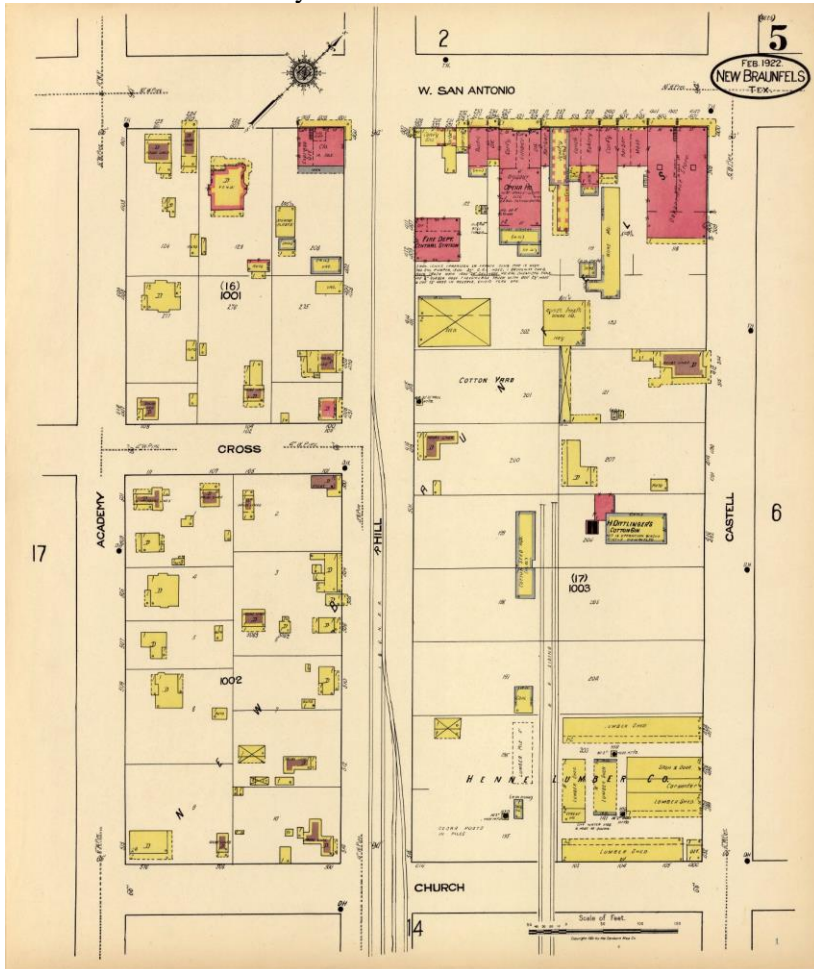


Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin



Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 9. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1922, Sheet 5 showing dense commercial development on W. San Antonio Street. Source: University of Texas Libraries.

