

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____ 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100004008

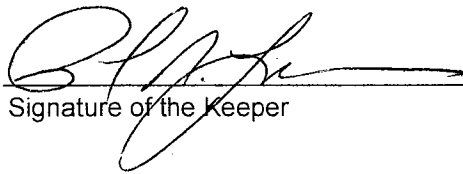
Date Listed: 5/31/2019

Property Name: Central Brownsville Historic District

County: Cameron

State: TX

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation


Signature of the Keeper

5/31/2019
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Description:

The photograph reference on the last line on page 7.14 for 1024 East Adams Street should read #26, not #25.

Significance:

The correct Areas of Significance are--*Architecture, Commerce and Community Planning and Development*. [Government, while cited in the introductory statement is not noted on the cover sheet, nor is a specific context developed in the narrative. Associations under this theme are adequately covered under Community Planning & Development.]

The TEXAS SHPO was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

OMB No. 1024-0018



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Central Brownsville Historic District

Other name/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by East Levee, East 10th, East Monroe, and East 15th/East 14th Streets as well as a two-block extension along the 800 and 900 blocks of East Elizabeth Street

City or town: Brownsville State: Texas County: Cameron

Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 ☒ localApplicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Mark Wolfe
 Signature of certifying official / Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

4/12/19
 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]
 Signature of the Keeper

5/31/2019
 Date of Action

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private; Public-Local

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
230	106	buildings
2	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
232	106	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 11 (10 buildings and 1 structure) (see continuation sheets Section 5, page 9 for a complete list)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: COMMERCE – business, financial institution, specialty store, department store,
DOMESTIC – single dwelling, hotel, secondary structure
EDUCATION – school
FUNERARY – cemetery
GOVERNMENT – city hall, fire station, government office, post office, courthouse
RECREATION AND CULTURE – theater
RELIGION – religious facility, church school, church-related residence

Current Functions: COMMERCE – business, financial institution, restaurant, specialty store,
DOMESTIC – single dwelling, hotel, secondary structure
EDUCATION – school
FUNERARY – cemetery
RECREATION AND CULTURE – museum
GOVERNMENT – city hall, fire station, government office, post office, courthouse
RELIGION – religious facility, church school, church-related residence
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Mission Revival, Queen Anne, Renaissance Revival, Second Empire
LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Border Brick, Craftsman, Folk Victorian, National Folk, Prairie, Spanish Colonial Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT: Minimal Traditional, Modern, Art Deco; NO STYLE

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK, CONCRETE, STONE, STUCCO, WOOD

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets Section 7, pages 10-29)

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations: N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Commerce, Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance: 1848-1969

Significant Dates: 1848

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): N/A

Architect/Builder: (See continuation sheet Section 8, pages 60)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets Section 8, pages 30-59)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets Section 9, pages 61-64)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
(*El Globo Nuevo and Garza House Compound*)
- ☒ previously listed in the National Register (see list on Continuation Sheet, Section 5, page 9)
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☒ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey TX No. 3139, 3272, 3274, 3275, 3276, 3277, 3281, 3285, 3287
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 76.5

Coordinates (See continuation sheet 10, page 65)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

Verbal Boundary Description: (See continuation sheet 10, page 65-66)

Boundary Justification: (See continuation sheet 10, page 65)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: David W. Moore, Jr., Project Director/Historian, Tara Dudley/Architectural Historian; Kristina Kupferschmid/Architectural Historian, Kathleen Conti/Architectural Historian; Katherine Duffield Hill/Architectural Historian

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Date: June 8, 2018

Additional Documentation

Figures (see continuation sheets, pages 75-105)

Maps (see continuation sheets, pages 67-74)

Photographs (see continuation sheets, pages 106-136)

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.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

PHOTO LOG

Brownsville Historic District

Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Photographed by Shonda Mace, Tara Dudley, David Moore, Kristina Kupferschmid

August 2017-April 2018

Photo 1

Contextual view of district alleyway through the 400 block of East 11th Street looking north.

Photo 2

Contextual view of district from 1200 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing northwest.

Photo 3

Contextual view of district from the 1 block of Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.

Photo 4

Contextual view of district from 1 block of East Washington Street, facing southeast.

Photo 5

Contextual view of district from 900 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing northwest.

Photo 6

Contextual view of streetscape, sidewalks from 1 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing south.

Photo 7

Contextual view of district from the 1100 block of East Washington Street, facing southeast.

Photo 8

Contextual view of district from the 1100 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.

Photo 9

Contextual view of district from the 1100FF block of East Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.

Photo 10

Map ID 503, 1226 East Monroe Street, oblique view of home, camera facing southeast.

Photo 11

Map ID 403, 1316 East Madison Street, oblique view of the residence, facing southwest.

Photo 12

Map ID 375, 1150 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Dancy Building (formerly the Cameron County Courthouse), view facing west.

Photo 13

Map ID 405, 1218 East Jefferson Street, oblique view of Immaculate Conception Cathedral, facing southeast.

Photo 14

Map ID 63, 4 East 13th Street, oblique view of The Gem Building, view facing south.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Photo 15

Map ID 274, 11 Market Square, oblique view of the Market Square Building and landscaping, view facing west.

Photo 16

Map ID 283, 1106 East Adams Street, facade view of San Fernando Building, view facing southwest.

Photo 17

Map ID 338, 1131 East Jefferson Street, oblique view of Masonic Lodge #81 (Formerly the Old County Courthouse), view facing north.

Photo 18

Map ID 243, 1223 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Bollack Store, view facing north.

Photo 19

Map ID 509, 936 East 14th Street, oblique view of a circa 1930s Gas Station, view facing south.

Photo 20

Map ID 511, 1054 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Laiseca Store, view facing north.

Photo 21

Map ID 194, 1128 East Washington Street, oblique view of the P.V. Farias & Brothers Building, view facing south.

Photo 22

Map ID 221, 1325 East Washington Street, front façade view of the Stillman House Museum, view facing northwest.

Photo 23

Map ID 428, 828 East 15th Street, front façade view of the Garza-Barreda House, view facing southwest.

Photo 24

Map ID 371, 1047 East Madison Street, oblique view of the residence, view facing north.

Photo 25

Map ID 515, 1039 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Field-Pacheco Warehouse, view facing north.

Photo 26

Map ID 291, 1024 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Brownsville Public Library (old), view facing west.

Photo 27

Map ID Nos. 198 and 204, 533 and 525 East 12th Street, oblique view of the Parker's Row Building, view facing west.

Photo 28

Map ID 510, 1049 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Field/Pacheco Building, view facing north.

Photo 29

Map ID 432, 1502 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Globo Nuevo Building, view facing south.

Photo 30

Map ID 177, 11 East Washington Street, oblique view of the Clay & McDavitt Building, view facing east.

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Photo 31

Map ID 98, 12 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Majestic Mall Building, view facing south.

Photo 32

Map ID 265, 1201 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Maldonado Pharmacy Building, view facing east.

Photo 33

Map ID 95, 1159 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Bank and Customs House/Celaya Building, view facing north.

Photo 34

Map ID 198, 533 E. 12th Street, facade view of Parker's Row storefront, view facing northwest.

Photo 35

Map ID 203, 1152 East Washington Street, façade view of Parker's Row Storefront, view facing northwest.

Photo 36

Map ID No 2135, 409 East 13th Street, oblique view of the Web Miller Drugstore Building, view facing west.

Photo 36

Map ID No 89, 1201 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the New Drug Store (Federal Courthouse Site, view facing east.

Photo 37

Map ID 87, 1245 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the San Roman Building, view facing north.

Photo 38

Map ID 83, 1255 East Elizabeth Street, façade view of the Yturria Bank Building, view facing northeast.

Photo 39

Map ID 16, 1049 East Washington, oblique view of the Fernandez-Schodts Complex, view facing north.

Photo 40

Map ID 448, 947 East 15h Street, oblique view of The Tamayo Store, view facing west.

Photo 41

Map ID 273, 1105 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Fernandez Hide Yard, view facing east.

Photo 42

Map ID No 119, 1115 East Washington, oblique view of the Jose Fernandez Building, view facing east.

Photo 43

Map ID 267, 12 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Juan H. Fernandez y Hermano Building, view facing south.

Photo 44

Map ID 361, 12 East Madison Street, oblique view of the La Madrileña Building, view facing south.

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Photo 45

Map ID No 96, 1141 East Elizabeth Street, facade view of the J.L. Putegnat & Brothers Building, view facing east.

Photo 46

Map ID No 104, 1054 East Elizabeth Street, facade view of the First National Bank Building, view facing northeast.

Photo 47

Map ID 113, 1057 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Merchant National Bank Building, view facing north.

Photo 48

Map ID 276, 1150 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Park Hotel, view facing south.

Photo 49

Map ID 8, 1147 East Levee Street, oblique view of the Travelers Hotel, view facing north.

Photo 50

Map ID 398, 1324 East Madison Street, facade view of the Webb-Martinez Residence, view facing southwest.

Photo 51

Map ID 117, 11 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Federal Building, view facing east.

Photo 52

Map ID No.127, 925 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Sears & Roebuck Building, view facing north.

Photo 53

Map ID 99, 1032 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Combe-J.C. Penny Building, view facing west.

Photo 54

Map ID 384, 1144 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Fernandez and Laiseca Building, view facing west.

Photo 55

Map ID 128, 847 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Seabury George & Taylor Buildings, view facing north

Photo 56

Map ID 2016, 1201 East Washington Street, oblique view of the Manitou Building, view facing east.

Photo 57

Map ID 106, 1101 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Aziz Brother Building, view facing east.

Photo 58

Map ID 492, 1264 East Monroe Street, oblique view of a circa 1935 mission revival apartment building, view facing west.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

5. Classification

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

Cameron County Courthouse (1912), 1150 E Madison St, Built: 1912, NR Criteria: A and C, Listed: 9/27/1980,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004084/80004084.pdf>

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, 1144 E Madison St, Built: 1915, NR Criteria: A and C, Listed: 1/20/2018,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/100002433/100002433.pdf>

Fernandez, Miguel, Hide Yard, 1101-1121 E Adams St, Built: 1890 to 1900, NR Criteria: A and C, Listed: 10/1/1990,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/90001485/90001485.pdf>

Immaculate Conception Cathedral, 1218 E Jefferson St, Built: 1856-1859, NR Criteria: A and C, Listed: 3/26/1980,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004085/80004085.pdf>

La Madrileña, 1002 E Madison St, Built: 1892, NR Criteria: C, Listed: 11/17/1988,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/88002384/88002384.pdf>

La Nueva Libertad, 1301 E Madison St, Built: 1893, NR Criteria: A and C, Listed: 6/14/1984,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/84001628/84001628.pdf>

Stillman, Charles, House, 1325 E Washington St, Built: ca. 1850, NR Criteria: B and C, Listed: 11/19/1979,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/79003468/79003468.pdf>

The Gem, 400 E 13th St, Built: ca. 1848, NR Criteria: A, B, C, Listed: 6/28/1991,
<https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/91000852/91000852.pdf>

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Description

The 76-acre Central Brownsville Historic District is in central Brownsville, a city on the northern bank of the Rio Grande in the southernmost portion of Texas. Brownsville is a border town and the county seat of Cameron County, across the river from the Mexican city of Matamoros. The district is bounded roughly by the following streets: East Levee Street to the southwest, East 8th Street and East 10th Street to the northwest, East Monroe Street to the northeast, and East 14th Street and East 15th Street to the southeast (Map 2). The period of significance and the bulk of the historic built environment in the district dates from 1848 to 1969 and includes a predominant concentration of late-nineteenth- and early-to-mid twentieth-century commercial buildings, as well as a concentration of residential buildings, some religious and governmental buildings, a historic park, and a historic cemetery. The oldest contributing buildings represent early commercial construction in Brownsville, supporting the Fort Brown military encampment immediately to the east. As the city spread west and north, a thriving commercial district developed along East Elizabeth Street, East Levee Street, East 12th Street and East Jefferson Street. Much of the construction prior to the arrival of the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway in 1904 was constructed in a vernacular tradition unique to the Lower Rio Grande River Valley area called Border Brick, which melded Creole, Mexican, and Spanish Colonial building traditions. The tracks served as a southern border to the developing city, and the rails brought in new building materials and styles, resulting in a boom of residential construction using cheaper and mass-produced building materials such as milled lumber. Other national popularized styles flourished in the district, including Mission Revival, Modernism, Art Deco, Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, and Craftsman. The district contains little non-historic infill and has few vacant lots. While many of the district's commercial building facades have been modernized over the years, many of those alterations were completed during the historic period and reflect the evolving commercial identity of the town. The buildings within the historic district retain a high degree of integrity. Eight properties (with combined total of 11 resources) within the district are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Of the 349 resources in the Brownsville Historic District, 243 are recommended contributing, and 106 are recommended noncontributing.

Geography and Topography

Located in Cameron County, Brownsville sits in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of the Gulf Coastal Plains physical region of Texas. It is on the north bank of the Rio Grande River opposite the Mexican city of Matamoros and is near the southernmost part of the state of Texas. The Rio Grande serves as both the southern boundary of the city as well as the international boundary between the United States and Mexico. Brownsville is approximately 146 square miles, 115 feet above sea level, and approximately 21 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. The city's proximity to the coast has allowed it to serve as a major transit and shipping center and prompted the construction of the Brownsville Shipping Canal in 1936. This location also means that Brownsville sits in a region subject to the threat of tropical storms. The climate of Cameron County is humid sub-tropical, and winds from the gulf keep the city cooler than most inland Texas cities, making temperatures higher than 100° Fahrenheit uncommon. Thanks to the rich soils of the river and the construction of a vast irrigation network, the Lower Rio Grande Valley is one of the most prosperous agricultural regions of Texas, producing fruit and vegetables through the cooler months. Brownsville's landscape also includes an assortment of resacas, or oxbow lakes, formed by the Rio Grande during high water, before being geographically cut off when waters recede. This terminology is specific to the southern half of Cameron County that includes Brownsville.

Circulation Patterns

The rectangular grid pattern of Brownsville's downtown dates to 1848, when Charles Stillman and the Brownsville Township Company hired George Lyons to lay out the original town plan. Lyons divided each of the 308 blocks by a

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

20-foot central alley running northwest-southeast and platted them into twelve saleable lots.¹ Today, the blocks remain 300 feet long and 250 feet wide and diagonally oriented to the cardinal points.² Streets running northwest-southwest are 60 feet. The northwest-southwest streets include the main commercial and heavily developed streets in the city and district: East Levee, East Elizabeth, and East Washington Streets. The alleys running between these streets are 20 feet wide and are characterized by the presence of power lines (**Photo No. 1**). The cross streets are numbered, 40 feet wide, and run southwest-northeast. Several irregularities to the district's consistent street grid pattern occur within the district boundaries. At the Market Square site, bounded by East Washington Street, East 11th Street, East Adams Street, and East 12th street, two additional through roads—Market Square Streets—cut northwest-southeast through the 600 block of East 11th and 12th Streets on either side of the Market Square Building. Additionally, the 900 block of East 11th and 12th Streets on which the 1912 Cameron County Courthouse stands has no alley cutting through its center.

East Elizabeth and East Washington Streets—running northwest-southeast—and East 12th and East 13th Streets—running northeast-southwest—historically and currently serve as the major thoroughfares through the historic district. On street parking lines both sides of named streets running northwest-southeast, and on one side of numbered streets running northeast-southwest, with the exception of 12th and 13th streets, which have no on street parking. There are sidewalks through most of the district that allow pedestrians easy access to the variety of commercial businesses that line the streets. (**Photo No. 2**). Non-historic metal street sign and light poles direct traffic in the commercial core of the district. Located at the intersection of major streets, cantilevered arms project from poles in the sidewalk and hang above the street with street signs and traffic lights. These signs and lights replaced the original traffic lights sometime after the period of significance ended, according to images of Elizabeth Street from around 1920 and city photos taken in approximately 1940 and in 1972 (**fig. 1, Photo No. 3**). Palm trees line East Washington Street and East Adams Streets (**Photo No. 4**). According to photographs from the 1860s, East Elizabeth Street was historically tree-lined. Non-historic lamp posts also line the streets in the commercial core of the district, as do non-historic concrete and tile trash receptacles and benches (**Photos No. 5 and No. 6**). Several of the main streets within the district serve important roles in cross-border transportation. East Elizabeth Street and East Washington Streets come together just outside the southern border of the district, after crossing International Boulevard, and continues east as West University Avenue across the Fort Brown Resaca toward Interstate Highway (IH) 69E. Just south of the district boundary, International Boulevard crosses the International Border through the US Customs and Border Protection Brownsville Gateway and across the 1926 Gateway International Bridge. Historically, East Elizabeth Street served as the main thoroughfare for travelers coming to Brownsville and/or crossing the border into Matamoros. East 12th and 13th Streets similarly come together just outside of the district boundary, forming Sam Perl Boulevard and bringing international traffic to the Brownsville and Matamoros Express International Bridge.

The street patterns characteristic of the commercial area continues into the residential areas of the district, along East Monroe Street, East Madison Street, and East Jefferson Street in the eastern part of the district. Here, houses typically have driveways that are accessed via both the main street and alley and on-street parking supplements private residential parking.

Relationship of Buildings to One Another

The core of downtown Brownsville contains a dense concentration of one- and two-part commercial block buildings within the central business district. Buildings and their lots typically face the main streets, though some properties front onto cross streets. The lot sizes throughout this area are consistent, but many properties are built across multiple

¹ Urban Prospects. The City of Brownsville Historic Resources Survey, Prepared for the City of Brownsville (September 2000), 6.

² Stephen Fox. "Architecture in Brownsville: The 19th Century." In *Studies in Brownsville & Matamoros History*, edited by Milo Kearney, Anthony Knopp, and Antonio Zavaleta, (Brownsville: The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College University Press, 1995), 200.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

lots. These buildings range from one to five stories in height, though the majority is one and two stories tall, and often abut their lot lines and are separated from the roadway by a sidewalk (**Photo No. 7**). Moreover, most of the buildings in the central business district share common walls, which creates a dense commercial setting. Awnings on these buildings oftentimes project out over the sidewalk, establishing a cohesive connectivity among adjacent buildings (**Photos No. 8 and No. 9**). This pattern of connectivity is somewhat broken in the northwest edge of the district, at the 900 blocks of East Elizabeth and East Levee Streets. A parking lot, provided for the ca. 1950 H.E.B grocery store at 924 East Elizabeth Street, breaks up the cohesiveness of the block. Despite the presence of the parking lot, the grocery store building itself follows building patterns characteristic of the district by abutting both the sidewalk and the building to its northwest.

