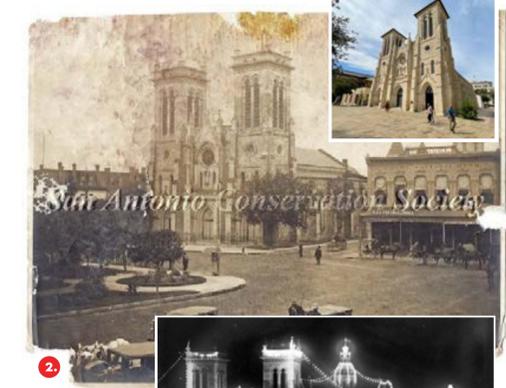


# SAN ANTONIO

C. 1907



**c. 1909**  
Soledad Street, looking south towards the Commerce Street intersection. The remains of the Veramendi Palace are on the immediate left with the mansard tower of the Masonic Building visible above it. The three story building at the far end of the street is the Danenhauer, with the Kampmann building to its left. Streetcar tracks run down the middle of the street. c. 1909



**c. 1902-1923**  
Main Plaza, looking southwest towards the Southern Hotel. The San Fernando Cathedral is in the center. The City Hall

with a dome and two towers is on the far right beyond the Frost Brothers Bank. The plaza has been landscaped as a park. The church was greatly expanded during 1868 and 1873. The original tower and the eastern wall were torn down during the construction project. In 1868, under the direction of architect Francois P. Giraud, the cathedral was considerably enlarged in the Gothic style, the addition forming the existing nave. The carved stone Stations of the Cross were added in 1874. The striking stained glass windows were added in 1920. In 1874 the church became a cathedral when Pope Pius IX named San Antonio a diocese. It became an archdiocese in 1926. Inset above: San Fernando Cathedral today with the Main and Soledad roads closed at Main Plaza to create a pedestrian plaza from the river to the cathedral. The Main Plaza was remodeled with design by Lake Flato in the early 2000s. Middle: Nighttime view looking west towards San Fernando Cathedral, decorated with lights for Spring Carnival (later Fiesta San Antonio). In background are City Hall and City Market (in distance on far right), also decorated with lights.



**c. 1900**  
View looking south across Main Plaza towards the Bexar County Courthouse. The landscaped park is to the right, while the Morris Apartments is the four-story building on the left. Street car tracks are also visible leading down Dwyer Avenue. James Rely Gordon built the courthouse in 1896. This street is now closed to automobiles.



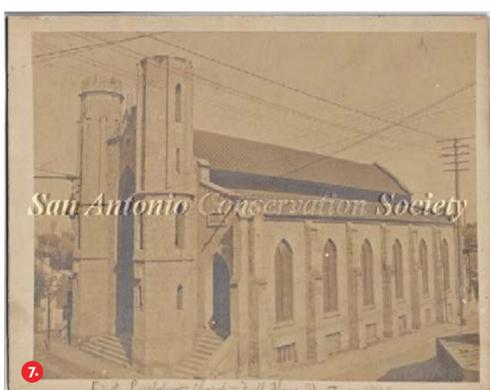
**c. 1910**  
View of Commerce Street is blocked off while several men shovel rubble during a street paving happening outside the Market House from Market Square. Alfred Giles designed the Market House, which was torn down in 1938. c. 1910