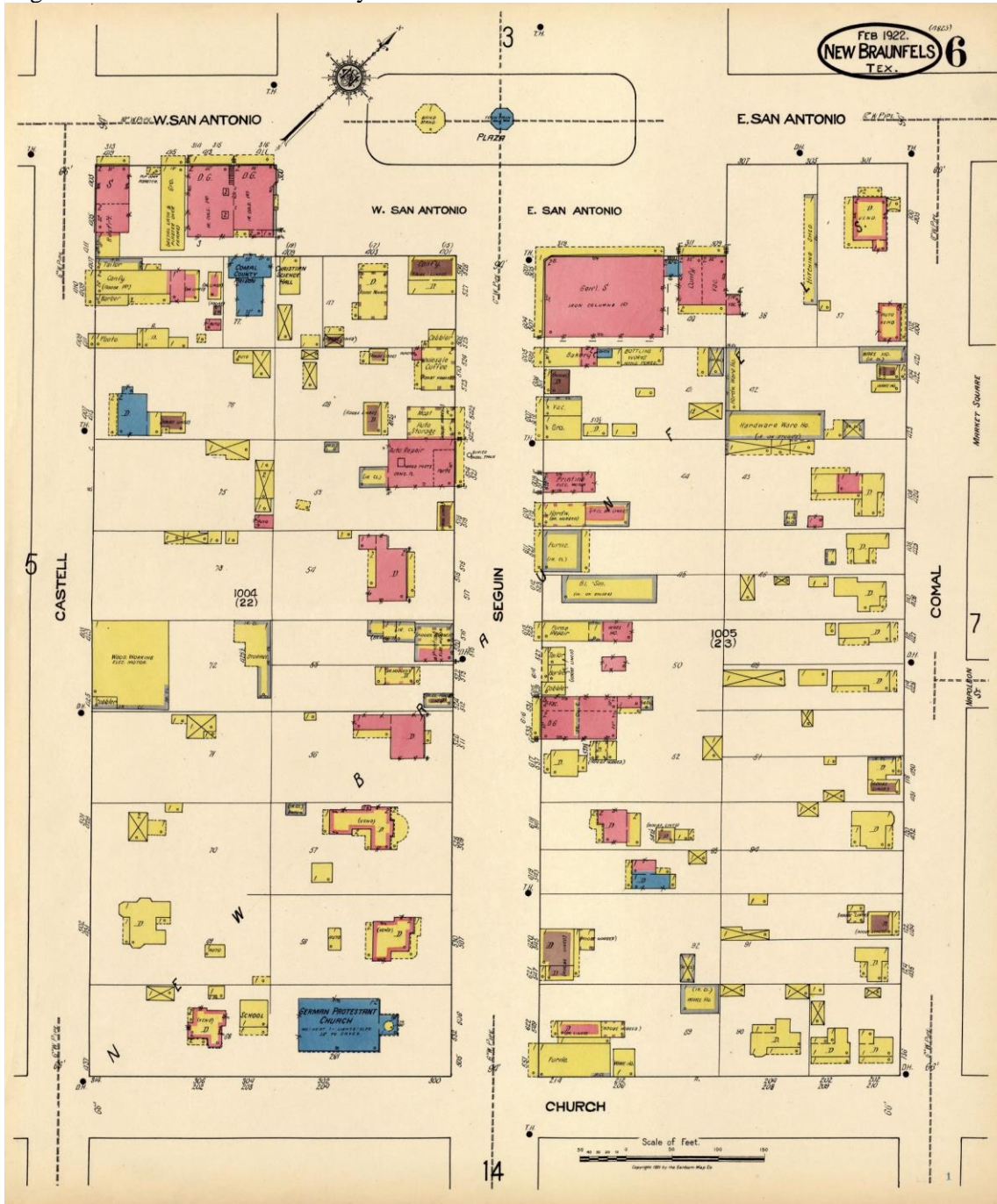


Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 10. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1922, Sheet 6 showing the continued mixed-used development patterns on S. Seguin Avenue. Source: University of Texas Libraries.



Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 11. The Comal County Courthouse (NRHP 1976) and Main Plaza (NRHP 2021) around 1900. Note the mixture of governmental, residential, and commercial. Source: Comal County Historical Commission.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 12. Augustus Koch's *Birds Eye View of New Braunfels, Comal County, Texas, 1881*. Note the development patterns around Main Plaza and along primary arteries of Seguin Avenue and San Antonio Street. Source: Texas Historic Overlay, Texas State Library and Archives.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 5. 1973 aerial of New Braunfels with boundary in yellow. Note the development and density in the district is minimally changed from the current development and density. Source: USGS EarthExplorer.