Outside of the commercial core of the district, the building density lessens in the northeast half of the district where residential properties make up the majority of resources and intermix with a variety of commercial, religious, and governmental properties. The houses along East Monroe, East Madison, and East Jefferson Streets generally sit on narrow, long lots, though in some places these lots have been subdivided into two smaller parcels. Houses have setbacks of varying distances, but most are within ten feet of the sidewalk, and many are separated from the sidewalk by vegetation and fencing. The most common fencing type is metal chain link, but some barriers are constructed of masonry, concrete and manufactured metal. (**Photo No. 10 and No. 11**). Within these more residential areas, there are several examples of multi-family housing and pockets of commercial construction. Many of those commercial buildings are at the intersections of East Monroe and East Madison Streets as they cross East 13th and 14th Streets.

Several important religious and government buildings occupy entire blocks and do not share party walls or abut other buildings. Examples include the 1912 Dancy Building (**1150 East Madison Street, Photo No. 12**), once the Cameron County Courthouse, which occupies the entirety of the 1100 block of East Madison Street. It is surrounded on each side by landscaped lawns, large trees and sidewalks that connect each of the former courthouse's doorways to the street beside it. The northern side of the 1200 block along East Adams Street is owned by the Diocese of Brownsville and is home to the Immaculate Conception Cathedral (**1218 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 13, NRHP 1980³**) and several associated buildings. The entrance to the Cathedral on East 12th Street is surrounded by a concrete and iron fence, with decorative concrete fencepost topped by electric lanterns. Inside this fence is a small courtyard and several trees. The remainder of the lot and service buildings are surrounded by a brick masonry fence.

Range and Distribution of Construction Dates

The buildings and sites that make up the Brownsville Historic District date from 1848 to the present (2018). Of the district's 349 resources, 310 date to the period of significance, between 1848 and 1969. Construction in the district occurred over a long period of time, as Brownsville weathered the effects of the Civil War and the arrival of the railroad. Because of its long history, discussed in detail in Section 8, many buildings from different periods of development sit geographically very close to one another. The city developed first alongside Fort Brown (outside the district but designated as an NHL; NRHP 1966⁴), in the southeastern corner of the historic district and therefore several of the district's oldest buildings are found here. The oldest property in the district is The Gem (**400 East 13th Street; Photo No. 14, NRHP 1991⁵**), built about 1848 in what is now known to be the Border Brick style. Prior to the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, development continued to move west and north and included the construction of the Market Square Building (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**) in 1850 and the Immaculate Conception Cathedral (**1218 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 13, NRHP 1980⁶**) in 1859. When the Union Army gained control of Fort

³ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004085/80004085.pdf>.

⁴ A copy of the nomination is available at: https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/66000811/66000811_NHL.pdf.

⁵ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/91000852/91000852.pdf>.

⁶ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004085/80004085.pdf>.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Brown in November 1863, the retreating Confederate troops set fire to Fort Brown, and the resulting explosion and fire also destroyed much of downtown Brownsville. In the 1870s and 1880s, a modest economic recovery led to the construction of several buildings in the downtown core, including the San Fernando **(1106 East Adams Street; Photo No. 16)** in 1877. Cameron County also erected a courthouse at the corner of 12th and Jefferson Streets **(1131 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 17)** in 1883.

The most rapid growth in Brownsville's historic core took place after the arrival of the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway arrived in 1904. This line terminated southwest of the original town site platted by Stillman and Lyons, providing Brownsville with a defined southern border as it grew. A new bridge across the Rio Grande connected Matamoros and Brownsville in 1910, and the city's historic core redeveloped along Levee, Elizabeth, Washington, Adams, and Jefferson Streets.⁷ New commercial development included the Bollack Store **(1223 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 18)**, a three-story two-part commercial block building with Italianate stylistic influences in its wide eaves and ornamented bracketing. The façade features three bays topped by decorative arches and separated by pilasters and a centrally located and recessed entry flanked by store windows and topped by transoms. The new county courthouse was constructed one block northeast of the 1883 courthouse in 1912, expanding the downtown core to the northeast **(1150 East Madison Street; Photo No. 12)**.

The opening of the Gateway International Bridge's in 1928 connected Brownsville to Matamoros, Mexico, from East 14th Street, which now serves as the southeastern border of the district. East 14th Street subsequently emerged as a major thoroughfare, and the increased traffic spurred the construction of new businesses including service stations and repair shops **(936 East 14th Street; Photo No. 19)**. Like many American cities, Brownsville experienced the effects of the Great Depression, which slowed economic and building activity. The most important construction projects typically were by public works projects. In 1932, a new federal building at 1001 East Elizabeth Street replaced the U.S. Customs House and Post Office the formerly occupied the same lot. The city's status as a regional hub of trade and transportation grew after the Port of Brownsville opened in 1936, and the wartime use of Fort Brown as a training base for the US Army's 14th Cavalry continued to fuel the city's economy and encourage a degree of construction. The increase in automobile traffic and commercial demand in the central business district resulted in the demolition of some older buildings followed by new construction. After World War II, like in many places across the country, working-class families began to move from Brownsville's older neighborhoods to suburban residential areas. This effect was compounded by the arrival of the US 83 Expressway in 1965, and the resulting dispersal of industrial job centers. The result was slowed development in the downtown Brownsville area, allowing historic fabric to survive into the twentieth-first century.

Property Types and Building Forms

The Brownsville Historic District contains a significant collection of properties that include noteworthy examples of late-nineteenth and early-to-mid-twentieth-century commercial buildings, residential buildings, as well as significant religious and government buildings. Of the 349 total properties in the Brownsville Historic District, 224 are commercial buildings, 107 are residential buildings, 9 are governmental buildings, 6 are religious buildings, 1 is a park, and 1 is a cemetery. Among those buildings in the Commercial property-type category, 128 are classified as a one-part commercial block, 74 are two-part commercial block, and 2 are enframed window wall and 1 is a two-part vertical block. The remaining do not fit any distinct type or building form. The classification of commercial property types follows the typologies set forward in Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street*.⁸

⁷ HHM and Associates, Inc., "Brownsville Historic Resources Draft Survey Report," (2018), 9.

⁸ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987), 54-67.

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Of the district's 107 residential properties, 65 are single-family dwellings, while 12 serve as multi-family housing, such as (11) apartments or (1) duplexes. There are also 17 backhouses; the rest of the resources in the domestic properties grouping (17) are classified as in the secondary buildings category and include sheds, detached kitchen, servant's quarters, cistern, carports, and garage apartment. Garages are uncommon in the district, while many of the accessory buildings are backhouses, and off-street parking is in uncovered driveways or under carports. The most common plan types among the residential properties include 18 bungalows, 10 center-passage houses, 8 L-plan houses, 6 hall-and-parlor houses, and 6 houses with linear plans. The remaining residential plan types include those categorized as modified L-Plan, shotgun, T-plan, and other non-distinct forms.

There are nine properties in this Brownsville Historic District that are government properties. This grouping includes two county courthouses, a federal building/post office, a public library, a fire station, a public market/city hall building, two offices, and one warehouse. There are two historic sites in the historic district. The first is a cemetery (Campo Santo Viejo) just north from the courthouse. This cemetery is located within the original town site and in use active by 1852. There are no visible headstones or graves, instead the ground is covered in grass and surrounded by a non-historic metal fence. The second site is Market Plaza Park, constructed around 1960, connecting the Market Square site to Adams Avenue to its north. The site includes several live oak trees, brick paving stones, and a central fountain.

Map 4 depicts the geographic distribution of property types within the district.

Common Construction Materials

The use of brick is a common connecting trait for many of the historic commercial properties in downtown Brownsville, especially before the arrival of the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway. In fact, 132 properties in the district (approximately 38 percent) feature brick as a primary façade material. The most common secondary material on these buildings is stucco, although ceramic tile and stone also commonly appear alongside the brick. Some brick buildings are almost entirely covered with stucco, including the Market Square Building (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**) and the 1928 City Library (**1024 East Adams Street**). Some early commercial buildings were also constructed in wood, like the Laiseca Store (**1054 East Monroe Street, Photo No. 20**). After the arrival of the railroad in 1904, construction using milled lumber and concrete block became much more common. Another resource available after the arrival of the railroad was cast iron, and a cast iron storefront was installed in 1908 at the P.V. Farias & Brothers Building (**1128 East Washington Street; Photo No. 21**).

Residences built prior to 1904 were also likely to use brick as their primary construction material. The Stillman House (**1325 East Washington Street; Photo No. 22**) is one early example of brick construction and will be discussed in greater detail later in the nomination. More vernacular structures also relied on brick and stucco, including the Garza/Barreda House (**828 East 15th Street; Photo No. 23**). Residences constructed after 1904 were commonly built using milled wood siding, and in the mid-century, concrete block became a common material as well (**1047 East Madison Street; Photo No. 24**).

Other building types also followed the overall building material trends displayed by the previous two types. The 1893 Field-Pacheco Warehouse (**1039 East Monroe Street; Photo No. 25**) was constructed using brick in what is known locally as the Border Brick style. The Immaculate Conception Cathedral (**1218 East Jefferson Street**) was constructed of brick and stone, and governmental buildings made use of brick and stucco, as in the case of the 1929 Brownsville Public Library (**1024 East Adams Street; Photo No. 25**), which also featured a red tile roof.

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Architectural Styles, with Representative Examples

Contributing resources in the district date from 1848 to 1969 and display a diversity of architectural styles that were prevalent during the development of Brownsville. The distribution of these architectural styles throughout the historic district is a reflection of the way that the city of Brownsville developed from a military fort town to an international commercial and shipping center. These styles represent changing local and national styles and material availabilities. Notable historic styles include Border Brick, French Creole, Spanish Colonial Revival, Gothic Revival, Mission Revival, and Art Deco. Those styles illustrated today within the district border can be grouped into the following categories, from most to least prevalent:

Table 1. Breakdown of building with distinctive architectural stylistic influences.

Style	Number
Border Brick	42
Classical Revival	25
Mission Revival	22
Modern	21
Craftsman	17
Spanish Colonial Revival	15
National Folk	9
Folk Victorian	7
Prairie	7
Minimal Traditional	5
Gothic Revival	2
Art Deco	1
Colonial Revival	1
Greek Revival	1
Italian Renaissance Revival	1
Italianate	1
Queen Anne	1
Renaissance Revival	1
Second Empire	1

The oldest buildings in the district typically showcase a vernacular style unique to the Rio Grande River Valley, which blends stylistic influences brought to the region by the Spanish, as well as migrants from Northern Mexico, New Orleans and the East Coast.⁹ Now called the Border Brick style, this architectural expression developed prior to the arrival of the railroad in 1904 and blends more classical styles like Greek Revival with vernacular Creole and Mexican elements. It is particularly prevalent in the Brownsville commercial district that developed around the Market Square in the 19th century. The Parker's Row building (**533 East 12th Street, 535 East 12th Street; Photo No. 27**), built circa 1855, is an example of such an early mercantile building. It is a single-story brick and stucco commercial building with a series of storefronts. The Border Brick style is evident in the brick corbelling along the top of the building and the ornamental dentils below a flat roofline. Some buildings, as is the case for Parker's Row, have had this detailing painted in contrasting colors in order to draw more attention to it. The Field-Pacheco Complex (**1049 East Monroe Street; Photo No. 28**), built in 1893, demonstrates the strong French-Creole influence in the district and on the Border Brick style. It is a painted brick two-story two-part commercial block building, with a second story

⁹ Fox, 189.

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wooden porch that wraps around two sides. The porch is decorated with jig-sawn brackets, turned wood balustrades, and a turned wood frieze, while the parapet is decorated in Border Brick style, with brick entablature and a parapet that reads "Andres Pacheco." Another exceptional example of the style is the Globo Nuevo Building (**1502 East Madison Street; Photo No. 29**), constructed in 1897, a single-story brick and stucco commercial building encircled by dentilled brick parapet and floating entablature.

The Stillman House (**1325 East Washington Street; Photo No. 22, NRHP 1979¹⁰**), constructed in 1850, is an important example of Greek Revival architecture in Brownsville. It is a symmetrical single-story dwelling of brick construction. It features a centrally located single door entry, surrounded by sidelights and topped by a transom, and flanked on each side by double-hung wood windows and shutters. The flat-roofed porch is supported by simple classical columns, and two interior chimneys are located on each side of the side gabled roof, and topped by an arched chimney cap.

The Immaculate Conception Cathedral (**1218 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 13, NRHP 1980¹¹**) was constructed in 1859 in the Gothic Revival style, while also incorporating aspects of the Brownsville vernacular architectural traditions. With its pitched roof, brick construction, and the addition of buttress-like wall extensions on the front façade, the structure also references the Mission Revival style, which was popular in the region.

An important example of Brownsville's wood framed, wood-clad commercial construction still exists in the district. The historic Laiseca Store (**1054 East Monroe Street, Photo No. 20**) is a side-gabled, double massed building with horizontal wood siding and decorative bargeboard located at the ends of the first gable. The building's stylistic influence is best characterized as National Folk. It was constructed in 1887 on a brick foundation and has had a small metal-sided addition added to its northwest elevation.

The 1912 Cameron County Courthouse (**1150 Madison Street, NRHP 1980¹²**) exemplifies the Classical Revival style in Brownsville. Located north of Brownsville's historic commercial district, the courthouse features a stained-glass rotunda and dome and exhibits Classical Revival traits including symmetrical facades ornamented with Corinthian-styled pilasters, terra cotta ornamentation and a cornice with dentils.

The Clay & McDavitt Building (**1001 East Washington Street, Photo No. 30**) is a single-story example of the Mission Revival style as it was constructed in Brownsville. This stucco-covered commercial building exhibits key stylistic traits including a red tile roof and decorative parapet. Its role as a commercial building is also clearly defined, as the primary façade includes two entrances and store-front windows with transom lights above a metal awning.

After the arrival of the railroad, more properties were built of wood in contrast to the masonry buildings that prevailed in the downtown area up until that time. The Craftsman style in Brownsville enjoyed popularity locally during the interwar period and is exemplified by the home at **1035 Madison Street**. Built circa 1925, it is a one-story bungalow with a brick pier, box column porch, a front-gabled roof and partial width porch.

Modern architecture from the middle of the twentieth century is evident in structures like the Majestic Theater, built in 1949 (**1002 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 31**). It is a two-part commercial block building originally used as a motion picture theater but was later converted into retail space. The corner of the building is covered in green metal panels and features a projecting theater marquee and neon sign reading 'Majestic.' Triple-hung aluminum windows puncture the façade on the second floor. Modern residences were also constructed during this era, including a circa

¹⁰ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/79003448/79003448.pdf>

¹¹ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004085/80004085.pdf>

¹² A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004084/80004084.pdf>

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1950s residence built of concrete masonry block, with a flat roof and irregular geometric form (**1047 East Madison Street; Photo No. 24**).

Brownsville's City Market building (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**) is an important mid-century example of Spanish Colonial Revival-style architecture represented in a government building. In order to elevate the building to the high standard of design being applied to other commercial and institutional buildings in Brownsville at the time, in 1949, San Antonio architect Ellis F. Albaugh, Jr. redesigned the existing Border Brick building (constructed 1850) in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style with a large bell tower and cupola, exterior surface treatment of "Monterey Plaster," and fountain and pool at the south plaza.¹³

While many of the properties display the influence of a specific architectural style or a clear blending of two prevalent local styles, many do not fit within any defined or identifiable style or architectural expression even though they may exhibit some key character-defining features. Among the examples in the district that fall within this grouping include the Maldonado Pharmacy (**1201 Adams Street; Photo No. 32**). This 1913 building is a good example of a significant contributing resource with no determinate style. The property is a two-story two-part commercial block building with a stuccoed exterior and stucco carvings beneath and above the second story windows. While it has no explicit style, it is a strong example of a general commercial building from the railroad era.

Integrity

The Brownsville Historic District retains much of its overall historic integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association since the conclusion of its period of significance in 1969. There has been little non-historic infill, and though some demolitions have taken place, vacant lots and parking lots are uncommon in the district. A comparison of existing conditions within the Brownsville District to Sanborn and other historic maps show little change in the streetscape pattern or building density. While many properties have been altered, especially on storefronts in the downtown area, these alterations generally took place within the district's period of significance. Of the 349 properties within the district, 243 are contributing while only 106 are noncontributing.

Contributing Resources

Properties in this category include 240 buildings, 2 sites, and 1 structure that exhibit the shared common historic character and physical qualities that define this part of Brownsville as a unique place that is distinct from its surroundings. Collectively, these resources enable the district to convey a sense of time and place. These properties not only display a diversity of architectural styles, but also tell the story of an evolving architectural trends and eclectic nature of the built environment that is unique to the Lower Rio Grande River Valley.

To be included in this category, a resource must date to the historic district's period of significance (1848-1969), be within the defined district boundary, and possess scale, materials, and siting similar to or compatible with the other historic resources in the area, thereby adding to the district's overall historic character and sense of cohesiveness. Contributing properties retain their salient historic physical features and associative qualities. However, properties do not need to be unaltered to be considered contributing. Indeed, almost all properties in the Brownsville Historic District have been altered to some extent and most of these alterations date from the period of significance. Some properties have been changed after the period of significance concluded in 1969. The greater the cumulative impact of the alterations, the less likely a historic property will be classified as a contributing element to the historic district. The most common alterations include the modernization of historic storefronts with aluminum-frame plate-glass display windows, replacement of original doors, or changes to entrance configurations. Windows on the second story of

¹³ Eugene Fernandez, Request for Determination of Eligibility, prepared for Texas Historical Commission, May 15, 2018, 16, 18.

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several buildings have been altered, either by infilling or covering. In some cases, brick façades have been covered with stucco or tile. In some cases, slip-cover style façade treatments have been applied to the upper stories of downtown commercial buildings, which was a popular trend in the 1950s and 1960s and thus falls within the period of significance. Common residential modifications include the replacement of roofs, windows, doors, and the addition of fences and other landscaping elements. Although many alterations do detract from the original character of a building, these buildings are still classified as contributing if their overall form remains intact, they remain recognizable to the period of significance, and enable the district to convey a sense of the past (pre-1970). In some cases, these alterations obscure important character defining traits, but the additions are themselves an important representation of the mid-century modernization movement in Brownsville.

Noncontributing Resources

Properties within the Central Brownsville Historic District that are considered noncontributing are those that detract from the district's historic character and include two subtypes: severely altered historic resources (69) and resources that were constructed after the end of the period of significance in 1969 (37). The latter subtype includes buildings that typically exhibit few or any of the physical features or architectural characteristics that distinguish the district as a distinct area and diminish the district's collective sense of the past. The former grouping consists of buildings constructed during the district's period of significance but that have been altered so dramatically that little of their historic fabric or character from the pre-1970 era is recognizable. Such changes have so compromised the property's historic integrity that they no longer represent the district's period of significance. It is possible for a noncontributing building to become contributing through historically sensitive rehabilitation and/or restoration efforts.