**c. 1910**  
East elevation of the San Antonio City Hall (prior to the addition of the fourth floor). c. 1910



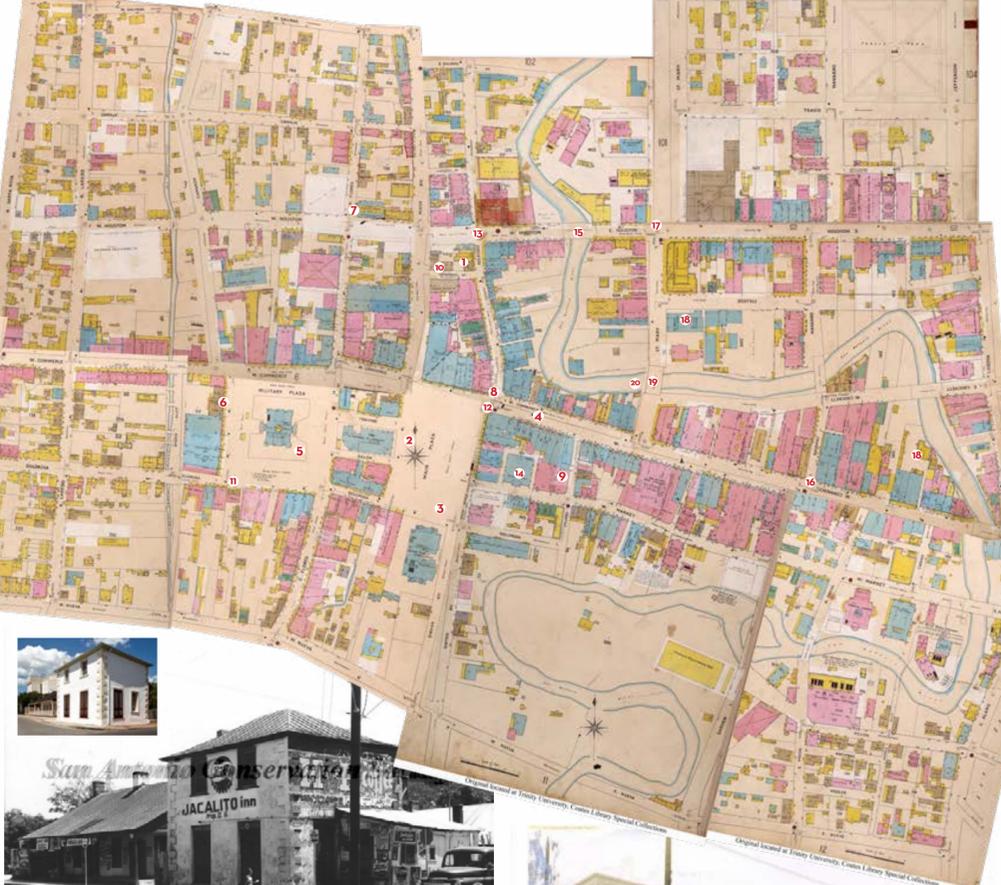
**c. 1910**  
Identity of the Spanish Governor's Palace at the beginning of the twentieth century could be guessed at only by its keystone, barely visible in the shade above what had become the entrance to L. Moglia's saloon. Adina De Zavala who was a preservation advocate in San Antonio identified a row of low-rent shops and cantinas on Military Plaza as the last remaining Spanish aristocratic that San Antonio's re-grouping, new residence in the State of Texas—the "Spanish Governor's Palace." Inset: Keystone above the door dating the building to c. 1749.



**c. 1900**  
An oblique view of the front and right facades of the First Presbyterian Church located at the intersection of Houston and Flores Streets. The church was designed by Theodore Giraud. On the back: First Presbyterian Church, 204 No. Flores St. off Houston St. - Photo 1900, (behind Stowers Furn. Co.) Remains of original structure occupied by El Miramar Night Club as of 11/81.



**c. 1900**  
Commerce Street looking east near the intersection with Soledad. Visible on the immediate left is the Kampmann (Bank) Building and the Hertzberg Clock. On the right is the edge of the Danenhauer Building. c. 1900 On the back: Frank Bros. - 332-336 W. Commerce St. Hertzberg Clock - 329 W. Commerce St. All entries on Commerce Street are labeled without East or West, since the original dividing line moved four blocks west from the river to Main Street between 1969 and 1970.



**c. 1910**  
Navarro House before restoration. Lopez Groceries and the Rosta Bar are in the Navarro House. The Jacalito Inn is in the two-story building on the corner. A shed-roof addition, which is covered with advertising signs, is attached to the two-story building.