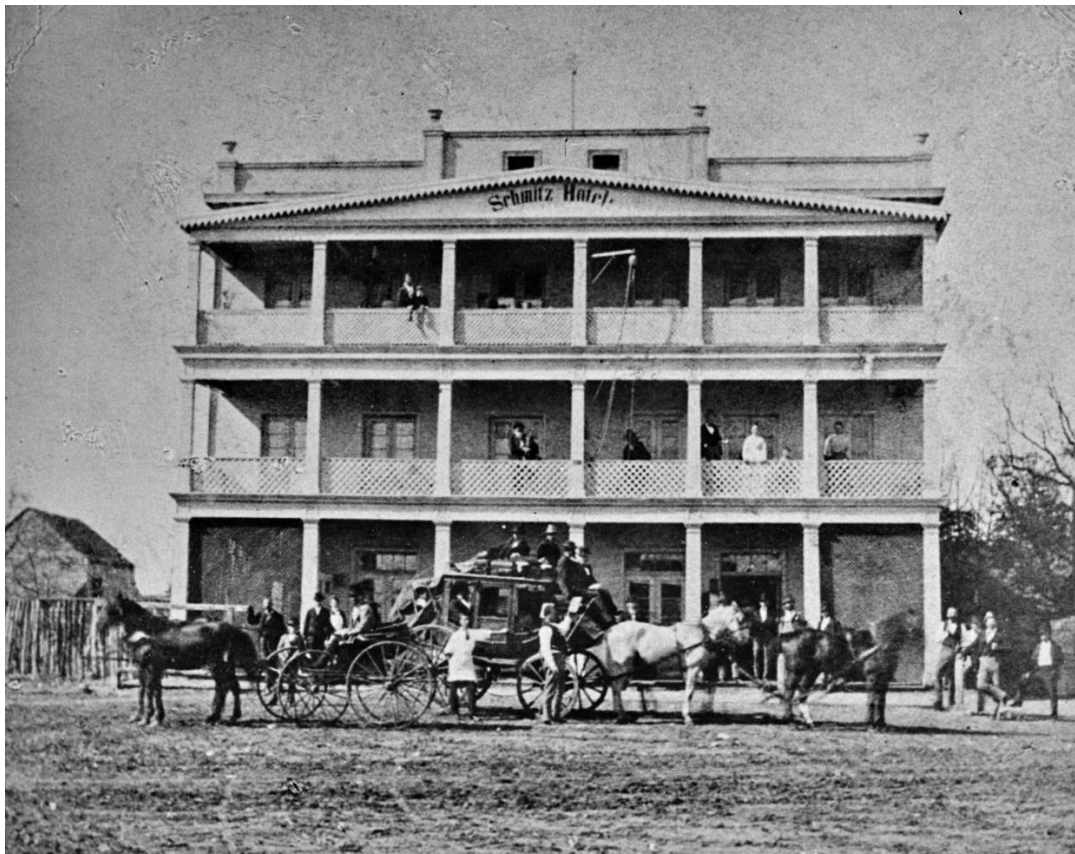




Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 14. The former Guadalupe Hotel at 471 Main Plaza (Resource 859, NRHP 1975) after 1873 when the third floor was added. Source: University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Texas Historical Commission.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 15. The former Guadalupe Hotel at 471 Main Plaza (Resource 859, NRHP 1975) in 1979 before it was restored to its original nineteenth century façade. Source: University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Texas Historical Commission.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 16. Map of New Braunfels in 1868. Note the expansion of town from the original town lots, including across the river. Source: Maps of the Past, accessed July 2, 2024, <https://mapsofthepast.com/>.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 17. The *fachwerk* house at 354 W. Bridge Street (Resource 943) in 1970. Source: University of North Texas Libraries, *The Portal to Texas History*, crediting Texas Historical Commission.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 18. Circa 1910 postcard of New Braunfels showing Market Plaza being used as a cotton yard. Source: Comal Conservation, accessed July 29, 2024, <https://www.comalconservation.org/comal-springs.html>.