Inventory

HHM completed an intensive survey of the area within the boundaries of the district in October 2017. This survey sought to identify properties that meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on an individual basis or as part of a district. Using information from this and a previous survey in the year 2000, HHM established the Central Brownsville Historic District boundary which included a dense collection of historic resources spanning from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. The district contains 349 resources, 243 (includes 11 resources previously listed) of which contribute to the historic district. The following inventory is a comprehensive tally of all of the 349 resources within the district. The inventory, presented below in street address order, provides the property's map number, address, actual/estimated year of construction, historic use, stylistic influence or plan type/form, and its contributing/noncontributing designation. For the location of each resource, refer to Map 3.

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
107	429 E 10th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
108	431 E 10th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
109	433 E 10th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
111	439 E 10th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
317	744 E 10th	ca. 1960	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	C
320	816 E 10th	1986	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
319	820 E 10th	ca. 1915	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk	C
366	914 E 10th	ca. 1900	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	C

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Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
14	417 E 11th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
184	543 E 11th	1911	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
191	609 E 11th	1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
192	617 E 11th	1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
289	629 E 11th	1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
288	635 E 11th	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
339	715 E 11th	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
337	717 E 11th	ca. 1940	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
336	739 E 11th	ca. 1940	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
335	745 E 11th	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
328	816 E 11th	1919	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
372	915 E 11th	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Professional	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
374	1048 E 11th	1971	Commerce/Trade / Professional	Modern / One-part commercial block	N
6	315 E 12th	1972	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
5	406 E 12th	1922	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
198	533 E 12th	ca. 1855	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
205	534 E 12th	1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
204	535 E 12th	ca. 1855	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
208	536 E 12th	1885	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
271	628 E 12th	ca. 1890	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
266	710 E 12th	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
380	902 E 12th	ca. 1920	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
381	904 E 12th	ca. 1920	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
506	908 E 12th	1948	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	N
499	1024 E 12th	ca. 1950 / 1970s	Domestic / Multi-family building	Mission Revival	C
63	400 E 13th	1848	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C; NRHP, 1991
2135	409 E 13th	1852	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
235	532 E 13th	1867	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C

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Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
237	533 E 13th	1857	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
257	653 E 13th	1975	Commerce/Trade / Warehouse	No style	N
393	835 E 13th	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Professional	No style	C
489	930 E 13th	1894	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
493	1021 E 13th	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Hall and parlor	C
491	1021 E 13th	ca. 1930	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
490	1021 E 13th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
487	1021 E 13th	ca. 1925	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
488	1021 E 13th	ca. 1925	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
485	1021 E 13th	ca. 1935	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
486	1021 E 13th	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / Hall and parlor	C
225	605 E 14th	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Restaurant	Mission Revival	N
250	655 E 14th	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
249	655 E 14th	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
360	804 E 14th	1987	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	N
402	815 E 14th	ca. 1960	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	N
401	817 E 14th	ca. 1950 / ca. 2015	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	N
409	828 E 14th	ca. 1935	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
509	936 E 14th	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	C
468	1005 E 14th	1962	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
466	1011 E 14th	ca. 2000	Commerce/Trade / Shop	No style	N
425	827 E 15th	ca. 1930	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
428	828 E 15th	1897	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
427	828 E 15th	1897	Domestic / Secondary structure	Border Brick	C
428	828 E 15th	1897	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / L-plan	C
446	943 E 15th	1989	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style / Apartment building	N
448	947 E 15th	1878	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
292	1000 E Adams	1928	Government / Fire station	Spanish Colonial Revival	C
284	1001 E Adams	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
282	1007 E Adams	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
280	1023 E Adams	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
291	1024 E Adams	1928	Government / Public library	Spanish Colonial Revival	C
287	1024 E Adams	1911	Commerce/Trade / Hotel	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
279	1033 E Adams	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
290	1042 E Adams	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
278	1043 E Adams	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C

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Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
275	1055 E Adams	1890	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
277	1055 E Adams	1890	Commerce/Trade / Department store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
286	1100 E Adams	1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
273	1105 E Adams	1880	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C; NRHP, 1990
283	1106 E Adams	1877	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
281	1114 E Adams	ca. 1960	Landscape / Park	No style	C
272	1123 E Adams	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	N
270	1134 E Adams	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
276	1150 E Adams	1906	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
268	1155 E Adams	1905	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
267	1200 E Adams	1883	Commerce/Trade / Department store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
265	1201 E Adams	1913	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
264	1203 E Adams	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
263	1208 E Adams	ca. 1900	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
262	1209 E Adams	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
260	1225 E Adams	ca. 1935	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
259	1235 E Adams	ca. 1935	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
256	1237 E Adams	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
254	1239 E Adams	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
252	1255 E Adams	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
251	1255 E Adams	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
248	1263 E Adams	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
255	1304 E Adams	1967	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
253	1312 E Adams	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
137	805 E Elizabeth	1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	N
136	811 E Elizabeth	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C

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Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
135	827 E Elizabeth	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
134	837 E Elizabeth	1929	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
128	847 E Elizabeth	1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
115	900 E Elizabeth	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / Enframed Window Wall	C
114	924 E Elizabeth	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
127	925 E Elizabeth	1948	Commerce/Trade / Department store	Art Deco / Two-part commercial block	C
112	952 E Elizabeth	1927	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
125	957 E Elizabeth	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
117	1001 E Elizabeth	1931	Government / Post Office / Courthouse	Renaissance Revival	C
98	1002 E Elizabeth	1949	Commerce/Trade / Theater	Modern / Two-part commercial block	C
101	1002-(R) E Elizabeth	1949	Commerce/Trade / Theater	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
116	1031 E Elizabeth	1927 / 1959	Commerce/Trade / Department store	Modern / Two-part commercial block	C
99	1032 E Elizabeth	1910 / 1948	Commerce/Trade / Department store	Modern / Enframed Window Wall	C
103	1048 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930 / 1970s	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	N
104	1054 E Elizabeth	1912	Commerce/Trade / Financial institution	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
113	1057 E Elizabeth	1911	Commerce/Trade / Financial institution	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
106	1101 E Elizabeth	1927	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
94	1104 E Elizabeth	1990	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	N
93	1110 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
105	1113 E Elizabeth	ca. 1945 / 1963	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
102	1121 E Elizabeth	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
100	1127 E Elizabeth	1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
92	1128 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
91	1136 E Elizabeth	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
97	1137 E Elizabeth	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
96	1141 E Elizabeth	1904	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Queen Anne / Two-part commercial block	C
90	1152 E Elizabeth	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
88	1158 E Elizabeth	1925	Commerce/Trade / Financial institution	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
95	1159 E Elizabeth	ca. 1850	Commerce/Trade / Financial institution	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
86	1200 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
85	1200 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
89	1201 E Elizabeth	1853	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
245	1215 E Elizabeth	ca. 1850	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
244	1215 E Elizabeth	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
243	1223 E Elizabeth	1911	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Italianate / Two-part commercial block	C
242	1231 E Elizabeth	1850	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
84	1232 E Elizabeth	ca. 1885	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
241	1233 E Elizabeth	1850	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
82	1240 E Elizabeth	ca. 1886 / 1956	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
87	1245 E Elizabeth	ca. 1890	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
240	1251 E Elizabeth	ca. 1900	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
83	1255 E Elizabeth	1854	Commerce/Trade / Financial institution	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
81	1258 E Elizabeth	1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
80	1260 E Elizabeth	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
78	1263 E Elizabeth	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	N
79	1268 E Elizabeth	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
76	1301 E Elizabeth	1991	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
77	1302 E Elizabeth	1927	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
74	1318 E Elizabeth	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
72	1318 E Elizabeth	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
70	1322 E Elizabeth	1868	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
68	1335 E Elizabeth	1961	Commerce/Trade / Department store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
66	1340 E Elizabeth	1948	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	N
71	1343 E Elizabeth	1961	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
69	1365 E Elizabeth	ca. 1995	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
323	1003 E Jefferson	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
313	1003 E Jefferson	ca. 1910	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
321	1012 E Jefferson	ca. 1950	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Minimal Traditional / Bungalow	C
325	1013 E Jefferson	1972	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
324	1013 E Jefferson	1972	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
326	1015 E Jefferson	2010	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
322	1022 E Jefferson	ca. 1960	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Minimal Traditional	C
329	1032 E Jefferson	ca. 1905	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / L-plan	C
331	1042 E Jefferson	2008	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
332	1050 E Jefferson	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
327	1055 E Jefferson	ca. 1940	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
330	1101 E Jefferson	1919	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
333	1109 E Jefferson	1929	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
334	1115 E Jefferson	1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
338	1131 E Jefferson	1882	Government / Courthouse	Second Empire	C
348	1158 E Jefferson	ca. 1915	Commerce/Trade / Professional	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
349	1218 E Jefferson	1859	Religion / Church facility	Gothic Revival	C; NRHP, 1980
404	1218 E Jefferson	1860	Religion / Church-related residence	Spanish Colonial Revival	C; NRHP, 1980
405	1218 E Jefferson	1860	Religion / Secondary structure	Gothic Revival	C
406	1218 E Jefferson	1860	Religion / Secondary structure	No style	C
341	1235 E Jefferson	1952	Religion / Church school	Modern	C
345	1235 E Jefferson	ca. 1980	Religion / Church school	No style	N
347	1303 E Jefferson	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
350	1307 E Jefferson	1959	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	N
352	1311 E Jefferson	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
351	1323 E Jefferson	ca. 1910	Domestic / Multi-family building	Craftsman	C
353	1357 E Jefferson	1994	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	N
359	1405 E Jefferson	1991	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
358	1409 E Jefferson	1975	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
357	1433 E Jefferson	1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / L-plan	C
356	1443 E Jefferson	ca. 1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / L-plan	C
355	1453 E Jefferson	1984	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
15	1005 E Levee	1975	Commerce/Trade / Restaurant	No style	N
18	1021 E Levee	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
16	1049 E Levee	1984	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
9	1101 E Levee	1927-1928	Commerce/Trade / Theater	Spanish Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
2131	1107 E Levee	1926	Commerce/Trade / Hotel	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
7	1114 E Levee	1927	Commerce/Trade / Hotel	Classical Revival / Two-part vertical block	C
10	1133-A E Levee	1855	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
2147	1133-B E Levee	ca. 1855 / ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
12	1143 E Levee	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
8	1147 E Levee	1919	Commerce/Trade / Hotel	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
4	1223 E Levee	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
3	1229 E Levee	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / One-part commercial block	C
3-A	1231 E Levee	ca. 1985	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No Style / One-part commercial block	N
2	1233 E Levee	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
1	1257 E Levee	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
62	1350 E Levee	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
361	1002 E Madison	1892	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C; NRHP, 1988
364	1005 E Madison	ca. 1950	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
362	1005 E Madison	ca. 1950	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / L-plan	N
367	1030 E Madison	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
365	1030 E Madison	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern	N
370	1035 E Madison	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
371	1047 E Madison	ca. 1950	Domestic / Multi-family building	Modern / Irregular	C
376	1102 E Madison	ca. 1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
378	1124 E Madison	1969	Government / Office	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
377	1124 E Madison	ca. 1965	Government / Office	Modern / One-part commercial block	C
379	1134 E Madison	1925	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
384	1144 E Madison	1914	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C; NRHP, 2018
384-A	1144 E Madison	1914	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style / Cylindrical	C; NRHP, 2018
384-B	1144 E Madison	1914	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C; NRHP, 2018
375	1150 E Madison	1912	Government / Courthouse	Classical Revival	C; NRHP, 1980
382	1203 E Madison	ca. 1950	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
392	1216 E Madison	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Professional	No style / One-part commercial block	C
386	1223 E Madison	ca. 1905	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	N
397	1231 E Madison	ca. 1930	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
396	1231 E Madison	ca. 1940	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
388	1231 E Madison	ca. 1925	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
387	1231 E Madison	ca. 1930	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	N
395	1245 E Madison	ca. 1965	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
389	1245 E Madison	ca. 1965	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Minimal Traditional / Center passage	C
391	1247 E Madison	ca. 1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
408	1301 E Madison	ca. 1850	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / Hall and parlor	C
407	1301 E Madison	1893	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C; NRHP, 1984
403	1316 E Madison	ca. 1905	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
399	1316 E Madison	ca. 1905	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / Modified L-plan	C
398	1324 E Madison	1906	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Border Brick / Center passage	C
411	1400 E Madison	ca. 1980	Commerce/Trade / Professional	No style	N
415	1405 E Madison	1957	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
414	1405 E Madison	ca. 1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / Linear plan	C
413	1405 E Madison	1957	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
422	1412 E Madison	1979	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
420	1412 E Madison	1914	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Center passage	C
418	1417 E Madison	ca. 1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / Hall and parlor	C
421	1425 E Madison	1930	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
416	1425 E Madison	1906	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / Modified L-plan	C
412	1426 E Madison	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Shop	No style	N
423	1435 E Madison	ca. 1960	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
417	1435 E Madison	ca. 1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / Hall and parlor	C
419	1445 E Madison	1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Folk Victorian / Center passage	N
424	1452 E Madison	1906	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
432	1502 E Madison	1897	Commerce/Trade / Department store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
274	1100 Market Square	1850 / 1912 / 1949	Government / City Hall / Market	Spanish Colonial Revival	C
514	1006 E Monroe	1978	Government / Storage	No style	N
515	1039 E Monroe	1893	Commerce/Trade / Warehouse	Border Brick	C
510	1049 E Monroe	1893	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
513	1049 E Monroe	1893	Domestic / Secondary structure	Border Brick / Linear plan	C
511	1054 E Monroe	1887	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	National Folk	C
507	1117 E Monroe	1852	Funerary / Cemetery	No style	C
504	1157 E Monroe	1880	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
500	1205 E Monroe	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
497	1217 E Monroe	2010	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
503	1226 E Monroe	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
496	1227 E Monroe	ca. 1960	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Irregular	N
502	1232 E Monroe	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style	N
501	1232 E Monroe	ca. 1945	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Bungalow	C
494	1245 E Monroe	1993	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	N
498	1248 E Monroe	ca. 1920	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
495	1254 E Monroe	ca. 1910	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / Hall and parlor	C
492	1264 E Monroe	ca. 1935	Domestic / Multi-family building	Mission Revival	C
481	1311 E Monroe	1961	Domestic / Secondary structure	Modern	C
479	1311 E Monroe	1961	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
478	1311 E Monroe	1961	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	C
480	1314 E Monroe	1958	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Linear plan	N
473	1314 E Monroe	1958	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Linear plan	C
477	1315 E Monroe	ca. 1930	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	National Folk / L-plan	C
474	1315 E Monroe	ca. 1940	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Shotgun	C
464	1315 E Monroe	ca. 1960	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
463	1315 E Monroe	ca. 1915	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
470	1322 E Monroe	ca. 1940	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Bungalow	N
471	1324 E Monroe	ca. 1920	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
472	1333 E Monroe	ca. 1905	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / T-plan	C
484	1340 E Monroe	1969	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Linear plan	N
475	1340 E Monroe	1969	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Linear plan	N
476	1344 E Monroe	ca. 1975	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style	N
469	1345 E Monroe	ca. 1960	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	C
465	1345 E Monroe	ca. 1970	Commerce/Trade / Shop	No style	N
462	1354 E Monroe	ca. 1950	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Mobile Home	N
461	1354 E Monroe	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Shop	No style	N
458	1405 E Monroe	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Linear plan	C
459	1414 E Monroe	ca. 1935	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
455	1415 E Monroe	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	N
454	1423 E Monroe	1993	Domestic / Multi-family building	No style	N
457	1424 E Monroe	1958	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / L-plan	C
452	1427 E Monroe	ca. 1940	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Bungalow	C
451	1427 E Monroe	ca. 1940	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
456	1432 E Monroe	1963	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
453	1432 E Monroe	1963	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	No style / Linear plan	C
449	1433 E Monroe	ca. 1965	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Minimal Traditional / Other	C
450	1444 E Monroe	ca. 1960	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Minimal Traditional / L-plan	C
447	1455 E Monroe	ca. 1925	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Craftsman / Irregular	C
445	1455 E Monroe	1936	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	C
444	1455 E Monroe	ca. 1950	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
443	1455 E Monroe	ca. 1950	Domestic / Secondary structure	No style	N
167	900 E Washington	1927	Commerce/Trade / Hotel	Spanish Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
174	952 E Washington	1971	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Modern / Two-part commercial block	N
177	1001 E Washington	1929	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
178	1015 E Washington	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / One-part commercial block	C
176	1018 E Washington	1927	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Spanish Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
179	1020 E Washington	ca. 1940	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
180	1021 E Washington	ca. 1920	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
182	1027 E Washington	ca. 1940	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
183	1033 E Washington	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Mission Revival / One-part commercial block	C
181	1036 E Washington	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
185	1037 E Washington	ca. 1945	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
186	1041 E Washington	ca. 1915	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
187	1045 E Washington	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
188	1049 E Washington	1886	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
189	1100 E Washington	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
195	1101 E Washington	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
196	1105 E Washington	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
197	1107 E Washington	ca. 1910	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
190	1112 E Washington	ca. 1905	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Colonial Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
193	1114 E Washington	ca. 1905	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
199	1115 E Washington	1882	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
194	1128 E Washington	1908	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
202	1136 E Washington	1927 / 1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
200	1137 E Washington	ca. 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
2132	1144 E Washington	1927 / 1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Prairie / Two-part commercial block	C
2134	1150 E Washington	ca. 1855	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C
203	1152 E Washington	ca. 1915	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / One-part commercial block	C
201	1157 E Washington	1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
211	1200 E Washington	1915	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
206	1201 E Washington	1928	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Classical Revival / Two-part commercial block	C
207	1205 E Washington	1898	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	Border Brick / Two-part commercial block	C

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Table 2. Inventory of Resources within the Central Brownsville Historic District.