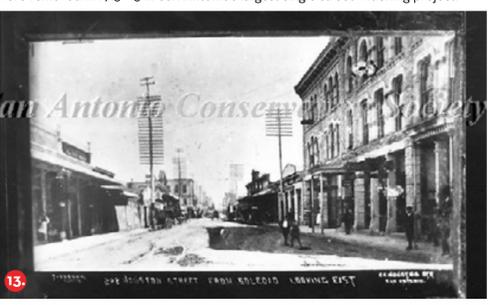
**c. 1910**  
Bird's eye view of the De la Garza house, northeast corner of Veramendi Street and Main Avenue, San Antonio, Texas, ca. 1910  
Looking southeast from the Clower Building (later Stowers' Building) toward the Spanish Colonial structure that was built by Geronimo de la Garza house in 1734. Open-air produce market (bottom center) at southeast corner of Houston Street (left) and Main Avenue. Schuler Company billboards behind market, including ones for Finck Cigars, J. Oppenheimer & Company's Bingo Cigars, and San Antonio Transfer & Taxicab Company. Large two-story building at upper right is Louis Kunkel Grocery, southeast corner Main and Veramendi. At upper left are buildings fronting on Soledad Street. At upper center are twin towers of the former Bexar County Courthouse. Photograph taken shortly before the De la Garza house was demolished to make way for construction of the Rand Building.



**c. 1910 and 1950 at Witte Site**  
The 1835 José Francisco Ruiz House was sandwiched between commercial buildings facing north on Military Plaza (above in box) by the end of the nineteenth century. Damaged by a hurricane and about to be razed, the José Francisco Ruiz House was rescued in 1947 with help from the Historic Buildings Foundation, reconstructed on the grounds behind the Witte Museum and first used as a pottery shop by Harding Black.



**c. 1900**  
Commerce Street, shown looking east from Main Plaza in the late 1890s, was crowded even before arrival of the automobile. Shown in its original location is the Hertzberg Jewelry Company's clock, later moved with the firm to the corner of Houston and Navarro streets where it was turned over, in 1982, to the care of the San Antonio Conservation Society. Historic facades on the right side of the street were removed in 1913-15 in San Antonio's largest single street widening project.



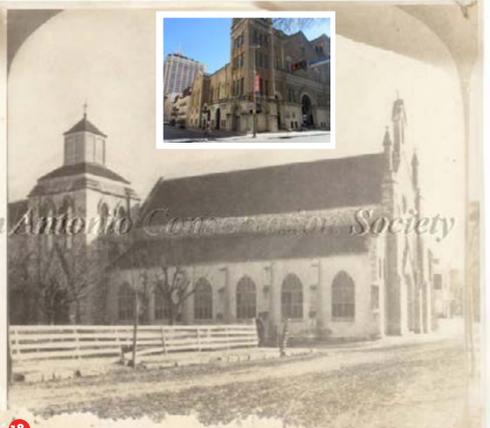
**c. 1900**  
A photograph of Houston Street looking east, taken from Soledad Street.



**c. 1912**  
Moving the Alamo National Bank Building, southwest corner of Presa and Commerce Street. Photograph shows crowd outside as workmen were completing the move during the widening of Commerce Street. Inset picture showing the historic facades of buildings along Commerce Street removed for the widening of the street and the Alamo National Bank building in the center.



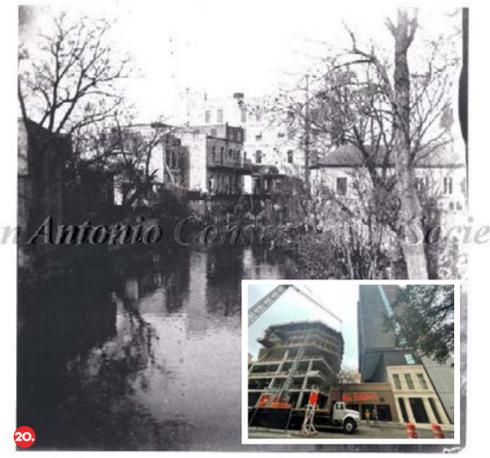
**c. 1913**  
A street car and automobile fording the flood at the intersection of Saint Mary's and Houston. People ride the cars and line the sidewalk. The Hertzberg Clock is visible on the right in front of the Gunter Building and the Rand Building is in the background on the left. c. 1913



**c. 1900**  
An oblique view of the left and front facades of the original Saint Mary's Church, located on the corner of St. Mary's and College Streets. A fenced-in yard with trees is visible on the left. College St. originally was known as Water St. St. Mary's St. originally was known as Rincon St. Inset: St. Mary's Church present day with Omni La Mansion del Rio directly behind on College Street. La Mansion was originally the site of St. Mary's University. The church was rebuilt from its original form following a flood of the river in 1921.