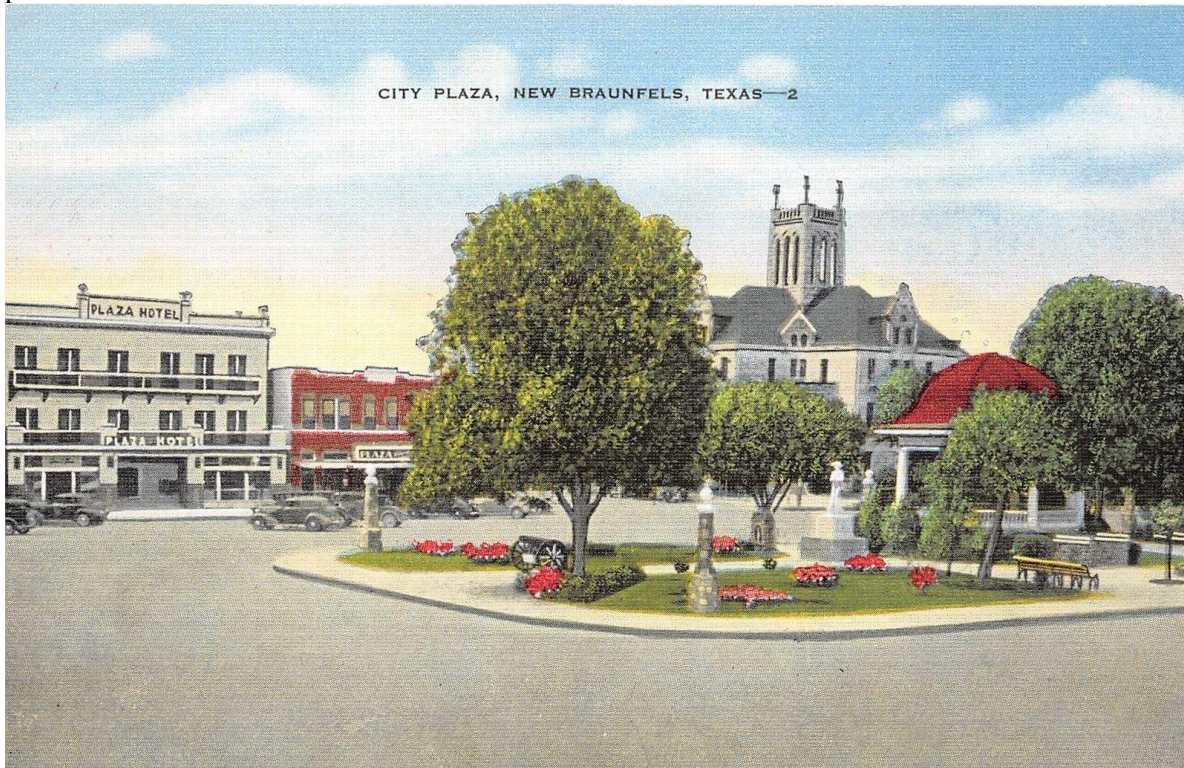




Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Figure 19. Circa 1930 postcard of New Braunfels. Like many postcards of the era, Main Plaza is featured in this postcard. Source: HHM research collection.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 20. The 200 block of W. San Antonio Street in 1908, facing northeast toward Main Plaza. The Plumeyer Bakery at 239 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 32) has not yet been built (future location identified by arrow). Source: University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Texas Historical Commission.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 21. View of W. San Antonio Street from the courthouse, facing southwest, in 1913. Note the Plumeyer Bakery at 239 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 32) is built (identified with arrow). Source: University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Texas Historical Commission.