Map ID	Address	Year Built	Historic Use	Style / Type	NR Status
209	1209 E Washington	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
210	1211 E Washington	ca. 1935	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
215	1212 E Washington	ca. 1900	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
212	1217 E Washington	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
213	1221 E Washington	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
216	1222 E Washington	ca. 1915	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / Two-part commercial block	C
214	1225 E Washington	1970	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
217	1234 E Washington	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
219	1246 E Washington	ca. 1870 / 1930	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
218	1254 E Washington	ca. 1960	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
220	1264 E Washington	1972	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
232	1302 E Washington	ca. 1950	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
230	1318 E Washington	ca. 1955	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C
222	1325 E Washington	ca. 1995	Commerce/Trade / Professional	No style / One-part commercial block	N
221	1325 E Washington	1850	Domestic / Single-family dwelling	Greek Revival / Center passage	C; NRHP, 1979
229	1334 E Washington	1969	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
228	1334 E Washington	1969	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
223	1335 E Washington	1930	Domestic / Multi-family building	Mission Revival	C
227	1342 E Washington	1976	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	N
224	1350 E Washington	ca. 1965	Commerce/Trade / Specialty store	No style / One-part commercial block	C

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Central Brownsville Historic District encompasses a significant part of the city's historic core and includes the central business district and an adjacent neighborhood that includes residential, governmental, and religious buildings. The majority of the resources date from the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and reflect the dynamic, vibrant, and constantly changing character of this distinct part of Brownsville. Collectively, this district captures the essence of Brownsville: its role as a significant center of trade and commerce, its largely unique town layout and spatial configuration, its contributions to the economic, cultural, and social development of the lower Rio Grande region that integrates multiple cultural backgrounds and traditions into a largely unique culture, and its many significant examples of works of noted local, regional architects and builders. Besides the noteworthy grouping of commercial buildings along East Elizabeth, East Washington, and East Adams Streets, the district also includes two historic courthouses and associated jails that remain distinctive landmarks in the surrounding residential areas and attest to the legacy of Brownsville as a center of law and justice in Cameron County. The district encompasses approximately 78.9 acres and includes 243 contributing resources and 106 noncontributing resources. The Central Brownsville Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Government and Commerce at the local level, as well as Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level. The period of significance extends from 1848, the year of the town's founding to 1969, marking the recommended 50-year age threshold .

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

Factors in the Establishment of Brownsville

In the early eighteenth century, squatters (including herders and farmers) settled and explored the land on which Brownsville eventually developed. Particularly, residents of the city of Matamoros utilized the future site of Brownsville as an *ejido*, or common pasture.¹⁴ The land was granted by the Spanish government to José Salvador de la Garza from Matamoros in 1781 (fig. 8-1). Mexican farmers continued to graze cattle in the area after Texas gained independence from Mexico in 1836 and became part of the United States in 1845.

The future townsite's relationship to Fort Texas was also key to the city's development. The U.S. Army created Fort Texas near a bend in the Rio Grande in March 1846 as a military tactic to establish the Rio Grande as the southern border of the United States (fig. 8-2). The outpost played a significant role in the defense of the Rio Grande valley. On May 3, Mexican forces attacked Fort Texas.¹⁵ U.S. Army Major Jacob Brown, commander of Company E, Third Artillery, Seventh Infantry which garrisoned the fort, was injured during the attack and died on May 9. He was buried within the fortification walls, and the Army renamed the post Fort Brown after him.¹⁶ Periodic flooding in the low-

¹⁴ Alicia Garza and Christopher Long, "Cameron County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed August 04, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcc04>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, modified on August 31, 2016, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹⁵ The attack occurred as U.S. troops brought supplies from Fort Polk at El Fronzon (later Point/Port Isabel). The Army would have transported up the Rio Grande to Brownsville in order to avoid Mexican troops while traveling up the river or because the trip over land was shorter than the two-day journey on the meandering Rio Grande. Dixie L. Jones, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Old Military Road," accessed August 4, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/exo02>, uploaded on June 15, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹⁶ Carl S. Chilton, *Historic Brownsville: An Illustrated History* (HPN Books, 2010), 6; Thomas W. Cutrer, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Brown, Jacob," accessed August 1, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fbr87>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association; Elizabeth Pettit Davenport, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Fort Brown," accessed August 1, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qbf07>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, modified on March 4, 2011, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

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lying area where Fort Brown was sited resulted in the relocation of the fort when the Mexican-American War ended in February 1848. A “new” fort was established 500 yards west of the original fort’s earthenworks on June 21, 1848 (figs. 8-2 and 8-3).¹⁷ In April 1848, Captain William Warren Chapman, quartermaster responsible for the site selection and construction of Fort Brown, noted, “As soon as a treaty is signed, Matamoras [sic] will be in a measure deserted and a large city will spring up on the Texas side. Fort Brown is a healthy place and with good permanent quarters it might be made a delightful and beautiful station.”¹⁸ Similarly, the June 24, 1848, issue of *The American Flag*, a weekly newspaper from the Brownsville/Matamoras area, predicted that the new fort would become permanent and foresaw a great trading center, perhaps named Athens, growing up around it.”¹⁹ A June 1848 response to the newspaper, possibly written by one of the Chapmans, rebuked them:

Gentlemen:—You are rather too fast in giving a name to the location of the Quarter Master’s Depot on the other side. Furthermore, it is not intended that any private buildings should be erected at that point. But should it chance that a town spring up there, a national name for it would be more befitting than the stale and worn out name of “Athens”... ‘Brownsville’ occurs to me as being the most appropriate name for this place, in memory of the gallant Major Brown who fell in defence [sic] of the spot on which it is located.²⁰

This suggestion would, indeed, come to fruition with the City of Brownsville being laid and developed simultaneously with Fort Brown’s permanent construction, partially due to the city’s strategic location close to the fort.²¹

The site for Brownsville was also ideal due to its proximity to and existing relationship between the area and Matamoras (fig. 8-3). Matamoras had been explored by Europeans since the seventeenth century, was first permanently settled by the Spanish in 1746 and established as the town of San Juan de los Esteros in 1765.²² The city of Matamoras included public squares, most notably the centrally-located main plaza surrounded by important public buildings that were visible from far distances and served as landmarks.²³ The New York, Havana and Mexican Mail Steamship Company (F. Alexandre & Sons) ran steamers from New Orleans to Matamoras with ports of call at Bagdad and Tampico.²⁴ This unique New Orleans – Tampico – Matamoras – Brownsville connection became important for regional commerce and also for the noted Creole influence in the early architecture of Brownsville.

Layout of the Original Townsite

Following the signing of the Treaty of Hidalgo Guadalupe, which ended the war between the Republic of Mexico and the U.S., both countries recognized the Rio Grande as the boundary between the two nations. The end of hostilities

¹⁷ Caleb Coker, *The News from Brownsville: Helen Chapman’s Letters from the Texas Military Frontier, 1848-1852* (Austin: Barker Texas History Center, 1992), 56, n. 4.

¹⁸ Letter from Helen Blair Chapman to Emily Welles Blair, April 6, 1848, in Coker, 35-26.

¹⁹ Coker, 56, n. 4.

²⁰ Ibid., 361.

²¹ Caleb Coker, *Handbook of Texas Online*, “William Warren Chapman,” accessed January 25, 2018, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fch68>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

²² Alicia Garza and Christopher Long, *Handbook of Texas Online*, “Brownsville, TX,” accessed August 01, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdb04>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

²³ Mark Lund, “Historic Architecture in Brownsville and Matamoras,” in *Studies in Brownsville and Matamoras History*, edited by Milo Kearney (Brownsville: The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College, 1995), 189.

²⁴ Robert C. O. Benjamin, *Life of Toussaint Overture: Warrior and Statesman, with an Historical Survey of the Island of San Domingo from the Discovery of the Island by Christopher Columbus, in 1492, to the Death of Toussaint, in 1803*, volume 1 (Evening Express Print Company, 1888), 120.

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brought political and economic stability, which fostered greater settlement and development of the southernmost part of the state. Among those who took advantage of the prosperity was Charles Stillman. A native of Connecticut who had moved to Matamoros in 1828 and later established a shipping operation to transport American troops up the Rio Grande during the conflict, Stillman recommended the site for the relocation of the “new” Fort Brown.²⁵ He also purchased a portion of the Garza grant from the first wife of José Narcisco Cavazos. This was illegal, however, because the legal title to the property did not belong to them but to the heirs of Cavazos’s second wife.²⁶ As a result of the unlawful purchase, the legal title to the land remained in dispute for years.

In August 1848, Stillman, along with New York merchant Samuel A. Belden and New Orleans produce broker Jacob Mussina, formed the Brownsville Town Company. Stillman engaged George Lyon, who served as the Deputy Survey of Nueces County, to survey the 4,676-acre site for the town and plat its layout for the Brownsville Town Company.²⁷ Lyons’ grid-like plan created 308 numbered blocks in a northeast-southwest orientation immediately west to Fort Brown.²⁸ Each 300-foot-by-250-foot city block was divided by a central alley and contained 12 lots that were 15 feet wide and 120 feet deep.²⁹ The townsite’s northeast-southwest oriented numbered streets were 40 feet wide while the northwest-southeast oriented named streets were 60 feet wide. Levee Street, which derived its name from the natural ridge (not a manmade embankment) that served as a place for vessels of various sizes to land, extended northwestward between 12th and 14th Streets. It is probable that Stillman named several of Brownsville’s first streets after himself and his wife Elizabeth.³⁰ Northward from Elizabeth Street, streets were named sequentially after U.S. presidents as well as important U.S. figures, such as Benjamin Franklin.³¹ The city was sited at the junction of several military roads—the roads to Point Isabel and to Brazos Santiago converged to form 12th Street while the road to Mouth of Rio Grande (*Boca del Rio*) merged into Monroe Street (fig. 8-3).

The original townsite plan of Brownville deviated from the town-planning traditions of nearby Matamoros and other Mexican towns of the Lower Rio Grande Valley because of its wider streets and presence of block-dividing alleys. Brownsville also lacked a broad boulevard and public squares or plazas that typified other previously created town plans in the region (figs. 8-2 and 8-3).³² The absence of large public spaces encouraged the construction of dwellings that contained interior patios and presented a more private and inward-facing character. Moreover, the overall layout

²⁵ Coker, *The News from Brownsville*, 56, n. 4.

²⁶ Chilton, 7.

²⁷ The original plat map for Brownsville is not available. Refer to figure 8-19 for 1893 map showing the city’s original layout and block numbering. The 1922 *Map of the City of Brownville* published by the New York & Brownsville Improvement Co. Ltd. in the collection of the Brownsville Historical Association also illustrates those features.

²⁸ Urban Prospects, *The City of Brownsville Historic Resources Survey*, prepared for the City of Brownsville, September 20006.

²⁹ Blocks between 12th and 13th Streets consisted of 14 lots. Map of the City of Brownsville, map, 1878, texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth192536/, December 4, 2017), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting University of Texas at Arlington Library.

³⁰ One theory is that the sign making company who made the street signs originally misread the order and mistook Street (St.) for Saint (which is also St.). <http://www.douglasdraper.com/blog/charles-stillman-the-map-of-brownsville>, accessed December 11, 2017. South of Levee Street, the streets appear to have originally been named after patriotic US and Texas figures—Houston, Hamilton, and Austin—per an 1868 map (fig. 8-10). Later, Houston Street was renamed (St.) Francis, possible in honor of Stillman’s father Francis.

³¹ Alleys between the named streets were often named by or after families whose homes did not face the main streets. This is revealed in descriptions of “Cowan’s Alley” between Elizabeth and Washington Streets during testimony from (as well as later histories on) the Brownsville Raid of 1906. Bronsbil Estacion, “2016 Taken on the Brownsville Raid Tour,” August 6, 2016, <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2016/08/james-mills-gives-vantage-point-from.html> (accessed May 22, 2018); U.S. Senate, *Report of the Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry Relative to the Shooting Affray at Brownsville, Texas, August 13-14, 1906, by Soldier of Companies B. C, and D Twenty-Fifth United States Infantry*, 12 volumes (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911).

³² Urban Prospects, 7.

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and lack of public spaces revealed that city founders envisioned Brownsville to “facilitate business exchange.”³³ They wanted the creation of Brownsville to be a profitable endeavor. With the exception of streets and alleys, the town site Brownsville included no space that would not incur a profit. It did not include public squares or plazas; Market Square (bound by 11th, 12th, Washington, and Adams Streets) was not created until 1850.³⁴ The large plots were efficiently divided into small lots to allow for the “maximum amount of land for sale.”³⁵ The narrow lots also offered greater flexibility for buyers and enabled them to purchase the desired number of lots to fit their individual needs. Since city lots were all roughly of the same dimensions, a hierarchy of land use and development evolved by predetermined lot size, but by location. For example, property in proximity to the river and to Fort Brown became the most desirable and hence more likely to be developed. The Brownsville Town Company began selling lots in December 1848. The lots ranged in price from \$150.00 to over \$1,000.00, based on proximity to the Rio Grande and to Fort Brown.³⁶

Initially, the land that the Brownsville Town Company purchased in the vicinity of the fort was sparsely developed:

Except for a few lumber buildings erected on the corner of what is Levee and 11th Street, owned by Slinger and the store, Bandarita, balance of the ridge was covered with willow and mesquite trees with undergrowth of prickly pear, and brush. With the exception of a small cow pen situated where F. Yturria home now stands, the rest occupied only rattlesnakes, centipedes, lizards, and horned frogs.³⁷

The townsite plan, however, encouraged early businesses to spring up quickly at the riverbank in the area along East Levee and East Elizabeth Streets—where the steamboats lined up—since the original town plan did not designate a specific commercial area. Early on, denizens of Brownsville consisted of the military personnel at Fort Brown and a small civilian population. They were soon joined by a number of merchants who desired to take advantage of opportunities Brownsville had to offer as a U.S. border city on an important shipping route. Not only did the presence of Fort Brown play a critical role in the establishment of Brownsville, it also influenced early development patterns in the city. The brick Quartermaster Wall separated the fort from the town.³⁸ The city’s first buildings—commercial and residential—were sited just outside of the fort, close to the river. Some of the oldest buildings in the historic district remain near this bend in the Rio Grande.³⁹ Among the first permanent buildings in Brownsville was Stillman’s store at the corner of 12th and Levee Streets (not extant) as well as a storehouse built for Samuel Belden (as Mr. J. E. Carey & Co.) at a prime location on 13th Street near the river at Levee Street (**400 East 13th Street, La Joya/The Gem; Photo No. 14, NRHP 1991**)⁴⁰.⁴¹ The Commercial & Agricultural Bank erected a building to house their financial institution around the same time (**1159 East Elizabeth Street, Celaya Building; Photo No. 33**). Some of these businessmen and merchants resided further away from the river, perhaps to avoid the chaos of living near the busy boat

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Lund, 188, 189.

³⁵ Ibid, 189.

³⁶ Ibid, 7.

³⁷ William Neale, *Century of Conflict, 1821-1913*, edited by John C. Rayburn and Virginia Kemp Rayburn (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 53; Mark Lund, “The Gem,” from Texas Historical Commission, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker application: The Gem, text, April 13, 1992, 6, texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph428580/m1/4/, accessed January 26, 2018, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas Historical Commission.

³⁸ Bruce Aiken, “The Start of the Brownsville-Matamoros Telephone Link,” in *Studies in Brownsville & Matamoros History*, edited by Milo Kearney, et. al. (Brownville: The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College, 1995), 128.

³⁹ Lund, “Historic Architecture in Brownsville and Matamoros,” 188.

⁴⁰ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.the.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/91000852/91000852.pdf>.

⁴¹ Mark Lund, “The Gem,” from Texas Historical Commission, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker application: The Gem, text, April 13, 1992, 4, texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph428580/m1/4/, accessed January 26, 2018, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas Historical Commission.

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landing along Levee Street. Among these early houses was a cottage owned by Henry Miller (**1325 East Washington Street, Stillman House Museum; Photo No. 22, NRHP 1979⁴²**), owner of the Miller Hotel (not extant). Miller rented this home to his partner Charles Stillman by the time his wife Elizabeth Goodrich Stillman arrived in Brownsville in August 1849.⁴³

Expansion and Development of the Original Townsite

Following Brownsville's incorporation on January 24, 1850, the city experienced a continuous period of expansion through the Civil War and to the turn of the twentieth century.⁴⁴ The existence of the river and of Fort Brown affected the city's pattern of development and forced growth in a west and northwesterly direction. A secondary commercial core developed in Brownsville with the construction of an open-air market and governmental office facing East 12th Street, Market Square (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**), in 1850.⁴⁵ The Market Square building defined an area of primarily one-story, wood-frame buildings along unpaved streets (fig. 8-4). The construction of Market Square encouraged commercial and mercantile development in the vicinity, particularly as East 12th Street extended northeastward out of the city and functioned as the direct route to Port Isabel and Brazos Santiago on the Texas Gulf Coast and southwestward to the steamboat landings on the lower Rio Grande (fig. 8-3).⁴⁶ East 12th Street, then, became an important connection between the city's two commercial nodes at the Rio Grande and at Market Square. Brownsville's city limits in 1854 are depicted in fig. 8-3. Among post-Market Square construction in the area was Parker's Row, a grouping of commercial buildings that U.S. Commissioner Francis J. Parker built on the northwest side of the 300 block of East 12th Street in 1855 (**533 East 12th Street, 535 East 12th Street, 1152 East Washington Street; Photo No. 27, No. 34, No. 35**). The density of the city's commercial development at that time remained closest to the river along East Levee and East Elizabeth Streets as exemplified by the construction of new commercial buildings such as the **Webb Drug Store (409 East 13th Street; Photo No. 34)**. An 1857 view of Brownsville shows the various wood-frame and masonry buildings along the riverfront (fig. 8-5). In the 1850s, important residential development continued along East Washington Street such as when Stillman's partner Francisco Yturria commissioned Henry A. Peeler to build his home close to Stillman's at 1424 East Washington Street (not extant).⁴⁷ H. E. Woodhouse, another of Stillman's partners and early Brownsville entrepreneur, also erected his home on the street (1136 East Washington - not extant). The Gothic-style Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (**1218 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 13, NRHP 1980⁴⁸**) was built in 1859 to serve the city's Roman Catholic residents. Its location stood near what was then the northernmost developed end of East 12th Street, a primary artery connecting the city's two commercial nodes.

By the early 1860s, permanent commercial development along East Elizabeth Street solidified the significance of the city's growth closer to the river. A view of the north side of the 1200 block of East Elizabeth Street just before the Civil War depicts a cohesive grouping of buildings on the unpaved, tree-lined boulevard including the Martinez Building (**1201 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 36**), San Roman Building (**1245 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 37**), and Yturria Bank Building (**1255 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 38**), and the Miller Hotel (at 13th and Elizabeth, not extant) (figs. 8-6 and 8-7). By the start of the Civil War, Brownsville's two commercial nodes framed an

⁴² A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/79003448/79003448.pdf>.

⁴³ Brownsville Historical Association, "Stillman House," <http://www.brownsvillehistory.org/stillman-house.html>, accessed January 31, 2018.