**c. 1900**  
View looking west from the Saint Mary's Street bridge over the San Antonio River towards the Bexar County Courthouse in center. Bowen's Island is visible at left, and the top of Dueller's Candy factory is visible at right through the trees. c. 1900 St. Mary's St. was Garden St. at the time of the picture.



**c. 1900**  
Looking west from the St Mary's Street bridge along the SA River. The Twchis House is visible at the right with was moved to the grounds of the Witte Museum in 1941 after interventions by the Preservation Society. On the left of the river is the site of the Esquire Tavern, the oldest bar in San Antonio, opening in 1935 after Prohibition was repealed. Inset: Existing Esquire Tavern from Commerce Street with large hotel developments going up around the historic site.



**c. 1914**  
The Market House faces Milan Square. It is a large and substantial building and was erected in 1900, at a cost of \$55,000. On the second floor is the Convention Hall seating about 4000 people. The building was demolished in 1938 and replaced with the still standing Market Square Courtyard.

# SAN ANTONIO

## c. 1950 & the Urban Core Future



**c. 1953**  
Construction bids were being taken by city hall for underground parking garages beneath Travis Park, Main Plaza, Alamo Plaza and part of La Villita when the plot was discovered by the San Antonio Conservation Society. The most advanced proposal was for a garage under Travis Park, shown here looking southwest in a rendering by architects Atlee B. and Robert M. Ayres. In this view showing the St. Anthony Hotel in the background, cars enter and exit the three-level garage from Jefferson Street at the left and Navarro Street at the right. The Confederate monument in the center of the park is placed on a pedestal above escalators providing pedestrian access to the garage. Four feet of topsoil permit plantings on the roof of the garage, also to serve as a bomb shelter. The plan was defeated after four years of lawsuits and a change in city government. Travis park has recently been remodeled as a project for the "decade of Downtown" campaign to revitalize the urban core of San Antonio.



**c. 1952**  
The Vance House, a French colonial styled home built in 1859 by James Vance, an Irish immigrant, across Nueva Street from the future location of the Bexar County courthouse, was considered to be one of the finest homes ever built in the state. In 1939 it was an office of the State Employment Service. Two months of gentle persuasion, however, produced no more than promises to delay its demolition, to make way for the new Federal Reserve Bank.

Right: Vance House, ca. 1877 Photograph shows looking northeast on West Houston Street towards the Vance House, on corner of N. St. Mary's Street.



**c. 1956**  
Taking the place of the Vance House, mourned by The New York Times as one of the nation's greatest historic preservation losses of the time, was this Federal Reserve branch bank building, which opened in 1956. Today this building serves as the Bexar County Archives Building.



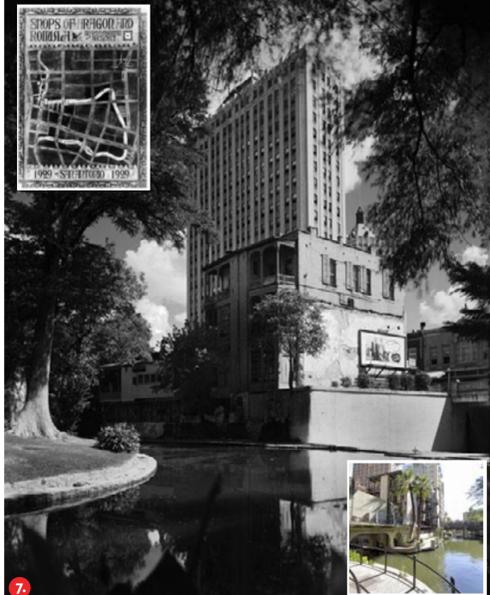
**c. post 1928 remodel**  
West elevation of City Hall shortly after remodeling and completion of the fourth floor addition in 1928. Faced with burgeoning administrative needs of a fast-growing city, it was renovated in a Spanish Colonial Revival style, the clock tower and tops of the round turrets at one end and square turrets of the other all removed for a fourth floor.