# SPP Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

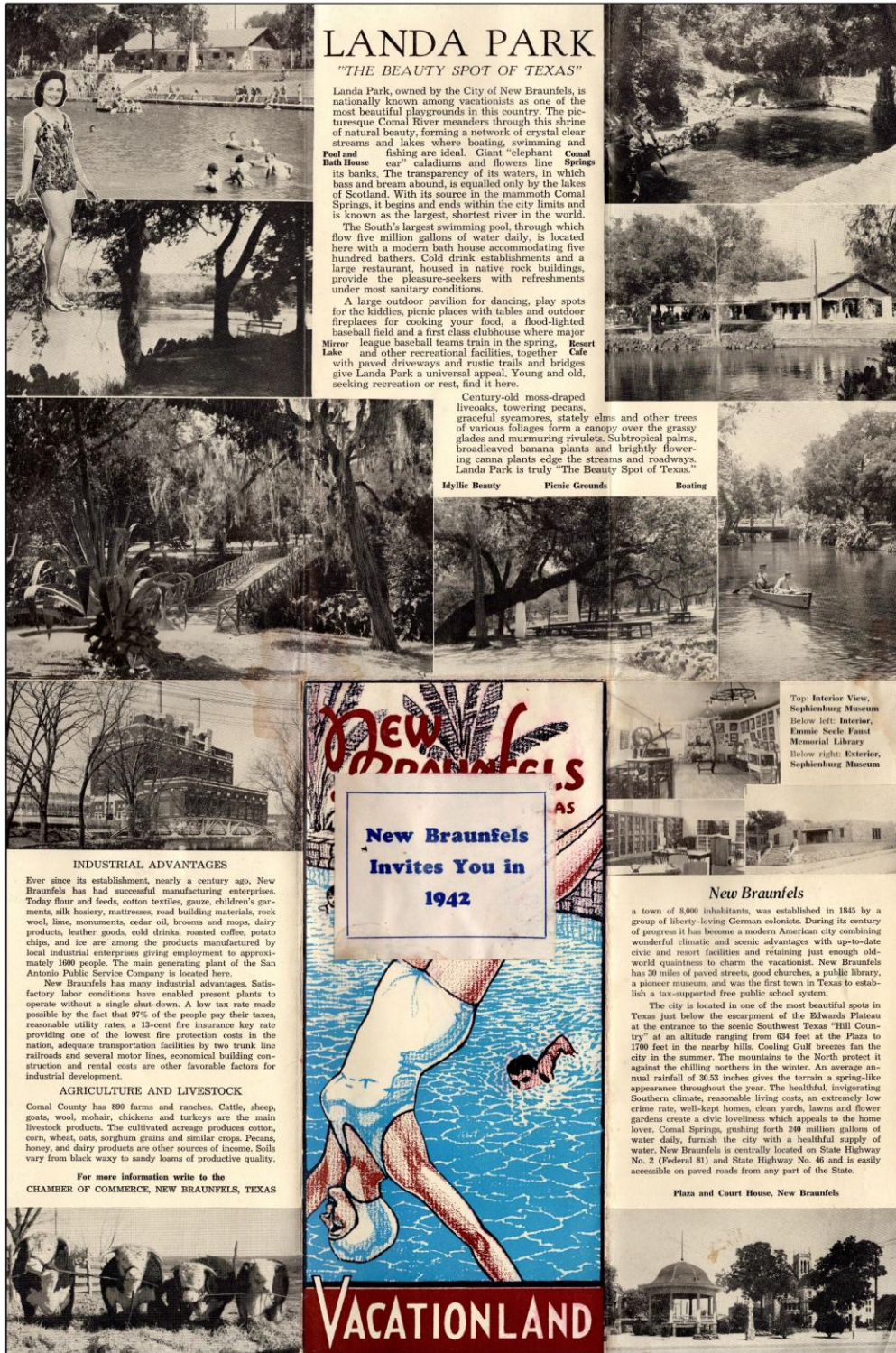


Figure 22. Tourist brochure for "Vacationland" New Braunfels from 1942. Source: Comal Conservation, accessed July 29, 2024, <https://www.comalconservation.org/comal-springs.html>.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas



## Playground of the Vacationist and Sportsman

The hill country north and west of New Braunfels is truly nature's wonderland. The grandeur of the eternal hills, the soft beauty of the green-clad valleys, and the rippling waters of the springs and brooks entrance the visitor driving through this scenic country. Well marked all-weather roads wind through an ever changing panorama of natural beauty and interesting attractions. The Devil's Backbone, which challenges the rugged splendor of the Rocky Mountains, the Narrows, where towering cliffs clasp hands above the deep ravine of the Blanco River, tumbling waterfalls, caves, reptile farms

and similar points of interest lure the vacationist and the sightseer. Camera fans, artists and lovers of nature revel in these vistas of natural beauty. Every season of the year brings with it a new charm and grace to these hills.

The Guadalupe River, one of Texas' swiftest and clearest streams, cuts a deep canyon through the mountains. The entire hilly terrain is timbered with liveoak, mesquite and cedar while century old cypress, pecans, elms and sycamores spread their branches above shady and cool picnic and camping grounds in the valleys along the streams.

A floral carpet of exotic loveliness is spread over hills, ranges, and valleys in the springtime when millions of bluebonnets, wild verbenas, mountain pinks, wild daisies, mountain laurel, redbud and myriads of other native flowers are in full bloom.

### A SPORTSMEN'S PARADISE

New Braunfels is located at the gateway to the great Southwest Texas hunting grounds. Wild deer, within a five-minute drive from the city, attract hunters from many states. It is estimated that 15,000 deer roam in the hills and on the ranges of Comal County.

The Guadalupe and Comal rivers abound with bass, bream, crappie, perch and channel cat. Lake Dunlap is another favorite spot for the many fishermen who come here for sport and relaxation.

### HISTORIC PLACES

Even the Indians loved to live in the pleasant climate of this section. The Comanches, and before them the Carankawas, pitched their tents at the many "watering places" around here. Landa Park and the entire Comal River valley in the northern portion of New Braunfels was the site of a large wigwam city. The Spaniards hunted gold in the surrounding hills. The Sophienburg Museum at New Braunfels contains a large collection of pioneer relics recalling the many historic episodes of this country, its original inhabitants and its early settlers.

The Alamo, Texas' most sacred shrine, the ancient Spanish missions and the old Spanish Governor's Palace are located just thirty miles south of here in the city of San Antonio. Randolph Field, the "West Point of the Air," is located fourteen miles south of New Braunfels. The tree under which was taught the first public school in Texas, the home of the renowned naturalist Ferdinand Lindheimer, the monument honoring the German pioneers of Texas, and other spots of historic interest are located in New Braunfels.

### HOTELS AND TOURIST RESORTS

Our hotels and tourist resorts offer up-to-date accommodations at reasonable rates to our many tourists and convention visitors. Many encampments and meetings are held here by young people's groups, employees of firms from the large cities, Bible schools and educational conference groups. The Southern Music Camp, under the direction of music leaders of national reputation, conducts a six-week summer music encampment here.