⁴⁴ Due to a lawsuit with Garza's heirs, the incorporation was repealed; Brownsville was reincorporated on February 7, 1853.

⁴⁵ Chilton, 8.

⁴⁶ Texas Historical Commission, "Downtown, TX Historic Property Listings – 533 E 12th Street, Brownsville, TX 78520," <https://downtowntx.org/brownsville-texas/533-e-12th-st-brownsville-tx-78520>, accessed May 14, 2018.

⁴⁷ Tony Lehmann, "The Border Brick/New Orleans French Quarter Style,"

<https://sites.google.com/site/historyofbrownsvilletexas/home/1848-to-1925-the-border-brick-style>, accessed January 26, 2018.

⁴⁸ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004085/80004085.pdf>.

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area scattered with dwellings of various forms and architectural styles as well as religious and social institutions to serve their inhabitants.

After the Civil War, the city's development remained centered at the river front and around Market Square. Little in the way of new development occurred and Brownsville's economy was slow to recover. Notable exceptions were the commercial enterprise of H. Braunschweiger and Levy (**532 East 13th Street**) and general merchandise business of brothers and Spanish immigrants Miguel and José Fernández (**1049 East Washington Street; Photo No. 39**).⁴⁹ Views of East Levee Street from around 1867 show an active business district remained along the river (figs. 8-6 and 8-7) as well as on East Elizabeth Street, which served as the main entry into Fort Brown just beyond East 14th Street (at the present-day intersection of East Elizabeth Street with International Boulevard) (fig. 8-10). Maps from the end of the decade indicate that development within the original townsite had expanded north and eastward to Franklin (present-day Monroe) Street (figs. 8-10 and 8-11).⁵⁰ In 1872, former Spanish vice-consul and merchant Simon Celaya organized the Rio Grande Railroad, which linked Brownsville and Port Isabel. The terminus of the 22.5 mile-long line was located at East Jackson and East 11th Streets, one-half block northwest of the historic district, which transformed area at the city's northeastern periphery from a working-class neighborhood to a small warehouse and industrial district. This pattern contributed to a further diversification of the area in land use and physical development.⁵¹

By the mid-1870s, Brownsville experienced a modest recovery signaled by the construction of new commercial buildings throughout the downtown area. The area around Market Square, in particular, was improved with larger high-style masonry commercial and residential buildings that replaced the wood-frame structures that had been in place since the city's founding. Among them was a complex built by Victoriano Fernández, a Spaniard who immigrated to the U.S. in 1859 (**1106 East Adams, V. Fernández Complex/San Fernando Building; Photo No. 16**).⁵² The buildings served as the Fernández family's home and, later, furniture business.⁵³ Casimiro Tamayo, a local businessman and civic leader, explored opportunities at the far north reaches of the downtown area, opening a store at **947 East 15th Street (Photo No. 40)**. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of 1877 shows the density of the city's commercial and residential development south of East Adams Street including the warehouse district along East Levee Street, a core of party-wall commercial buildings on East Elizabeth Street, and newer core of commercial buildings beginning to form around Market Square (fig. 8-12). By this time, the changing course of the Rio Grande discouraged continued development along East Levee Street (fig. 8-11). A *Map of the City of Brownsville* delineated one year later in 1878 indicates that the most prominent development north of East Jefferson Street was residential with some businesses and hide yards. Despite many newer wood-frame and masonry commercial and residential buildings, the area was dominated by *jacales*, small dwellings of upright wood posts chinked with clay or mud and covered with thatched roofs.⁵⁴

In the 1880s, the city's growth patterns remained consistent with some new development on East Levee and East Elizabeth Streets and around Market Square. Increasingly, however, Brownsville businessmen established commercial enterprises in buildings on and north of Market Square. Among these were additional buildings for the two Fernández'

⁴⁹ Stephen Fox and Juan Vélez, Fernández and Laiseca Building National Register of Historic Places nomination form, draft, May 2, 2017, 14.

⁵⁰ The street was initially named for Benjamin Franklin; it is unknown why or when the street name was changed.

⁵¹ The railroad depot and shops were located a couple of blocks to the northeast.

⁵² Fox and Vélez, 14.

⁵³ Kaila Contreras, "City plans to restore San Fernando Building," *Brownsville Herald*, November 15, 2017, http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/city-plans-to-restore-san-fernando-building/article_82611d5a-ca7d-11e7-9627-3be12cf435d6.html, accessed May 22, 2018.

⁵⁴ Map of the City of Brownsville, [map], 1878, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting University of Texas at Arlington Library, accessed June 30, 2017, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph192536/m1/1/?q=brownsville%201878%20map..>

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brothers near Market Square—Miguel Fernández' hide yard (**1101-1121 East Adams Street; Photo No. 41, NRHP 1990⁵⁵**) and Jose Fernández's combination mercantile and residence (**1115 East Washington Street, Jose Fernandez; Photo No. 42**).⁵⁶ From the time Cameron County was established in 1848, the County rented or purchased office space to conduct its business.⁵⁷ In 1883, the first Cameron County Courthouse building was completed at the corner of East 12th and East Jefferson Streets (**1131 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 17**). The siting of the Cameron County Courthouse, 35 years after the county's formation, contrasted to the nineteenth-century courthouse square plan typical of many Texas towns. For one, Brownsville lacked a deliberately planned and set aside public square created as the site for governmental or institutional buildings. Also, Brownsville was the second seat of government for Cameron County (Santa Rita, a small community five miles downstream of Fort Brown, was the original county seat); no competition took place between cities which would warrant pre-selection of a prominent site for the courthouse at the county's establishment.⁵⁸ Under the leadership of Stillman, the county seat moved to Brownsville following an election later in 1848.⁵⁹ The new Cameron County courthouse served as a hub for commercial and residential development and encouraged the city's continued northeasterly growth. In 1883, the Brownsville and Gulf Railway built a mule-powered, narrow-gauge line on East 12th Street that connected the Rio Grande Railway terminus to the ferries at the river.⁶⁰ This connection between the major market and transportation points in Brownsville also fostered expansion toward the northeast in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Spanish immigrant merchants established businesses in the vicinity of Market Square and along Brownsville's major trade and transportation routes to serve and benefit from the growing population in those areas. These enterprises included the J. H. Fernández y Hermano store (**1200 East Adams Street; Photo No. 43**), Laiseca Store (**1054 East Monroe Street, El Globo Chiquito; Photo No. 20**), and La Madrileña (**1002 East Madison Street; Photo No. 44, NRHP 1988⁶¹**).⁶²

Brownsville's development and street layout by the mid-1890s are further revealed in aerial photographs of the city taken from the top of the Cameron County Courthouse and published in *The Twin Cities of the Border* in 1893 (figs. 8-13 through 8-16). Throughout the city, the original grid of unpaved streets was retained. East Elizabeth and East 12th Streets, both important transportation routes, intersected and functioned as major development corridors, with the later essentially bisecting the Brownsville Historic District. The view looking to the south takes in the rear of the city's business core and shows the mix of commercial, residential, and religious buildings toward East Levee Street and the river but focuses on the area between East Elizabeth Street and the 1883 courthouse (fig. 8-13). Consistent with the commercial enterprises focused toward the river and Market Square, the "South End [was] devoted to wholesale and

⁵⁵ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/90001485/90001485.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Fox and Vélez, 14.

⁵⁷ Norman Rozeff, "The story of Cameroun County's Courthouses," *Valley Morning Star*, October 10, 2010, www.valleymorningstar.com/news/the-story-of-cameron-county-s-courthouses/article_4daecfad-5e84-5597-8deb-67d3f24dc04e.html.

⁵⁸ The site of Santa Rita now lies within the corporate city limits of Brownsville. In 1996, all that remained was the *colonia* of Villa Nueva located near the intersection of US 281 and Old Military Road (FM 269). Grade Edman, *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Santa Rita, TX," <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hvs39>, accessed May 31, 2018, uploaded on June 15, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association; Google Maps; Willard B. Robinson, *The Handbook of Texas Online*, "County Courthouses," accessed May 28, 2018, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/cgc03>, uploaded on June 12, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

⁵⁹ Garza and Long, "Cameron County."

⁶⁰ Norman Rozeff, "Rio Grande Valley Railroads – Part 1: Hanging Tough in the Lean Years," *Valley Morning Star*, February 1, 2015, accessed May 28, 2018, http://www.valleymorningstar.com/life/part-hanging-tough-in-the-lean-years/article_9ab5e502-a8e3-11e4-bb32-53fe0ed3242e.html.

⁶¹ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/88002384/88002384.pdf>.

⁶² Fox and Vélez, 14; Ethel Cantu, La Madrileña National Register of Historic Places nomination form, May 1988; John P. White, La Madrileña – Ortiz Store, Written Historical and Architectural Data, Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS No. TX-3281, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, accessed July 21, 2017, <http://cdn.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/tx/tx0100/tx0121/data/tx0121data.pdf>.

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retail mercantile establishments and offices of all kinds.”⁶³ The less-developed area of the city to the west—away from Fort Brown and major market routes, was a “residence district” (fig. 8-14). The part of the city east of the courthouse—and limited from further expansion by Fort Brown—was likewise primarily residential with “the homes of a numerous suburban population” and a scattering of commercial businesses (fig. 8-15).⁶⁴ The view to the north shows that Brownsville’s northern reaches contained small houses and commercial buildings but was dominated by several lumber, bone, and hide yards—including the warehouse of Henry M. Field (**1039 East Monroe, Field Pacheco Complex; Photo No. 25**)—as part of the “industrial” area closer to the terminus of the Rio Grande Railroad (fig. 8-16).

The areas photographed for the 1893 publication were populated sufficiently for them to be recorded by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company a short time later in the spring of 1894. The Sanborn maps indicate the consistent character of each area as well as increased growth within that one-year time frame. The eastern reaches of the city were augmented with additional stores placed prominently at street corners (**1301 Madison Street; La Nueva Libertad**). The East Elizabeth Street corridor continued to be enhanced with new construction, some of which replaced older buildings, in modern styles and materials (**1141 East Elizabeth Street; J. L. Putegnat & Brother pharmacy; Photo No. 44**). Already well-established on his lot in the northern industrial area, H. M. Field added a two-story, store-house (**1049 East Monroe, Field Pacheco Complex; Photo No. 28**) next to the existing warehouse on his lumberyard complex. The mixed-use character of the city southeast of East 12th Street was continued by individuals such as Spanish merchant Alfonso Garza who constructed a home (**828 East 15th Street; Photo No. 23**) and a new building for his dry goods and mercantile business El Globo Nuevo (**1501 East Madison Street; Photo No. 29**). By the turn of the twentieth century, with no link to the national railroad system, Brownsville retained a degree of seclusion, apparent in the consistent character and growth patterns of the areas around the main commercial and governmental hubs of East Levee and East Elizabeth Streets, Market Square, and the 1883 Cameron County Courthouse.⁶⁵

Effect of Railroad Service on Brownsville’s Development in the Early Twentieth Century

When the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway (St.L.B.&M.) arrived in Brownsville in 1904, the city underwent a period of transformation and growth.⁶⁶ The St.L.B.&M. tracks terminated southwest of the original townsite and contributed to the development of a new warehouse district parallel to Fronton Street (fig. 8-17).⁶⁷ This area became a distinct zone south of the Brownsville Historic District.⁶⁸ Transportation and commercial activity via the river remained viable. This riverfront commercial node of the historic core on East Levee, East Elizabeth, East Washington, and East 12th Streets saw renewed development as business owners took advantage of the connection with the railroad with freight and passenger ferries sited on the river banks between Fronton and Saint Francis Streets.⁶⁹ The railroad also opened the lower Rio Grande Valley to settlers from the northern and midwestern states, thereby ending the area’s longstanding isolation. New farmers migrated to Brownsville, cleared large amounts of land for agriculture and built extensive irrigation systems and roads. This expansion of farming and the railroad links to the

⁶³ W. H. Chatfield, *The Twin Cities, Brownsville, Texas, Matamoros, Mexico, of the border and the country of the Lower Rio Grande* (Brownsville: Printed for the Brownsville Historical Association, 1991), 2.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*.

⁶⁶ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 15; Classic Streamliners, “The Gulf Coast Lines,” <https://www.classicstreamliners.com/rr-gcl.html>, accessed July 27, 2017. The railroad became the first part of a system, ultimately known as the Gulf Coast Lines, running from New Orleans via Baton Rouge and Houston to Brownsville.

⁶⁷ Urban Prospects, 8.

⁶⁸ Terri Myers, Brownsville Freight Depot and Warehouse District National Register of Historic Places nomination form (draft), September 6, 2017.

⁶⁹ *Plat of Property of Brownsville Ferry Company Ltd.*, [map], June 24, 1910, Brownsville Historical Association, Brownsville, Texas.

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North brought unprecedented growth and prosperity to Brownsville through increased export and import of goods and people.⁷⁰ The development of municipal utilities occurred in 1907 when Brownsville residents petitioned the City Council to approve an election for a utility system. Local residents voted unanimously for bonds to be issued for the development of a local system with electric and water plants.⁷¹ A view of East Elizabeth Street after the completion of the municipal-owned electric lighting system shows East Elizabeth Street complete with electric light poles and street lights (fig. 8-18).

Because of transportation and technological advancements in the first decade of the twentieth century, Brownsville saw a period of boosted trade and development and various merchants replaced older or erected new commercial buildings. Examples include the J. L. Putegnat & Brother Building (**1141 East Elizabeth; Photo No. 44**) and M. H. Cross Building (**1452 East Madison Street**). The boom also allowed for the import of new building materials and new architectural forms such as cast iron to augment building development in the Brownsville Historic District as seen at the structural cast iron columns used at the interior and exterior of the Jose Besteiro y Hermano Building (**1155 East Adams**) and the cast iron façade shipped in from the Houston Structural Steel Company via rail and installed at the P. V. Farias & Brothers Building (**1128 East Washington Street; Photo No. 21**). Around this time, Louis Kowalski, a prominent Brownsville Custom House and merchandise broker, published a map of Brownsville that focused on the original townsite (fig. 8-19). The map highlighted the trajectory of the city's development northward from the Rio Grande and Fort Brown as well as the limitations that those entities placed on its growth. The map also depicted various rail lines that served Brownsville and revealed their physical relationship to one another and to primary streets. The map showed some blocks within the historic downtown core as solid numbered blocks whereas those surrounding to the city limits included clearly defined alleys and lots, suggesting that the undelineated blocks (within the historic core, and several blocks westward), were fully developed by this time. Of note is the creation of Palm Boulevard by this time. The thoroughfare effectively marked the boundary between Brownsville's original townsite and newer suburban neighborhoods that were growing to the northwest, outside of the Brownsville Historic District.⁷² While the expansion of Brownsville's metropolitan area encouraged streets and boulevards that extended outward to undeveloped or new land opened for subdivision, the city's downtown area remained a centralized, dense area.⁷³

The stability that the railroad brought to agricultural and commercial activity in Brownsville encouraged additional transportation-related businesses, as well as various civic, commercial, and governmental pursuits that are reflected in the Brownsville Historic District. In 1909, Brownsville's City Council gave the Brownsville and Railway Company the right to construct a standard track in place of the narrow-gauge line on East 12th Street. This proposal met with opposition as locals feared that the passenger line would then be used for steam cars and regular freight traffic, "ruining forever the busiest thoroughfare of Brownsville, on which are situated the county court house, jail, Catholic church, market, city hall, and the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico railway's passenger station."⁷⁴ The standard gauge line was not built.

Among the well-received civic improvements that Brownsville's turn-of-the-century prosperity spurred was the completion of the first car and railroad bridge linking Brownsville and Matamoros in 1910. Two years earlier, U.S. Representative John Nance Garner proposed a bridge to span Rio Grande and connect the St.L.B&M. in Brownsville to the Mexican National Railway in Matamoros. The bridge was completed in 1910 and became the first to serve all

⁷⁰ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 16.

⁷¹ Brownsville Public Utilities Board, "History," <http://www.brownsville-pub.com/about-us/history>, accessed May 30, 2018.

⁷² Urban Prospects, 8.

⁷³ David Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for evaluation and documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*, September 2002, 22.

⁷⁴ "Give Railroad Twelfth Street," *The Brownsville Herald*, April 2, 1909; "As to the 12th Street Franchise," *The Brownsville Herald*, April 16, 1909.

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land-based international traffic—pedestrian, animal-drawn, automobile, and rail. With these advancements in the Brownsville's infrastructure, new development occurred along East Levee, East Elizabeth, East Washington, East Adams, and East Jefferson Streets. New commercial growth included business houses such as the Pauline Bollack Building (**1223 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 18**) and Dittman Motion Picture Theater (1124 East Washington Street, demolished). Following the trend of prominent placement of corner stores in the nineteenth century, First National Bank (**1054 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 46**) and Merchants National Bank (**1057 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 47**) were built on opposite corners from one another in 1912.

Brownsville's renewed importance as a major U.S. and Rio Grande Valley city and newfound prosperity was signified by the additions to the Market Square and City Market building (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**) and the construction of a new county courthouse in 1912 (**1150 East Madison Street; Photo No. 12, NRHP 1980⁷⁵**). At Market Square, the City Market building's second floor (reduced after a hurricane in 1867) was reconstructed and a two-story addition was built onto the south end. The public market on the ground level was enclosed. A fire hall was erected at the north end of the plaza and connected to the City Market via a covered breezeway.⁷⁶ With the exception of the market spaces, the new areas were "efficiently outfitted for the offices of the municipal government."⁷⁷ The new courthouse was erected one block northeast of the 1883 courthouse on a site formerly occupied by the J. S. and M. H. Cross Lumber and Hide Yard.⁷⁸ Once again, the siting for the Cameron County courthouse was not a pattern typical to Texas. Although the building was erected on a full city block as were most of the state's late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century courthouses, it did not occupy a centralized location within the original townsite. The new courthouse encouraged further expansion of the original townsite to the northeast with residential and commercial resources replacing industrial and agricultural sites. Commercial use of property north of the new courthouse declined, especially east of 13th Street.⁷⁹

The Increasing Impact of the Automobile and Transportation Infrastructure

While railroad service retained its significance and influence on Brownsville's development, the automobile introduced a new set of changes to the physical character of the city and its street and circulation network. In August 1910, Brownsville voters supported the funding of street paving by assessing fees from those private owners, street car companies, and railroad companies whose property abutted areas to be paved.⁸⁰ In the spring of 1911, the City Council determined the necessity of issuing bonds to support the city's portion of the expense of paving efforts and ordered a bond election, which passed on March 14, 1911. In August, the city contracted with the Creosoted Wood Block Paving Company of New Orleans to construct 23,650 yards (two miles) of paving and subsequently created paving districts in which to do the work.⁸¹ Paving District No. 1 included East Washington, East Elizabeth, and East Levee Streets, as well as East 10th through East 13th Streets.⁸² The paving was complete by December 1912.⁸³ According to Bruce Aiken, former Historic Brownsville Museum director, the treated wood was considered better than brick in the early

⁷⁵ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004084/80004084.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Fernandez, Request for Determination of Eligibility, 16.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ The hide yard was relocated one block north to a site directly adjacent to the F. Yturria Lumber Yard (formerly M. Schodts) and the Henry M. Field complex).