**c. 1950**  
South view of the Bexar County Courthouse looking north with trees (Vance's house yard?) and cars in the foreground and Alamo National Bank building in the background. It is one of the largest historic courthouses in Texas, and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Today, the courthouse sees more than 10,000 people a day conducting county business.



**c. today**  
The 1850s limestone home and law office of Texas Declaration of Independence signer José Antonio Navarro was endangered by urban renewal in the 1950s. San Antonio Conservation Society. Purchased by the San Antonio Conservation Society in 1960 and saved after extended negotiations with the city, the José Antonio Navarro complex was opened to the public as a house museum in 1964. Eleven years later it was deeded to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to be maintained as a State Historic Site. With the aid of architect Brooks Martin, restoration began. Cypress lumber was used for a rest room and a grape arbor in the rear courtyard. A rock and cypress fence went along the new south property line once a six-foot strip was sold to the city for widening Nueva Street, although it meant trimming the width of the smallest building on the property. The corner building was restored as Navarro's law office, complete with family document copies donated by County Clerk James W. Knight. On October 7, 1964 visitors were greeted at an Open House. The \$15,000 note on the property was paid off the next day. On October 30 the complex was toured by members of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, for the first time holding its annual meeting in San Antonio.

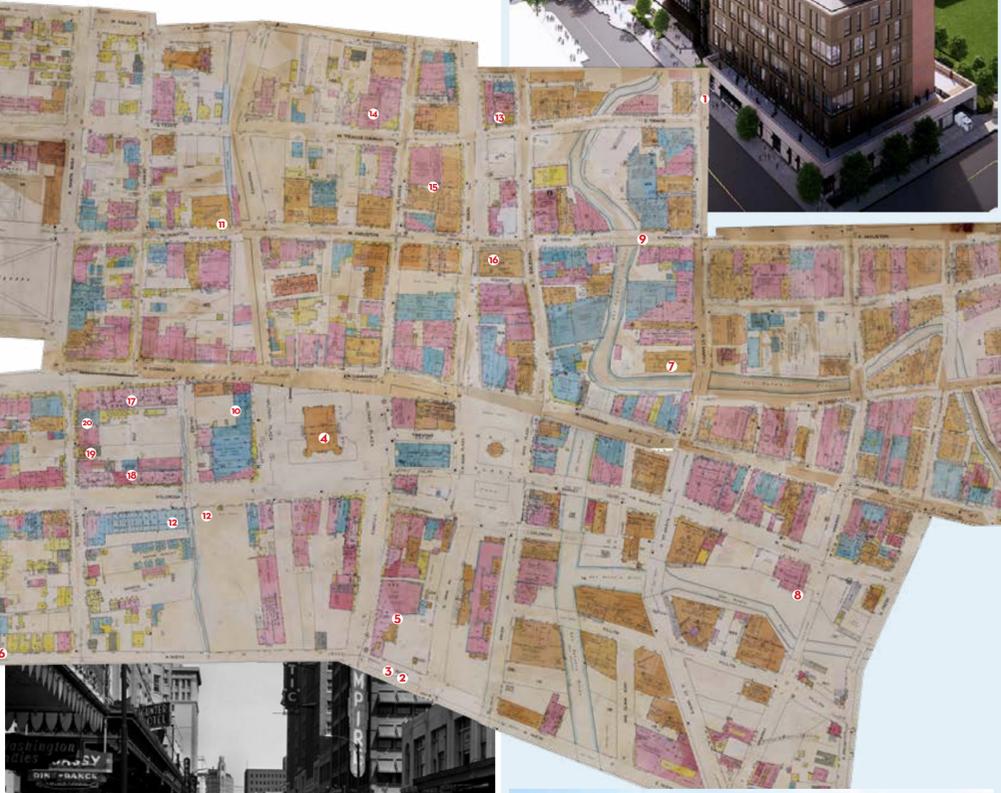


**c. 1938**  
Witte Building, overlooking the San Antonio River, ca. 1938 prior to the completion of the Riverwalk development completed in 1941. on the bottom right is the position of the north-south cutoff channel to carry floodwaters past the downtown River Bend. View looking southeast with beginning of upper arm of the river bend on left, the new main channel on right. Three-story building in center, with balconies, is the Witte Building. Ben Milam Cypress on far left. Tall building behind Witte Building is the Alamo National Bank.