The Hotel Faust and Plaza Hotel are located in the heart of the city. On the banks of the Comal River, also within the city limits, are Camp Warnecke, Camp Ulbricht and Camp Giesecke. A few miles above town on the Guadalupe River are Slumber Falls Camp and Hueco Springs Camp. Adjoining the city on Federal Highway No. 81 are Camp Alta Vista, Camp Shady Oak, Camp New Braunfels, and Camp Southside.

All pictures in this folder are scenes in and around New Braunfels, "THE BEAUTY SPOT OF TEXAS"

Figure 23. Tourist brochure for "Vacationland" New Braunfels from 1942. Source: Comal Conservation, accessed July 29, 2024, <https://www.comalconservation.org/comal-springs.html>.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 24. The Opa logo that was placed on street and road signs to navigate tourists to attractions. Source: Rahe Collection from Alton Rahe, *Wurstfest New Braunfels: The First Fifty Years*, 56.





Figure 25. Wurstfest on Main Plaza in the 1960s before moving to its current location. Note the German heritage decorations. Source: Sophienburg Museum and Archives.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 26. The mid-nineteenth century Ulrich House at 259 N. Seguin Avenue (Resource 920) circa. 1970. Note that the former residence is a real estate office. Source: University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting Texas Historical Commission.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 27. The Brauntex Theater at 290 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 837, NRHP 2008) in 1942 after its completion. Source: Mac McCoy, "Brauntex Theater" National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Nomination, Texas Historical Commission (THC), 2008, PHOTOS 16.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Figure 28. West San Antonio Street, looking southwest from the 100 block of the street, in 1961. Source: Cindy Coers, Comal County Historical Commission.



Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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**Photos**

Photo 1. Camera facing northeast toward contributing Main Plaza (Resources 442365 A-G, NRHP 2021) with the contributing courthouse (Resource 864, NRHP 1976) in background.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 2. Camera facing northeast at contributing Market Plaza (Resource 442364). Note the residences that surround the park.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 3. Camera facing east, showing the contributing buildings at 343 and 367 Main Plaza (Resources 50 and 49).



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 4. Camera facing north toward the main entrance into the contributing Comal County Courthouse (Resource 864, NRHP 1976) from Main Plaza.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 5. Camera facing north showing the dense development of the 200 block of the northwest side of W. San Antonio Street.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 6. Camera facing north showing the commercial development on the northeast side of the 200 and 100 blocks of S. Seguin Avenue. Note the development on the southwest side is set further from the street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 7. Camera facing southwest showing contributing Resource 62A at 260 S. Seguin Avenue. Note that the First Protestant Church (NRHP 1971) and the 1910 Queen Anne style Walter Faust House are connected by a rear, non-historic-age addition.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 8. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church (Resource 54551A) at 198 W. Bridge Street. Note that the historic-age church building is connected to the addition to its side via a setback hallway.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 9. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing former Guadalupe Hotel (Resource 859, NRHP 1975) at 471 Main Plaza.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 10. Camera facing north showing the contributing house (Resource 944C) at 374 W. Bridge Street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 11. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing L. A. Hoffman Building (Resource 73B) at 167. S. Seguin Avenue. The contributing Krause Building (Resource 73A) is to the right.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 12. Camera facing south showing the contributing Henne Hardware warehouse (Resource 849) at 221 W. Mill Street. Note that it is set to the rear of the Henne Hardware commercial building on W. San Antonio Street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 13. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing John Faust house (Resource 6A) at 361 W. San Antonio Street.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 14. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing old New Braunfels High School (Resource 1292) at 430 W. Mill Street.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 15. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Gerlich Building, an old car dealership (Resource 842) at 386 W. San Antonio Street.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 16. Camera facing south showing a row of contributing former residences that are now offices in the 400 block of S. Seguin Avenue. Resource 213A at 408 S. Seguin Avenue is in the foreground.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 17. Camera facing north showing the contributing school building (Resource 54551B) at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church at 198 W. Bridge Street.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 18. Camera facing southwest showing the contributing one-part commercial block building at 139 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 848).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 19. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing commercial block building constructed for the phone company at 210 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 431521).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 20. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing commercial building with residence at the rear at 364 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 103A).



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 21. Camera facing southeast showing the noncontributing, non-historic-age Comal County Courthouse Annex (Resource 863) at 188 N. Seguin Avenue.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 22. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former multi-family dwelling at 189 Comal Avenue (Resource 116A).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 23. Camera facing southwest showing the contributing Jahn Building at 494 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 207).