⁷⁹ Urban Prospects, 7.

⁸⁰ *The Southwestern Reporter*, volume 203, 154.

⁸¹ Samuel Nicholson of Boston, Massachusetts, patented wood block patent in 1854. Historic Pavement, "Wood Block Street Pavement," <http://www.historicpavement.com/new-page-4/>, accessed May 29, 2018; "The Wood Block Campaign," *The Lumberman*, volume 49, no. 6 (March 15, 1912): 36; Celaya et. al. v. City of Brownsville, *The Southwestern Reporter*, volume 203 (June 5 – July 10, 1918): 154.

⁸² Celaya et. al. v. City of Brownsville, *The Southwestern Reporter*, volume 203 (June 5 – July 10, 1918): 157.

⁸³ Ibid.

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twentieth century, but the fire department was called out to extinguish fires on the road caused by gas leaks common to early automobiles.⁸⁴

Another transportation improvement that affected the character of the Brownsville Historic District included the introduction of electric streetcar service. In 1912, the Brownsville Street and Interurban Railway filed a charter to build an electric railway with street and suburban lines in and near Brownsville (figs. 8-20 and 8-21).⁸⁵ The company constructed lines within the original townsite that circulated within the historic district along the following streets:⁸⁶

- East Elizabeth Street⁸⁷
- East Washington Street from East 3rd Street to East 11th Street
- East 11th Street from East Washington Street to connection with Rio Grande Railway
- East Madison Street from East 11th to East 12th Street

Streetcar service began operations by late January 1913.⁸⁸ The streetcar line provided riders access to important locales within the historic district and connected the downtown commercial and residential area to the emerging suburbs (Brownsville's West End) being developed at the western edge of the original townsite, outside of the historic district. Electrical wires appear to have been removed from the main streets to the alleys around this time (fig. 8-22).

The mid-to-late 1910s saw the commercial corridors closer to the river increasingly cater to travelers to Brownsville via auto and rail, as well as to farmers and ranchers from the surrounding areas and to visitors from across the border who came into the city to conduct business, shop, and seek entertainment. Several hotels such as the Park Hotel (**1150 East Adams Street; Photo No. 48**) and Travelers Hotel (**1147 East Levee Street; Photo No. 49**) were built. By 1914, the wood-frame structures in the Miller Hotel complex were demolished; a new Mission Revival building replaced the hotel's old wood-frame bar and sitting room facing Elizabeth Street (demolished).⁸⁹ A photograph taken during the Decoration Day 1916 parade highlights the commercial character of the historic downtown core near the river. Antebellum and late-nineteenth-century edifices co-existed with modern, twentieth-century buildings and amenities as illustrated by the electric poles and continuous concrete sidewalks in front of the storefronts (fig. 8-23). Pedestrians were protected at many storefronts by canopies or awnings that extended over the sidewalk to the street. On the other hand, growth in the northeastern part of the city continued to be residential development as exemplified by the Webb-Martinez Residence (**1324 E. Madison Street; Photo No. 50**).

At time of the creation of the Texas Highway Department (now known as the Texas Department of Transportation) and establishment of the state highway system in 1917, highway officials proposed State Highway (SH) 12, to

⁸⁴ Gilberto Salinas, "Taking it to the Streets," *The Brownsville Herald*, April 13, 1997, http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/apr-taking-it-to-the-streets/article_9406983d-8fa0-5d66-9a89-da09ddc8f92d.html, accessed May 29, 2018.

⁸⁵ *Western Contractor*, volume 21, no. 581 (February 28, 1912): 29; *The Contractor*, volume 15, no 8 (April 15, 1912): 65.

⁸⁶ Archival research has not revealed a map of the streetcar system, so additional routes may have been in place. The street car system was never constructed on several additional routes in the historic district as was stipulated in the contract: East 14th Street from East Elizabeth Street to the Rio Grande River, East Levee Street from East 10th to East 14th Street, East 11th Street from East Levee to East Elizabeth Street, East 13th Street from East Elizabeth Street to the Rio Grande River, and East 14th Street from East Madison Street to the Goodrich and Forto Addition. "Legal Notices," *The Brownsville Herald*, May 10, 1921: 6.

⁸⁷ Research has not revealed the length of the streetcar line along East Elizabeth Street or if the line extended southwestward on East Washington Street past East 11th Street.

⁸⁸ *Electric Railway Journal*, volume 41, no. 16 (January 25, 1913): 177. The Brownsville Street & Interurban Railway later contracted with Brownsville Improvement Company to build a two-mile extension of the line from Brownsville to the Country Club. *The Contractor*, volume 17, no 8 (April 15, 1913): 50; *Electric Railway Journal*, volume 41, no. 16 (April 19, 1913): 745.

⁸⁹ It was located at the present site of 1203 East Elizabeth Street. See Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map of 1914.

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Brownsville along two pre-existing routes that converged in Harlingen before proceeding to Brownsville—the old Military Road and the Texas route of the King of Trails Highway, an early named auto trail that extended from Winnipeg, California, to Mexico. Newspaper accounts from the fall of 1917 and spring of 1918 highlight the promotion of the King of Trails' routing to Brownsville from Corpus Christi.⁹⁰ SH 12 entered Brownsville from the northwest and extended into downtown along East Elizabeth Street.⁹¹ The development of the state highway system did not immediately have a pronounced effect the fabric of Brownsville's historic downtown core. The City Council also regularly recognized the need for adequate city roads to accommodate vehicular traffic, in addition to the highways. In August 1919, it made assessments for grading and paving with gravel many of Brownsville's streets, several of which were in the downtown core.⁹² The 1919 edition of Sanborn maps of Brownsville shows development patterns consistent with those at the beginning of the century, with older buildings being expanded or replaced by newer buildings designed in current architectural styles.

The city's urban development continued in the 1920s due to the continuous arrival of people from the Midwest and northern states. These individuals arrived via rail and car as, by this time, Brownsville was the terminus of many highways: the Southern National Highway, the Lone Star Trail, the King of Trails, the Puget Sound to Gulf, the Jefferson Davis Memorial Highway, and the Colorado to Gulf Highway.⁹³ Auto clubs supported proper marking of these routes to show travelers that Southern Texas was "a motorists' paradise and that" they were welcome.⁹⁴ The growing popularity of automobiles may have contributed to the failure of Brownsville's streetcar system. By May 1921, the Brownsville Street and Interurban Railway Company had failed to build some portions of the system and to maintain service on others, going so far as to remove some of the rails and tracks. As a result, the City of Brownsville cancelled and terminated its contract with the Brownsville Street and Interurban Railway Company.⁹⁵ The completion of SH 12, the first paved highway in the Rio Grande Valley between Harlingen and Brownsville, in 1921 ignited another period of development in Brownsville. Infill and new construction within downtown began to include reinforced concrete, fireproof buildings such as the Maltby Building (**406 East 12th Street**) and State National Bank (**1158 East Elizabeth**). One marked change that contrasted with the previous consistency of growth was the replacement of domestic buildings—some high-style, elite housing—with retail establishments that catered to vehicular traffic, especially in the West End.⁹⁶ This trend is visible at the 1926 Sanborn map which illustrates that some of the older domestic buildings on East Elizabeth Street between East 8th and East 10th Streets were demolished to make way for a large auto garage (not extant). An increased number of auto-related commercial enterprises such as auto garages and auto repair shops are visible throughout the Brownsville Historic District. No zoning codes appear to have discouraged this trend at that time.

The Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in Brownsville in 1927. The passenger depot (listed in the NRHP in 1978) was located outside of the downtown historic core on East Madison Street between East 6th and East 7th Streets. While rail travel was still popular, the automobile had increasing influence on the city's development and infrastructure. In 1928, the Gateway International Bridge, an automobile bridge connecting Brownsville to Matamoros from the end of the 14th Street, opened (fig. 8-24). The bridge contributed to 14th Street's "emergence as a major north/south thoroughfare" and spurred the formation of the Brownsville Navigation District the following year.⁹⁷ Throughout the

⁹⁰ "Highway to Mexico City is Object of New Move," *The Brownsville Herald*, September 25, 1917; "The King of Trails Highway," *The Brownsville Herald*, February 15, 1918; "To Mark King of Trails Soon," *Brownsville Herald*, March 7, 1918; "K. of T. Agent Is Here Today," *The Brownsville Herald*, March 23, 1918.

⁹¹ *Official Automobile Blue Book*, volume 4 (Chicago: Automobile Blue Books, Inc., 1923), 807.

⁹² "Notice to Property Owners," *The Brownsville Herald*, August 20, 1919: 5.

⁹³ "Brownsville as Terminus of Many Highways is Not Shown, Says Engineer," *The Brownsville Herald*, August 17, 1921.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ "Legal Notices," *The Brownsville Herald*, May 10, 1921: 6.

⁹⁶ *Urban Prospects*, 8.

⁹⁷ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 16.

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city, increased auto traffic spurred the construction of new businesses such as service stations and auto repair shops. New establishments such as the El Jardin Hotel (**1114 East Levee Street**) and Cameron Hotel (**912 E. Washington Street**) accommodated travelers. Travel to and from Brownsville was further enhanced in 1929 when the city became a hub for Pan-American Airways. The Brownsville Historic District was impacted by this development in several ways. The downtown area accommodated vehicular traffic with angled and parallel parking on the main streets parallel to the river (fig. 8-25). Among one of the more popular trends at this time was the installation of electric street signs to attract drivers and other visitors. In 1929, electric street signs at Hotel El Jardin on East Levee Street and the Capitol Theater on East Washington Street (figs. 8-26 and 8-27).⁹⁸ The St.L.B.&M. Railroad also erected ornamental electric sign in the median of East Levee Street at 12th Street in front of its new passenger depot (constructed 1926-1927, not extant) to illuminate the entrance to the bridge road leading to the International Bridge. Analysis of the 1930 Sanborn map shows that by 1930, commercial development expanded even more along western parts of East Elizabeth Street.

The Depression Years

Although development slowed in the 1930s during the height of the Great Depression, Brownsville's population rose, and the city was able to survive economically. The beginning of the decade started off promising with the construction of a new Federal Courthouse and Post Office (**1001 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 51**). Local citizens also voted to form the Brownsville Navigation District in 1928; however, attempts to build the Port of Brownsville and accompanying transshipment channels were forestalled by a lack of funds and a series of weather-related setbacks. As with many infrastructure projects nationwide at that time, the federal government granted monetary aid in 1933 to help complete the project and facilitate the region's recovery from a major hurricane. The city's close ties to Mexico and its rising status as a regional hub of international trade countered the most destructive effects of the depression era. The routing of US 281 along Elizabeth Street in 1935 and SH 4 along 14th Street in 1939 brought increased international and domestic traffic, commercial and otherwise, into the city's historic core. From 1930 to 1940, numerous new businesses related to the processing and shipping of locally produced petroleum and agricultural products emerged. As farm values plummeted during the Great Depression, some area farmers moved to Brownsville in search of nearby jobs in the manufacturing, processing and shipping industries, thereby necessitating the development of new working-class neighborhoods at the periphery of the historic district and the expansion of city services within those neighborhoods as well as the older mixed-use and commercial areas of the historic district.⁹⁹

Renewed Expansion and Prosperity

With the onset of World War II, Brownsville seemed to be on the brink of another boom period. During the early 1940s, Fort Brown was the central training base for the 124th Cavalry, bringing waves of soldiers and civilian employees to the city and bolstering the economy. In 1942, some old streetcar rails were still in place in the historic core. The city government considered removing and selling them to aid war effort; they proposed to use the funds to repair the roads.¹⁰⁰ In 1943, US 77 was extended from Corpus Christi to the international border at Brownsville, further re-enforcing the city's status as the terminus of Texas's north to south traffic and as a major export/import point. Improvements to US 281 solidified Brownsville's link to other border transshipment centers such as Laredo and Eagle Pass. As Brownsville recovered from the economic downturn of the 1930s, new construction in

⁹⁸ Jose Cazares, "1928 Signs of Better Days Downtown," August 2016, <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2016/08/1928-signs-of-better-days-downtown.html>, accessed May 29, 2018.

⁹⁹ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 16.

¹⁰⁰ "Brownsville's Street Car Rails Enough for 3 Tanks," *The Brownsville Herald*, August 2, 1942, 13

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the city's central historic core contributed to the demolition or remodeling of several historic structures to accommodate ever-increasing automobile traffic.¹⁰¹

As illustrated by the many announcements for commercial opening and re-openings, the re-stabilization of Brownsville's economy in the 1940s and 1950s saw many older businesses remodel their premises or move to new locations to keep up with modern expectations and styles.¹⁰² This vibrant development in Brownsville took place despite the closing of Fort Brown in 1948. Among one of the most published openings was for that of a new Sears store (**925 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 52**) on the site where the Pipkin-Manske Motor Company building was formerly located.¹⁰³ Even the City Hall and Market at Market Square was "modernized and re-opened for business" in May 1949.¹⁰⁴ The last vestiges of new retail construction in the Brownsville Historic District also occurred in the 1940s and 1950s. In the early 1950s, the historic downtown core remained active. A view of East Elizabeth Street from this time shows the growth of retail development on the west part of the thoroughfare, as well as various features such as paved streets with water drainage, concrete sidewalks, and the reintroduction of street lights (fig. 8-28). Another visible trend was the use of new facades and signage to keep businesses relevant to their clientele. Many store owners added façade sleeves and resurfaced facades to their businesses, especially the larger retail and department stores on East Elizabeth Street. Over the course of the decade, however, suburban residential neighborhoods outside of the Brownsville Historic District began to usurp the predominance of the central business district and contribute to decentralization of retail shopping. Working-class families were drawn to these communities, particularly after Union Carbide, a polymers manufacturing company, built a large plant in Brownsville on property leased from the Brownsville Navigation District in 1959.¹⁰⁵

Effects of the Expanded Highway Network

The 1950s also saw effects of the growing state highway system on downtown Brownsville development. Maps from 1955 indicate that the routing of both US 281 (re-designated as US 77/83) and SH 48 extended along on two parallel streets after the creation of one-way thoroughfares. Between East 3rd and East 4th Streets, East Elizabeth Street carried the southeast bound traffic of US 281 and East Washington, the northwest bound. The alignment of SH 48 was split between 13th Streets and 14th Streets from East Washington Street to the Southmost Road; the former carried inbound traffic and the latter, outbound. Highway planners believe these one-way streets provided more efficient traffic flow. Brownsville, like many other US and Texas cities at this time, began to develop a one-way street system in its city center.¹⁰⁶ Maps of the period also show a new street, International Boulevard, which was constructed along SH 4 at the town-fort boundary in the mid-1950s (fig. 8-29). The four-lane highway, divided by a median, served to create a more

¹⁰¹ Extracted from Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 17; "Pipkin Motors Buys Ford Auto Bldg at 9th and Elizabeth," *The Brownsville Herald*, January 3, 1945: 2.

¹⁰² Advertisement for the re-opening of Franklin's Woman's Style Center at 1123 East Elizabeth Street, *The Brownsville Herald*, October 21, 1945, 8; advertisement for opening of E. de la Rosa Department Store, *The Brownsville Herald*, May 9, 1946, 5; "Brooks Opens New Drug Store Today," *The Brownsville Herald*, January 16, 1947, 1; advertisement for opening of Lane's Department Store, *The Brownsville Herald*, October 15, 1947, 5; announcements for the opening of the Grande Theater, *The Brownsville Herald*, June 6 and 10, 1948.

¹⁰³ The Pipkin building had replaced the 1920s Patterson Motor Company. *The Brownsville Herald*, October 4 and 11, 1948; "Sears, Roebuck and Company Will Open New Store Thursday," *The Brownsville Herald*, October 13, 1948, 16; "Mrs. John Pipkin to 'Cut Ribbons' At Grand Opening," *The Brownsville Herald*, October 13, 1948, 20.

¹⁰⁴ Advertisement, *The Brownsville Herald*, May 27, 1949, 3-B.

¹⁰⁵ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 17; "New Plant is the Big Thing Here," *The Brownsville Herald*, January 18, 1959, 13; "Union Carbide Contributes to Area's Economy," *The Brownsville Herald*, September 16, 1973, 55.

¹⁰⁶ John Nova Lomax, "Are the One-Way Streets in Our City Centers Killing Neighborhoods, Causing Crime, and Depressing Property Values?," April 22, 2015, <https://www.texasmonthly.com/the-daily-post/are-the-one-way-streets-in-our-city-centers-killing-neighborhoods-causing-crime-and-depressing-property-values/>, accessed May 29, 2018.

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definitive eastern boundary for the original townsite.¹⁰⁷ International Boulevard bypassed East 14th Street to provide a thoroughfare connecting Brownsville's airport and seaport with the Gateway Bridge. This shifted vehicular traffic and led many business owners to move from the East 14th Street corridor and the historic commercial core.

The construction of the US 77/83 Expressway from northwest of the city and atop the channel of Town Resaca in the mid-1960s provided a defined northern edge to Brownsville's original townsite.¹⁰⁸ The bypass rerouted traffic to the Gateway International Bridge (and the Brownsville & Matamoros Bridge further south) away from the central business district. Although downtown Brownsville businesses experienced a loss of middle-income patronage to suburban retail centers in the 1970s, economic circumstances relating to the city's border location preserved the value of downtown real estate for retail and wholesale businesses oriented to a Mexican clientele. The City of Brownsville also enacted its first ordinance to protect the city's historic resources in 1971.¹⁰⁹ As a result, downtown business buildings were not likely to be abandoned or demolished, as illustrated in a photograph from 1972 (fig. 8-30).¹¹⁰ To accommodate new tenants, building owners installed modern signage or altered facades with covers or other cladding to attract patrons who sought be modern and fashionable. The modifications of many of the older storefronts reflected a desire to update and refresh what many considered to be stodgy and out-of-date facades. Some major businesses did, however, relocate. Among these was the Sears department store on East Elizabeth Street, which closed and moved several miles north to Sunrise Mall on US 77/83 in 1981.