Inset Above: Position of the north-south cutoff channel to carry floodwaters past the downtown River Bend is shown in this map on the cover of Robert H.H. Hugman's river plan for the Shops of Aragon and Romula in 1929. The east-west street north of Houston Street below the map's title is Travis Street.  
Inset Below: River bend today showing the preserved Witte Building now housing private residences and restaurants on the Street and Riverwalk levels and the Commerce Street bridge over the Riverwalk cutoff channel.



**c. 1950**  
Looking upstream on upper arm of the river bend, between Navarro and St. Mary's Streets. Flagstone walkway over runoff water from Majestic Theater air conditioning system, San Antonio River Walk, completed in the vision of Robert H.H. Hugman.



**c. 1949**  
E. Houston Street looking east toward intersection of N. St. Mary's Street. Photograph shows men talking beneath marquee of Texas Theater on far left. In center, over the street, is banner advertising the San Antonio Garden Pilgrimage that was held March 26 and 27, 1949. Large signs on right for Majestic Theater and Empire Theater.



**c. post 1931 restoration**  
Inset picture shows building prior to restoration purchased with funds from a city bond issue approved in 1928, the vacant Spanish Governor's Palace awaits restoration. Adina De Zavala identified the row of low-rent shops and cantinas on Military Plaza as the last remaining Spanish aristocrats. For years, De Zavala would advocate for the buildings to remain before she could find the funding. The restoration was completed in 1931 in time to celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Spanish colonists from the Canary Islands. Saving the Spanish Governor's Palace ultimately led to the City addressing the larger problem of keeping the city's distinctiveness through a plan of coherent municipal development influenced by the preservationists'. After the Alamo, this restoration marked one of the first restoration projects in San Antonio, today considered to be a stylistic restoration.



**c. 1950**  
San Pedro Creek and west elevation of Liberal Loan Company Building from W. Houston Street. In 2010, mayor Julián Castro declared the 2010s the "decade of downtown," focusing on the physical transformation of the city and announced a focus on grand urban redevelopment projects that would trigger density within the downtown core again. Castro wanted to reverse those trends by growing development downtown – stores, restaurants, parks, apartments – to lure people back to San Antonio's core. The 2010s were about laying the groundwork. This took the form of roughly \$265 million over three voter-approved bond programs that are being invested into downtown's infrastructure. The construction of the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, the opening of Yanaguana Garden at HemisFair, the first stage of San Pedro Creek, and the cleaning up of Travis Park have played massive roles in this foundation building. Inset top: San Pedro Creek from Travis Street with Frost Tower in the background. Inset Middle: San Pedro Creek at Dolorosa and San Pedro I Bldg.



**c. Today**  
The developing University of Texas at San Antonio's urban campus has also made a considerable commitment to redeveloping the density within the downtown core. Announcing its desire to strengthen its downtown presence as a catalyst for bringing more business to the downtown core and supporting the growth of San Antonio. In 2022, the new San Pedro I, home of the new School of Data Science and the National Security Collaboration Center, opened along the San Pedro Creek. The center also will house the university's National Security Collaboration Center, currently operating on UTSA's main campus with embedded partners from private industry, state and federal government agencies, and military divisions working in cybersecurity. They announced the approval of the new Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Careers (IEC) building, to be known as San Pedro II, to be constructed just across the San Pedro Creek from San Pedro I. Above is a rendering of the newly completed San Pedro I and below is a rendering of the two buildings adjacent to each other and straddling the newly developed San Pedro Creek corridor. Inset above: View of opened San Pedro I building from street.



**c. Today**  
300 Main, a 32-story residential tower at the corner of North Main Avenue and East Travis Street. It will be the first high-rise multifamily development in downtown San Antonio and the latest Weston Urban project to contribute to the density and diversity of the downtown business district. 300 Main will feature 354 apartments averaging 924 square feet, a six-level parking garage, 6,275 square feet of ground-floor retail space, and a "sky lounge" on the 25th floor. Located near several other Weston Urban developments, including Frost Tower, Legacy Park, and the Rand and Milam buildings with c completion of 300 Main is expected in spring 2024.