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 24. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Faust Hotel (Resource 61, NRHP 1985) at 240 S. Seguin Avenue.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 25. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing former Dittlinger office building (Resource 106) at 398 E. San Antonio Street.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 26. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing First Protestant Church auditorium (Resource 62B) at 260 S. Seguin Avenue (note that the building faces W. Coll Street).



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 27. Camera facing north showing the contributing train depot (Resource 840) at 302 W. San Antonio Street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 28. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former Central Fire Station (Resource 45, NRHP 2019) at 131 Hill Avenue.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 29. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing former New Braunfels Social Club (Resource 149) at 353 S. Seguin Avenue.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 30. Camera facing northwest showing the 100 block of the northwest side of W. San Antonio Street with contributing 168 and 142 W. San Antonio Street and noncontributing 401 Main Plaza (Resources 852, 851, and 44893 from left to right). Note that even though it is non-historic-age, Resource 44893 compatibly fits into the historic streetscape.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 31. Camera facing southwest showing the noncontributing, non-historic-age building at 468 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 208A).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 32. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing S.V. Pfeuffer House residence at 170 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 68A).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 33. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing old Post Office (Resource 854) at 196 N. Castell Avenue.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 34. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing two-part commercial block building at 249 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 33).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 35. Camera facing northeast showing the 100 block of N. Castell Avenue with Resource 855, Resource 856, and Resource 857 (from right to left, all contributing).



Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 36. Camera facing northwest showing a historic-age, noncontributing former residence converted for reuse for religious purposes at 137 E. Mill Street (Resource 898).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 37. Camera facing south showing an altered historic-age commercial building that is noncontributing at 111 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 48).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 38. Camera facing north showing the 400 block of Main Plaza (Resources 44895, 859, 858 left to right) at the southwest side of Main Plaza. Note that the historic-age façade remains on the noncontributing Resource 44895; Resources 859 and 858 are contributing.



# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 39. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Henne Hardware building (Resource 833) at 246 W. San Antonio Street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 40. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing old Henne Hardware tin shop (Resource 834) at 264 W. San Antonio Street.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 41. Camera facing north showing Naegelin's Bakery (Resource 70B) and the Stephen Klein House (Resource 70A, NRHP 1970) at 129 S. Seguin Avenue; both are contributing.



Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 42. Camera facing southwest showing the contributing Ulrich House (Resource 920) at 259 N. Seguin Avenue.





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 43. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing old Plumeyer Bakery (Resource 32A) at 239 W. San Antonio Street.





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 44. Camera facing northeast showing a contributing hall-and-parlor residence at 325 S. Castell Avenue (Resource 160).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 45. Camera facing southwest showing a contributing Craftsman bungalow at 285 N. Castell Avenue (Resource 937A).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 46. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing Eiband House at 447 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 223A).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 47. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Brauntex Theatre at 290 W. San Antonio Street (Resource 837, NRHP 2008).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 48. Camera facing northwest showing a contributing hall-and-parlor residence at 374 W. Mill Street (Resource 923).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 49. Camera facing northeast showing the contributing Dr. Koester House at 421 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 222).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 50. Camera facing northwest showing the contributing Folk Victorian residence at 392 W. Mill Street (Resource 922).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 51. Camera facing southeast showing the contributing Voigt House at 308 E. San Antonio Street (Resource 99A).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 52. Camera facing north showing the contributing Faust-Frueholz House at 305 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 150A, NRHP 2024).





Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 53. Camera facing south showing a contributing Prairie style foursquare residence at 328 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 158).





# SBR Draft

Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

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Photo 54. Camera facing northeast showing a contributing two-part commercial block Commercial style building at 283 S. Seguin Avenue (Resource 85A).



Central New Braunfels Historic District, Comal County, Texas

Photo 55. Camera facing northwest showing a contributing Ranch house at 324 W. Mill Street (Resource 928).





4/8/2025

Agenda Item No. B)

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**PRESENTER**

Katie Totman, HPO

**SUBJECT:**

Discuss and consider creating a survey and designation subcommittee and ways to be more proactive with local landmark and district designations.

**INFORMATION:**

The purpose of this proposal is to formally establish a Survey & Historic Designation Subcommittee under the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC). This subcommittee will focus on surveying properties/areas within the city limits of New Braunfels to identify eligible properties for historic designation, leading community efforts toward historic designation where appropriate. The work of this subcommittee will help preserve the rich heritage of our community while fostering public awareness and engagement in historic preservation efforts.