Although impacted by the rerouting of major roads and redirecting of major traffic from the city's historic core, the area remains viable as many business, residences, and civic institutions still exist or have returned to historic building stock throughout the Brownsville Historic District. The City of Brownsville joined the Texas Historical Commission's Main Street Program in 2016. Continuing efforts to preserve historic resources in the historic district are made possible by the work of the Main Street Program as well as the Historic Preservation Office of the City of Brownsville's Planning Department.

Criterion A: Commerce

The Brownsville Historic District represents the growth of the historic townsite as the commercial focus of the surrounding area. Since the city's founding, the district demonstrates the importance of the area's economy with a variety of enterprises reflective of the business of trading goods and services and economic trends in Brownsville, South Texas, and the Rio Grande Valley.

Impact of the Rio Grande Steamboat Trade and Military Roads

Due in large part to its location on the Rio Grande at the southern tip of Texas and its relationship to other important port cities in the US and Mexico, Brownsville was poised to become an important regional trade center. General Zachary Taylor brought the first steamboats to the area to move troops, supplies, and equipment up and down the river during the war with the Republic of Mexico.¹¹¹ He also carried goods along the Rio Grande from the Gulf Coast to Rio Grande City as well as into the Mexican interior. Charles Stillman took advantage of the political and economic

¹⁰⁷ Urban Prospects, 8.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 9.

¹⁰⁹ City of Brownsville, *Code of Ordinances*, Article IX. Sec. 348-1489, https://library.municode.com/TX/brownsville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH348ZO_ARTIXHIPRURDE, accessed June 5, 2018.

¹¹⁰ Urban Prospects, 9.

¹¹¹ Carl S. Chilton, *Historic Brownsville: An Illustrated History* (HPN Books, 2010), 8.

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climate in the Lower Grande Valley with his transport company to carry and supply American troops during the war.¹¹² Richard King and Mifflin Kenedy became partners in Stillman's transport company and were influential in the development in the mercantile trade in South Texas that would lead to Brownsville's establishment.¹¹³ After the conflict, "Stillman recognized the future potential of [the] land adjacent to Fort Brown. Merchants based there could supply the U.S. Army and easily trade with numerous Mexican customers in Matamoros."¹¹⁴ The opportunity was due in large part to the various water and overland transportation routes that converged at Brownsville (fig. 8-31). Stillman understood the potential and financial opportunities of a townsite opposite Matamoros and quickly purchased the land to ensure that he would profit from the coming land boom.¹¹⁵ Brownsville was founded to "take advantage of patterns of trade between the U.S. and Mexico established early in the early nineteenth century" and quickly gained important economic status as a city on the US-Mexico border.¹¹⁶ Stillman, King, and Kenedy managed to establish a virtual monopoly on Rio Grande transportation, which ensured Anglo dominance of trade in the area and spurred Brownsville's growth.¹¹⁷

Soon after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (February 1848) confirmed the Rio Grande as the international boundary, other American merchants who had settled in Matamoros during and after the war came to the new town in droves because they could supply the U.S. Army at Fort Brown. In addition, they could easily trade with numerous Mexican clientele in Matamoros and had three markets in which they could participate—the transnational market, the new market of the Anglo American middle class, and the cosmopolitan business class of foreign immigrants.¹¹⁸ Initially, the U.S. Army erected temporary buildings at the fort from materials of existing buildings at Point Isabel, Brazos Santiago, and Boca del Rio, to house supplies being brought in from Matamoros and Mexico.¹¹⁹ Many of Brownsville's early merchants constructed some of the city's first buildings—warehouses and early commercial establishments at the bend in the Rio Grande (figs. 8-5 to 8-9) and along East Elizabeth and East Washington Streets. Businessmen also took advantage of the ferry's location at East 14th and East Levee Streets. Some early Brownsville merchants, like native Spaniard Don José San Román who was a merchant and investor with ties to the steamboat trade, started the tradition of having his business on the first floor and residing on the second with his mercantile company on East Elizabeth Street **(1245 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 37)**.¹²⁰

¹¹² John Mason Hart, Handbook of Texas, "Charles Stillman," accessed January 25, 2018, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fst57>, uploaded on June 15, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹¹³ Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹¹⁴ Lund, 188.

¹¹⁵ Nancy S. Footer, Charles Stillman House National Register nomination, August 1, 1978.

¹¹⁶ Urban Prospects, 6.

¹¹⁷ Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹¹⁸ Lund, 6; Brownsville City Cemetery National Register nomination, section 8, page 11; Dewey, 108, 109, 115.

¹¹⁹ Coker, 56. Boca del Rio ("Mouth of the River") was an aptly-named village at the mouth of the Rio Grande on the Texas side. The town was accessible via the south fork of a direct route from Brownsville; the north fork led to Boca Chica and Brazos Santiago. Boca del Rio appears to be at the same site as the temporary Army camp later named Clarksville after William H. Clark, the superintendent of the Army base at the river boat landing after the Mexican American War. South Padre TV, "Clarksville, the Lost City of the Rio Grande," October 28, 2011, <http://southpadretv.tv/clarksville-the-lost-city-of-the-rio-grande-825/>, accessed June 6, 2018; Cyrus Tilloson, "Clarksville, TX (Cameron County), *Handbook of Texas Online*, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hvc54>, accessed June 6, 2018, uploaded on June 12, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹²⁰ Friends of the THC, "Downtown, TX, Historic Property Listings – 1245 E. Elizabeth Street, <https://downtowntx.org/brownsville-texas/1245-e-elizabeth-st-brownsville-tx-78520>; <https://sites.google.com/site/historyofbrownsvilletexas/home/1848-to-1925-the-border-brick-style>, accessed May 22, 2018.

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Soon after its founding, Brownsville “became a center of American influence and American commerce on the Rio Grande.”¹²¹ The city’s status in the Lower Rio Grande Valley was solidified when Brownsville was designated as the seat of Cameron County on January 13, 1849. This part of South Texas was initially included in San Patricio County when Texas gained independence from Mexico. In 1846, Nueces County was formed from San Patricio County. The state government created Cameron County out of Nueces County after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; the first county seat was the town of Santa Rita five miles upriver from Fort Brown.¹²² Through the efforts of local businessmen, Brownsville was voted county seat instead. Brownsville. Helen Chapman, wife of Fort Brown’s first Quartermaster William Chapman, noted that “Cameron County was laid off from Nueces, and includes the towns of Brownsville, Santa Rita, and others of less note. Brownsville is by far the most flourishing town, and had received such a fair start that people of judgment think it cannot easily decline” the honor of being named the new county seat.¹²³ After Brownsville became the new county seat, the city soon replaced Matamoros as the leading trade center for northern Mexico.¹²⁴ This was further impacted by a population increase with refugees from Matamoros as well as Forty-niners taking the Gila route to the west coast during the height of the California Gold Rush. Prospectors would arrive at Port Isabel by ship, take the Port Isabel Road to Brownsville, then proceed on the Military Road to California.¹²⁵ The road was built as a potential supply route for General Taylor’s troops during the Mexican-American War.¹²⁶ Steamboats transported most of the supplies upriver, but the Military Road—which went through most of the old towns of the Rio Grande valley—was utilized when the Rio Grande was low or when a quick trip was necessary as the trip on the meandering river took two days.¹²⁷ Along with the Old Port Isabel Road, the Old Military Road was used as a smuggle route to avoid Mexican duties. Through traffic on both routes “brought good business to the local stages and steamship lines, as well as to stores, hotels, and the farms and ranches providing them with supplies and food,” encouraging the Brownsville economy and commercial development of the Brownsville Historic District.¹²⁸ In 1850, the city built a plank boardwalk along Elizabeth and Levee Streets with a variety of commercial enterprises, including those for exchanging money, selling curios and candy, and offering entertainment.¹²⁹ At his bank built in 1857 (**1255 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 38**), Francisco Yturria “sold everything from fine French wine and cigars to lumber and nails.”¹³⁰ Yturria also established a telegraph line between Brownsville and Matamoros.¹³¹ It started at the Yturria Mercantile Building in the US Consulate, crossed the river, followed the Quartermaster Wall then went to the Yturria building in the 1200 block of Elizabeth Street via the alley between Elizabeth and Washington Streets.¹³² Other important antebellum, pre-railroad stores and other businesses included:

- La Joya/The Gem, 1848 (**400 East 13th Street; Photo No. 14, NRHP 1991**)¹³³

¹²¹ Lund, 7.

¹²² Garza and Long, “Cameron County.”

¹²³ Coker, 107.

¹²⁴ Garza and Long, “Brownsville.”

¹²⁵ Texas Escapes, “Old Military Road,” <http://www.texasescapes.com/KenRudine/Old-Military-Road-Rio-Grande-City-to-Brownsville-Texas.htm>, accessed August 4, 2017.

¹²⁶ “Military Highway: Not quite as old as many suppose,” February 14, 2009, http://www.valleymorningstar.com/news/article_11fe5088-88df-5db5-b986-d0b82c8218f2.html, accessed August 4, 2017.

¹²⁷ Ibid; Dixie L. Jones, *Handbook of Texas Online*, “Old Military Road,” accessed August 4, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/exo02>, uploaded on June 15, 2010, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹²⁸ Kearney and Knopp, 80.

¹²⁹ Kearney and Knopp, 80.

¹³⁰ Victoria Manning, “A Texas-sized tale,” *The Brownsville Herald*, April 11, 2007.

¹³¹ Bruce Aiken, “The Start of the Brownsville-Matamoros Telephone Link” in *Studies in Brownsville and Matamoros History*, edited by Milo Kearney and Anthony Knopp (Brownsville: University of Texas at Brownsville, 1995), 128.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/91000852/91000852.pdf>.

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- San Román Building, 1850 (**1231-1233 East Elizabeth Street**)
- Webb Miller Drug Store, 1852 (**409 East 13th Street; Photo No. 36**)
- Dolores de la Portilla Pena Building, 1855 (**1133-A Levee Street**)
- Parker's Row (**533-535 East 12th Street; Photo No. 27, No. 34, No 35**)
- Commercial & Agriculture Bank Building (**1159 East Elizabeth Street, Custom's House/Celaya Building; Photo No. 33**)

These enterprises were situated in proximity to trade and commercial activities at one of Brownsville's two commercial nodes—near the river or in close proximity to the city's new open-air Market Square established in 1850.

Commercial Activity during the Civil War

For much of the Civil War, Brownsville flourished in spite of Union blockade of southern Confederate ports and "immense trade" was established "bringing the dual blessing of wealth and comparative peace along the border."¹³⁴ "After the Union Navy succeeded in blockading most Southern ports, the Confederacy sought other opportunities to ship cotton to Europe in return for ammunition, medicines, and other war supplies."¹³⁵ Trade moved inland from the neutral Mexican port of Bagdad to Brownsville after Union forces captured Port Isabel. Brownsville then became a prominent player in the Civil War, earning the title "back door to the Confederacy" by virtue of the fact that trade goods—especially cotton—could be taken to Mexico and shipped out to avoid the Union blockade of Confederate ports.¹³⁶ Further, the war brought increased trade to Matamoros, as Mexican ships departing from Mexican ports were not blockaded by Union troops.¹³⁷ As the region became the primary point of departure for Southern cotton, people from the Confederacy and Europe immigrated there in hopes of profiting off the sudden trade boom. The bustling Rio Grande cotton trade enabled Confederate troops to secure arms and ammunition from Europe in exchange for this cotton, and thus enterprising builders rushed to construct new commercial and residential buildings to accommodate the influx of goods and people.¹³⁸ Among these were two commercial buildings at the corner of East Elizabeth and East 13th Streets—the Metropolitan Building built by Robert Dalzell (not extant) served as the US Customhouse and bonded warehouse while the three-story brick annex at the rear of the Miller Hotel (not extant) housed additional hotel rooms and an office to serve that business' growing clientele.

The Arrival of the Railroad and Post-Civil War Commercial Activity

Before rail service reached Brownsville in 1872, active steamboat trade on the Rio Grande provided the primary means for transporting goods to and from the city. Bringing contraband to Bagdad helped the city to remain economically viable during the Civil War. After the war, this trade network collapsed, and the city's economy became stagnant. The city failed to regain its antebellum and Civil War-era prosperity. In fact, much of state was slow to recover during the Reconstruction Period, but the economy began to rebound in more populated areas of the state, led, in part, to the resumption of railroad construction. Because of its relatively isolated location away from population centers, Brownsville remained off the evolving rail network as railroads emanating from other Texas coastal communities such as Corpus Christi and Galveston grew with increased trade spawned by the advent of rail service. As a consequence, Brownsville continued to rely primarily through maritime trade with New Orleans.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ Chatfield, 1.

¹³⁵ Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹³⁶ City of Brownsville, "About Brownsville," <http://www.cob.us/822/About-Brownsville> (accessed August 4, 2017).

¹³⁷ James W. Daddysman, *The Matamoros Trade: Confederate Commerce, Diplomacy, and Intrigue* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984).

¹³⁸ Fox, "Architecture in Brownsville," 207.

¹³⁹ Young, "Port Isabel and Rio Grande Valley Railroad;" and Fox, "Architecture in Brownsville," 203.

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The Rio Grande Railroad, a narrow-gauge line from Point Isabel, was the first rail to extend service to Brownsville; it arrived in 1872.¹⁴⁰ With the terminus of the line seven blocks north of the river, businessmen seized the opportunity to develop an industrial area at the northeastern periphery of the city populated with concerns such as lumber yards and hide yards. Several Brownsville entrepreneurs, such as José Fernández, had businesses associated with ranching and farming industries in this area, the goods for would have been moved in and out by rail. By the mid-1870s, Brownsville experienced a modest recovery signaled by the construction of new commercial buildings throughout the downtown core such as the José Fernández Building (**1115 East Washington Street; Photo No. 42**) in 1882. Brownsville retained a degree of seclusion from South Texas and the rest of the country without a stronger link to the growing national railroad system.¹⁴¹ In 1883, the first Cameron County courthouse building was erected at the corner of East 12th and East Jefferson Streets. Connectivity to goods and services in Brownsville between the Rio Grande Railway and shipping activity at the river was enhanced with the installation of the mule-powered spur line along East 12th Street in 1883. Eventually, Brownsville's economy rebounded; by 1884 the city had two banks, three churches, two ice houses, and a cotton gin.¹⁴²

In the 1890s, Brownsville, with Laredo, served the largest geographic markets in the Rio Grande Valley. As such, the city's economy could support a "diverse array" of businesses. Customers from northern Mexico, small towns nearby, and surrounding ranches came to Brownsville to obtain goods they could not elsewhere. "Advertisements for Brownsville and Laredo businesses in the *Texas State Gazetteer* included general stores, grocery stores, meat markets, saloons, drugstores, liquor stores, cigar shops, saddlery makers, millineries, dressmakers, jewelers, and hardware dealers."¹⁴³ In 1893, the "lines of business and professional employments pursued in Brownsville" were many and varied according to the list of "Trades and Manufacturers" presented by Chatfield in his *Twin Cities* compendium:

Table 3. Historic Business types in 1893

Type of Business	No. of Establishments	Type of Business	No. of Establishments
Wholesale Merchants	9	Bakeries	7
General Merchandise	7	Bookbinderies	2
Dry Goods	9	Newspapers (Daily)	1
Groceries	13	Newspapers (Semi-Weekly) Spanish	2
Merchandise Brokers	5	Job Printing	2
Barber Shops	9	Ice Factories	2
Boots and Shoes	9	Sugar Refineries	1
Clothing	3	Steamship Lines	1
Furniture	2	River Navigation Lines	1
Harness Makers	2	Railroad Offices	1
Hardware	3	Express Offices	2
Hides and Lumber	2	Telegraph Offices	3
Pawnbrokers	3	National Banks	1

¹⁴⁰ *Handbook of Texas Online*, George C. Werner, "Rio Grande Railroad," accessed September 11, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqr07>. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

¹⁴¹ HHM & Associates, Inc., City of Brownsville Historic Resources Survey Draft Report, prepared for the City of Brownsville, February 2018, 8.

¹⁴² Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹⁴³ Dewey, 104.

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Type of Business	No. of Establishments	Type of Business	No. of Establishments
Tinsmiths	2	Ferry Companies	1
Cigars and Tobacco	3	Stage Companies	2
Machine Shops	1	Land & Improvement Companies	1
Blacksmiths	2	Real Estate Agents	2
Drugs and Medicines	2	Attorneys at Law	8
Restaurants	5	Commissioners of Deeds	3
Merchant Tailors	2	Fruit Farms	1

The variety of commercial establishments in the city is visible at the 1894 Sanborn map. Among them are many corner stores established in the 1890s with catchy names to attract customers (e.g., El Globo Nuevo, La Libertad). Brownsville's status in the growing South Texas region was signified with the construction of the federal building at the corner of East Elizabeth and East 10th Streets in 1892 to house a courthouse, custom house and post office (not extant).¹⁴⁴

Irrigation and Expanded Farming

Despite a period of commercial stasis through the turn-of-the-twentieth century, Brownsville's downtown core continued to grow. By the end of the nineteenth century, "the erosions from the banks [of the Rio Grande] and the large amount of water diverted from the channel for irrigation purposes" above Brownsville, "gradually impeded navigation."¹⁴⁵ As opposed to being able to navigate upriver, large steamships were forced to dock off Brazos Santiago while lighter ships docked at the Rio Grande Railroad Company's wharf at Point Isabel.¹⁴⁶ These ill effects to the shipping industry were alleviated by the river itself which deposited a rich alluvial soil that allowed for more productive crop cultivation at less expense.¹⁴⁷ As a result, farmers from Midwestern and northeastern states became increasingly attracted to and interested in relocating to the Rio Grande Valley.¹⁴⁸ Agricultural pursuits were also enriched when George Brulay successfully introduced South Texas irrigation on a small scale on this plantation outside of Brownsville in 1876.¹⁴⁹ The led to larger scale crop production, including sugar. Families like the Brulays had a rural plantation but maintained offices and, sometimes, a residence in downtown Brownsville.

After 1900, business owners increasingly specialized as Brownsville's population grew and as the region became more integrated into the state and national economy. In 1901, R. G. Dun & Co. listed a total of 54 businesses in Brownsville, 13 were general stores.¹⁵⁰ Brownsville experienced further, substantive growth with the arrival of the St.L.B.&M. Railroad in 1904. With a nationally connected rail line, "passengers could travel by rail from Brownsville to anywhere in the U.S. while farmers and merchants could ship their wares to any market in Texas or the U.S."¹⁵¹ Farmers from northern states arrived in Brownsville and the Rio Grande Valley in even larger numbers with the new rail link.¹⁵² The area was open for settlement and large-scale truck farming. Influenced by booster agents, settlers from other parts of

¹⁴⁴ HHM & Associates, Inc., 10.