**c. 1955**  
Alamo Title Building at 205 W. Travis Street, with Alamo Title Company on parapet of the building at northwest corner of W. Travis and N. Flores Streets. Sign for Paradise Lounge (N. Flores Street) on far right. Now demolished and a parking lot. The building stood adjacent to the the Robert E. Lee Hotel still in use, and the Alamo Tile Co site is now a parking lot adjacent to the new Frost Tower.



**c. Today**  
With its sleek and angular glass form, the Frost Tower an office space, is the first addition to the downtown San Antonio skyline developed by Westin Urban working to create a walkable urban environment. Located on Houston St, it neighbors with the ecologically restored San Pedro Culture Park to its west and Legacy Park (seen here) to its east. To the left is the City Tower currently in the process of remodel and to the right is the site of the future 300 Main tower apartments.



**c. 1939**  
Rand Building (left) at the corner of W. Houston Street and Main Avenue looking west. Photograph shows Rand Building (far left) with Wolff & Marx Co. clock on corner. Across Main is the Houston Building, with Sommers Drugs on ground floor. To the right of it is tall sign for Buckhorn Saloon. San Antonio Transit Company bus in center. Inset: Image of the newly refurbished Rand Building today.



**c. 1950**  
An oblique view of the (front) north and east facades of the three-story brick Continental Hotel on Commerce Street. Represents the hotel before the 1982 restoration by Joseph Seiterie. San Antonio development company, Weston Urban has revealed plans (in box above) for its 15-story residential tower. A 57,000-square-foot, 15-story residential development next to the historic Continental and Arana spaces, built in 1896 and 1926 respectively, into commercial offices and creative lofts. This includes extensive exterior renovations and restoration of original storefront masonry designs, brick and stone cleaning, and installation of new windows that replicate the original ones. The rear additions to the buildings that were built in the 1980s and 90s. While plans will leave the historical De La Garza House between the Continental and Arana buildings and will relocate the O'Henry House that was moved into its current location in the 1990's. Construction has already begun on the project. Right: The Plans for the residential building between the historical Continental and Arana buildings and preserving the De La Garza House between.



**c. 1926**  
Arana Building, 607-633 Dolorosa Street. An oblique view of the main (south) and side (west) facade, facing onto Dolorosa Street. Architect: Dielmann, Leo, c. 1926 Photograph shows view, from Bexar County Jail, looking north toward the two-story brick building with sign for Big M Party House. Back of Continental Hotel (center) Buildings in Rosa Verde North Urban Renewal area.



**c. Today**  
The O. Henry House Museum is a historic house museum located in San Antonio, Texas. It is named for the American writer, William Sydney Porter, better known by his pen name O. Henry, who lived in the house in 1885. The house, built in adobe brick, was originally located at 904 South Presa Street. In 1959 the Conservation Society preserved the home by buying it for one dollar and getting it moved to the Lone Star Brewery, where it was part of the Buckhorn Museum collection until the brewery's closure in 1997. In 1998, David Carter and the MLP partnership moved the house once more, this time to its present location at the corner of Dolorosa and Laredo Street After restoration, the home as a museum in 1999.



**c. Prior to 1978 renovations**  
The De La Garza house was built around 1800 and is a "one-story, caliche-block cottage and the only remaining example of the type of homes that once ringed the plazas." Along with the Spanish Governor's Palace, the "salt-box style house" is one of the oldest residential structures downtown. Attorney David P. Carter, bought the De La Garza homestead in 1978 from the San Antonio Development Agency, and began restoring it for a coffee shop related to the buñuelos business he co-founded during HemisFair '68. "He was told it was the oldest house in San Antonio," says his son Paul Carter. "When he restored it, (the city's first Historic Preservation Officer) Pat Osborne said he should not have painted over the accounts on the walls that reflected its (previous) use as a house of ill repute in the 1920s." Inset picture shows the preservation of the De La Garza house among the development of a 15 story residential tower built by San Antonio developer Westin Urban.