**Purpose & Objectives**

The Survey & Historic Designation Subcommittee will serve the following functions:

- 1. Conducting Neighborhood Surveys:** Assist staff with the organization of and oversee volunteer-driven surveys of neighborhoods to document existing building stock.
- 2. Facilitating Historic Designation Efforts:** Research and prepare reports for properties and districts that may qualify for local, state, or national historic designation.
- 3. Engaging Community Volunteers:** Train and lead volunteers in data collection, photographic documentation, and historical research.
- 4. Coordinating with Stakeholders:** Collaborate with city staff, local preservation organizations, and community members.
- 5. Reporting to the Main Commission:** Provide regular updates on survey progress, findings, and potential designation opportunities.

**Structure & Membership**

The subcommittee will consist of 5-10 members, including:

- Chairperson:** May be appointed by HLC chair or nominated and voted upon during a public HLC meeting. Oversees subcommittee activities, sets meeting agendas, and reports to the HLC.

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- **Volunteer Coordinator:** Organizes and trains volunteers for fieldwork. City staff will assist with this.
  - **Research Coordinator:** Focuses on gathering and analyzing historical data as it pertains to possible designations. City staff will assist with this.
  - **Community Outreach Representative:** Engages with residents and local organizations to build support for preservation efforts. Staff will also assist with public outreach.
  - **Additional Members:** May include HLC members and interested members of the community.

### **Work Plan & Timeline**

#### **1. Phase 1 - Planning (1-2 months)**

- Recruit volunteers; this can be capped to a manageable number.
- Identify priority neighborhoods for surveys.

#### **2. Phase 2/3 - Initial Survey Implementation/ Analysis & Designation Efforts (12-24 months, maybe longer)**

- Conduct training sessions for volunteers.
- Deploy teams to collect data in designated neighborhoods.
- Maintain a database of findings and photographic records. (Survey123)
- Analyze survey results and determine properties/districts for potential designation.
- Engage with property owners and community stakeholders.
- Prepare applications for historic designation at local, state, or national levels.

#### **3. Ongoing Work**

- Continue surveying neighborhoods/properties within the city limits.
- Once the survey is complete, routinely update as needed.
- Educate the public on preservation initiatives.

### **Resources & Support Needed**

To operate effectively, the subcommittee will require:

- Access to historic records and Survey123 (mapping tool)
- Administrative support from the commission and staff for organizing meetings and reports.
- Potential partnerships with universities, historical societies, and planning agencies.

### **Expected Outcomes**

By establishing this subcommittee, the HLC and staff will:

- Maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties that is coordinated with the statewide process for cultural resource surveys, which is in alignment with our requirements as a Certified Local Government through the Texas Historical Commission (SHPO).
- Strengthen community engagement in preservation.
- Improve the chances of securing historic designations.
- Foster a sense of local pride and historical awareness.



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The creation of a Survey & Historic Designation Subcommittee aligns with the mission of the HLC to protect and promote the historic integrity of our community. It also aligns with both the city's Comprehensive and Strategic plans which direct us to protect our historic structures, safeguard the character and integrity of our neighborhoods, and increase historic preservation programming and outreach.

4/8/2025

Agenda Item No. A)

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**PRESENTER**

Katie Totman, HPO

**SUBJECT:**

May is Preservation Month!

**INFORMATION:**

The city is hosting several free events throughout the month of May to promote historic preservation, heritage and culture. Below is a list of events planned. Confirmed events and details can be found on the city's website here: <https://newbraunfels.gov/474/Historic-Preservation>

- Friday, May 2: First Friday, "Discover the History" theme (DTA event)
- Saturday, May 3: Historic Tour of the Headwaters at the Comal
- Tuesday, May 6 - Saturday, May 10 from 12 to 4pm: Free Museum Week
- Wednesday, May 7 from 4-7p: Free Museum Day at the McKenna Children's Museum
- Thursday, May 8: Know & Flow Yoga (Sophienburg Museum event)
- May 9: Ribbon Cutting at New Braunfels Youth Collaborative (the building is a local landmark)
- May 13: Coffee with Commissioners. Will follow our regular meeting.
- May 22 from 1-2pm: Free House Genealogy Class at the Westside Library
- May 17 and May 31, 11a-1p: Music at the Mural; guided tour of a single downtown mural with a local musician.
- Wednesday, May 28: Market Plaza historic plaque dedication