¹⁴⁵ Chatfield, 1.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Garza and Long, "Cameron County."

¹⁵⁰ Dewey, 105.

¹⁵¹ City of Brownsville, "About Brownsville."

¹⁵² Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

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the US arrived in Brownsville, changing the city's ethnic makeup and land use patterns.¹⁵³ Irrigation became even more intensive, and the H. G. Stillwell's planting of the first commercial citrus orchard in the area paved the way for citrus fruit culture to become a leading industry in the Rio Grande Valley.¹⁵⁴ With a more direct route to major trade centers such as Houston and the abundance of cheap irrigable land, the farming of truck crops, particularly citrus fruits, flourished in the lower Rio Grande Valley. As local farmers acquired access to more advanced transportation and irrigation methods, they gained increased wealth affording them the capability to purchase more imported goods from local merchants.¹⁵⁵ Thanks to the railroad and irrigation, the Valley became a major agricultural center.

Leadership emerged as business developers and women's groups created organizations to promote city and civic improvements. In 1907, Brownsville got its first electric and water plants after local residents unanimously voted for the issuance of bonds to construct a utility system.¹⁵⁶ The increase in population and tax revenue allowed the local government to construct new infrastructure, such as a car and rail bridge connecting Brownsville to Matamoros in 1910 as well as a new county courthouse (**1150 East Madison Street; Photo No. 12, NRHP 1980¹⁵⁷**) in 1912. The downtown city market was remodeled in 1912 and was a center for social activity and commerce.¹⁵⁸

Automobiles and Tourism

With the influx of new residents to Brownsville, as well as the number of automobile tourists and travelers that came to or passed through the city, many businesses that were entertainment-oriented or served motorists—hotels, restaurants, movie theaters—sprang up along the border between 1900 and 1930.¹⁵⁹ Brownsville was no exception. A historic photograph from around 1915 shows the large number of bars and saloons that were present on Elizabeth Street (fig. 8-32). Among the many hotels that opened throughout the Brownsville Historic District were:

- Park Hotel, 1906 (**1150 East Adams Street**)
- Travelers Hotel, 1919 (**1147 East Levee Street**)
- DeWalt Hotel, 1926 (**1107 East Levee Street**)
- Alberta Apartments, 1927 (**1302 East Elizabeth Street**)
- Hotel Cameron, 1927 (**900 East Washington Street**)
- Hotel El Jardin, 1927 (**1144 East Levee Street**)

Figure 8-33 depicts the number of movie theaters that opened throughout Brownsville's downtown core.¹⁶⁰ Those which remained in business for some years were:

- Electric Theater, 1908 (not extant)
- Dittman Theater, 1910 (1118 East Washington Street; present-day **1114 East Washington Street**)

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Hardy·Heck·Moore, Inc., 16.

¹⁵⁶ Brownsville Convention and Visitors Bureau, "Discover Brownsville's Historic Places," https://brownsville.org/tour/history/historic-places/?doing_wp_cron=1528151045.9873120784759521484375, accessed June 4, 2018.

¹⁵⁷ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/80004084/80004084.pdf>.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Dewey, 106.

¹⁶⁰ Bronsbil Estacion, "The Dreamland, El Tiro and Teatro Mexico," April 24, 2016, <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2015/04/the-dreamland-el-tiro-and-teatro-mexico.html>, accessed December 19, 2017; Bronsbil Estacion, "The Queen Theater in Brownsville, Texas," <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2016/08/the-queen-theater-in-brownsville-texas.html>, August 21, 2016, accessed December 19, 2017.

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- Dreamland Theater, 1913 (**1100 East Washington Street**)¹⁶¹
- Queen Theater, 1916 (1107 Elizabeth Street;¹⁶² relocated to **1152 East Elizabeth Street** in 1926)
- Capitol Theater, 1928 (**1101 East Levee Street**)¹⁶³

Prominent department stores also gained a presence in the Brownsville Historic District in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1927, Kress Co. occupied the turn-of-the-century commercial building (**1031 East Elizabeth Street**) next to the 1892 federal building in the 1000 block of East Elizabeth Street.

The state's emerging highway system during the 1910s and 1920s influenced the development patterns of Brownsville's downtown core and encouraged the opening of new businesses, particularly those specifically auto-related. "Brownsville had one car dealership in 1910. By 1925, it had at least twenty-one automobile-related businesses and sixty-eight by 1935."¹⁶⁴ Among the most prominent was the Patterson Motor Company which took up north side of 900 block of Elizabeth Street (not extant). Automobile traffic prompted the construction of the Gateway Bridge which was completed in 1928. With the arrival of the bridge. As a result, the Brownsville-Matamoros Ferry ceased operations on July 31, 1928.¹⁶⁵ The boardwalk that had been a part of Brownsville's river scene at the southwestern edge of the Brownsville Historic District was removed as the need for ferries disappeared with the construction of the Gateway Bridge.¹⁶⁶

Brownsville gained another economic boost when, in December 1928, voters approved the establishment of the Brownsville Navigation District and \$2 million in bonds to build the ship channel which would provide a deep-sea outlet to and from any port in the world.¹⁶⁷ The work was not completed until 1933 when, after a major hurricane hit the area, the Public Works Administration lent money to the district. The port of Brownsville, located five miles northeast of the city, officially opened on May 15, 1936.¹⁶⁸ Its activity led to the establishment of offices to ship/transport locally grown agricultural goods from Brownsville. The downtown became a hub of port operations even though the port was miles away from downtown. During the Depression years, the opening of the Port of Brownsville and the inauguration of Charro Days—an annual Mexican-themed, bi-cultural festival—"helped ease matters from an economic and social perspective."¹⁶⁹ Brownsville economy remained viable and diverse—by 1938, R. G. Dun & Company listed 369 businesses in the city, only two were general stores."¹⁷⁰ This prosperity continued into the next decade. During World War II, Fort Brown became a training base for the 124th Cavalry. Although the government deactivated it in 1945, buildings still survive on campus.

¹⁶¹ Around 1937, this location became Teatro El Tiro.

¹⁶² This location became the Texas Theater; the building is not extant. Bronsbil Estacion, "The Queen Theater in Brownsville, Texas."

¹⁶³ Other theaters which opened in Brownsville but were short-lived included The Imperial (1909), Star (1910), Fox (1912), Casino (1912), Washington (1914), Gem (1914), and Crystal Theaters. Bronsbil Estacion, "Adolf Dittman (was Dittmann)," April 9, 2015, <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2015/04/adolf-dittman-was-dittmann.html>, accessed December 19, 2017.

¹⁶⁴ Dewey, 105-106.

¹⁶⁵ "Brownsville/Matamoros ferry boar history on our border," <http://bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com/2016/08/brownsville-matamoros-ferry-boat-by.html>, accessed December 19, 2017.

¹⁶⁶ Kearney and Knopp, 80.

¹⁶⁷ Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ https://brownsville.org/tour/history/historic-places/?doing_wp_cron=1528151045.9873120784759521484375

¹⁷⁰ Dewey, 105.

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Brownsville's Post-World War II Economy

Following the end of the war, a nationwide rural-to-urban movement developed, and Brownsville's population grew tremendously. Shipping and agri-business continued to provide the basis for the local economy, and, during the late 1940s, Brownsville saw a rise in the area's seafood shipping industry as large numbers of Texas and Louisiana shrimpers moved to the area. In the late 1940s, the Port of Brownsville's was included in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway System, allowing for increased water freight shipping through the city. Large-scale cotton farming also took hold in Brownsville's rural areas, and cotton-related manufacturing businesses emerged within the city.¹⁷¹ Brownsville became the world's leading exporter of cotton for a time.¹⁷² The movie theater remained one of the commercial enterprises that attracted the city's growing population. The late 1940s saw the opening of several new theaters while others were established in pre-existing cinemas:

- Teatro Mexico, 1945 (opened at site of former Dreamland/El Tiro)
- Teatro Iris, 1946 (**1037 East Washington Street**)
- Grande/Río Theater, 1948 (opened at site of former Dittman Theater; operated until 1969)
- Majestic Theater, 1949 (**1002 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 31**)¹⁷³

Among large retailers that were established in the Brownsville Downton Historic District were H.E.B. Grocery Store (**924 East Elizabeth Street**) and the Sears Roebuck and Company (**925 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 52**), which was built on the site where Patteson Motor Company had been built in the late 1920s. The integration of these retailers are examples of the westward expansion of Brownsville's downtown. The H.E.B. Grocery Store included a parking lot to accommodate increased use of automobiles.

In the 1940s and 1950s, business owners began modernizing building signage with electricity or façades of updated materials to attract and retain customers. When the Combe office and retail building (**1032 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 53**), constructed by 1907, became the home of J. C. Penney Co. in 1948, a suspended slipcover was placed over the original façade. Across the street, the Kress Co. (**1031 East Elizabeth Street**) refaced its department store building with a blank façade in 1959. This trend, reflecting modernization and the companies' integration into the national economy, has continued throughout the historic district.

Although Hurricane Beulah damaged portions of the Brownsville's historic downtown core in 1967, the 1960s and 1970s were prosperous years for Brownsville.¹⁷⁴ The Port of Brownsville, "fueled by the oil and offshore drilling rig industry and the development of the twin-plant or maquiladoras system of industry along the border," continued to contribute to the city's growth.¹⁷⁵ Likewise, endeavors such as the opening of the Gladys Porter Zoo in 1971 and continued expansion of the highway system made Brownsville an important South Texas tourist destination. As a result, business owners and large retailers, such as Woolworth's (**1335 East Elizabeth Street**), sustained operations in downtown Brownsville. Modernization also meant the demolition of several historic businesses to make way for modern commercial buildings. In 1967, the Metropolitan Building and Miller Hotel were demolished.

In the 1980s, Brownsville faced economic difficulty when a worldwide collapse of oil prices resulted in the devaluation of the *peso*. In the 1990s, Brownsville began to prosper once again with improvement in the Port of Brownsville's railway business, growth of the ship building and dismantling business, and positive impact of the

¹⁷¹ HHM, 17; Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹⁷² Garza and Long, "Brownsville."

¹⁷³ Bronsbil Estacion, "The Dreamland, El Tiro and Teatro Mexico;" Bronsbil Estacion, "Adolf Dittman (was Dittmann)."

¹⁷⁴ Brownsville Convention and Visitors Bureau, "Discover Brownsville's Historic Places."

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

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foreign trade zone on cargo moving in and out of the city. These trends have brought both stability and sustainability to Brownsville's economy. In turn, the commercial enterprise in the city's historic core remains active and vibrant despite changes in goods and services as well as the consumer base.

Criterion C: Architecture

Brownsville's architectural significance emanates from its association with well-known styles and forms typical of the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, and the rest of the United States during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The city's architecture reflects the ways in which transportation routes developed and improved, first through maritime shipping routes and then through railroads and interstate highways, thus increasing the availability and affordability of building materials. New construction often employed styles and forms popularized by magazines and pattern books, as well as the builders and designers who immigrated to Brownsville from Northern Mexico, New Orleans, and the eastern seaboard of the United States. The ways in which Brownsville developed, both as an urban center and in its architecture style, "consistently demonstrate the profound influence of Mexican cultural patterns on building typology and construction within a context of cultural exchange with the United States."¹⁷⁶

From the 1840s until the 1880s, Brownsville served as the primary trading city along the US-Mexican border, leading to further development, though the "surviving domestic architecture of this period displays greater adherence to contemporary Anglo-American building practices than does the commercial architecture."¹⁷⁷ The Stillman House, built in 1850, is one of the first examples of Greek Revival architecture in Brownsville and today stands as one of the city's oldest buildings (**1325 East Washington Street; Photo No. 22, NRHP 1979¹⁷⁸**). Locally made brick started replacing wood and adobe in construction, allowing "designers to build 2-story structures and embellish their simple designs with corbelled brick cornices and pilasters based on pattern books."¹⁷⁹ When the economy prospered, people would add decorative elements to new and existing architecture, such as cornices, lintels, balconies, and carved doors, continuing to use traditional Spanish colonial and Mexican building techniques. Many travelers noted the impressive quality of the town's numerous brick buildings, since brick construction remained uncommon in other towns such as "Galveston and Houston, where brick construction was rare until after the U.S. annexed Texas, and even then, was almost never used for residential construction."¹⁸⁰

Despite the increase in railroads through the rest of the US, Brownsville connected to the rest of the country primarily through maritime trade, largely through New Orleans. Many railroads bypassed the city along the gulf, save for the Rio Grande Railroad connecting Brownsville to Point Isabel in 1871-72, and it remained isolated from national railroads until 1904.¹⁸¹ By the mid-1870s, Brownsville experienced a modest recovery signaled by the construction of new commercial buildings throughout the downtown core such as the Alonso Building in 1877 (510 East Saint Charles Street) and the Fernandez and Laiseca Building in 1882 (**1144 East Madison Street; Photo No. 54, NRHP 2018**). The city retained a degree of seclusion from South Texas and the rest of the United States without a link to the growing national railroad system. Despite a period of commercial stasis through the turn of the twentieth century, Brownsville's downtown core continued to grow. In 1883, the first Cameron County courthouse building was erected at the corner of 12th and Jefferson Streets (**1131 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 17**). Brownsville's status in the growing South

¹⁷⁶ Urban Prospects, *The City of Brownsville Historic Resources Survey* (Prepared for the City of Brownsville, September 2000), 6.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹⁷⁸ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/79003448/79003448.pdf>.

¹⁷⁹ Amy Dase, *National Register Nomination: The Gem, Cameron County, Texas* (Austin, TX: Texas Historical Commission, April 1990; May 1991), 6.

¹⁸⁰ Stephen Fox, "Architecture in Brownsville: The 19th Century," in *Studies in Brownsville & Matamoros History*, ed. Milo Kearney, Anthony Knopp, and Antonio Zavaleta (Brownsville: The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College University Press, 1995), 206.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 203.

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Texas region was signified with the construction of the US Courthouse, US Customs House, and US Post Office building at the corner of Elizabeth and 10th Streets in 1892 (no longer extant).¹⁸²

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many residential, commercial, and public buildings in Brownsville exhibited Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival as well as Victorian-era stylistic influences, including Queen Anne and Folk Victorian.¹⁸³ Other revival styles, such as Classical, Colonial, and Tudor became popularized. Border Brick, another prominent style localized around the Rio Grande, emerged from a variety of vernacular building traditions, melding Creole, Spanish, and Mexican elements with that of the Greek Revival style. Buildings constructed in the early twentieth century and beyond reflect increasingly modern architectural styles, such as Craftsman and Prairie. Following the end of World War II, builders and architects began to construct in more modern styles, including Ranch, rejecting previous revival and regionally-specific styles.

Associated Builders and Architects

Samuel Wallace Brooks (1829-1903)

Born in 1829, Brooks grew up in Pennsylvania and Ohio before moving to New Orleans around 1850. There he established a successful lumber and building business and trained himself as an engineer and architect. As the Civil War raged in the south, Brooks moved to Matamoros, Tamaulipas, for the construction boom following the Union blockade of southern port cities. He then relocated across the border to Brownsville in 1878. There he became the area's "foremost architect, engineer, and builder" until the end of the nineteenth century, serving eight terms as the city's engineer.¹⁸⁴ Additionally, he built a substantial number of levees along the Rio Grande as well as buildings for the US Army at Fort Brown and Fort Ringgold.

Brooks designed and built the Brownsville Opera House, commonly known as the Vivier Opera House and later demolished in 1972, with Victorian architecture details. Inaugurated in November 1881 with a formal ball, the Opera House soon scoured for local talent, since "we were too far off the beaten track for any manager to risk the danger."¹⁸⁵ From 1889-1892, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury in D.C. designed the US Courthouse, Customhouse, and Post Office in Brownsville, with Brooks overseeing construction (all demolished in 1931). He built the 1892 Cameron County Courthouse, as designed by J. N. Preston & Son (**1131 East Jefferson Street; Photo No. 17**), in the Second Empire style. It has housed the Masonic Lodge since 1914 and the hurricane of 1933 destroyed many of its eclectic roof detailing.¹⁸⁶

Brooks' prolific body of work, as well as his civic leadership, shaped the architecture of both Brownsville and Matamoros for decades to come. Noting this, W. H. Chatfield profiled him extensively in his 1893 book, *The Twin*

¹⁸² HHM & Associates, Inc., *City of Brownsville Historic Resources Survey: Final Report* (On file at the Texas Historical Commission, 2018).

¹⁸³ Mark Lund, "Historic Architecture in Brownsville and Matamoros," in *Studies in Brownsville & Matamoros History*, ed. Milo Kearney, Anthony Knopp, and Antonio Zavaleta (Brownsville: The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College University Press, 1995), 193.

¹⁸⁴ Fox, "Architecture in Brownsville," 213.

¹⁸⁵ In a 2013 letter to the editor, Brownsville resident Jo Sobrino submitted excerpts of articles from *The Brownsville Herald* from the 1950s that "attempted to educate its readers about local history." Jo Sobrino, "Letters to the Editor: Revisiting Brownsville's Past," *Brownsville Herald*, March 14, 2013. http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/revisiting-brownsville-s-past/article_9fd9d294-8cf4-11e2-a8b1-001a4bcf6878.html

¹⁸⁶ Mass production of some components led to increasing eclecticism and blending of styles, as demonstrated by the Kowalski/Dennet House (**507 East Elizabeth Street**). This house is Brownsville's only surviving Second Empire-inspired house, with its mansard roof clad in decorative fish-scale shingles alongside Italianate brackets and porch detailing.

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Cities of the Border and the Country of the Rio Grande, making him the area's most famous architect. Under Brooks' design and construction, popular revivalist styles of the period became melded and merged with local, Creole, and northern Mexican architectural practices, helping create and define a style known today as Border Brick. Although several of his buildings are no longer extant and/or cannot be positively attributed to him due to a lack of surviving records, his designs and constructions greatly influenced contemporary and future architecture within Brownsville.¹⁸⁷

Atlee Bernard Ayers (1873-1969)

Born in Ohio, Atlee Ayers moved to Houston with his family in 1879. He later relocated to San Antonio, where he worked as a draftsman under architect B. F. Trester. He soon moved to New York to study architecture at the New York City Metropolitan Museum of Art. Afterwards, he opened his own practice in San Antonio, moved to Mexico, and later returned to Texas, where he served as the Texas State Architect. During his extensive career, he designed numerous homes in revival styles, including Colonial, Tudor, Classical, and Renaissance. Ayers was one of the first firms to build in Texas using Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style as an example. Some attribute his "sudden interest in Wrightian forms" to his hiring of George Willis, a former employee of Frank Lloyd Wright.¹⁸⁸

In Brownsville, Ayers designed the 1911 Merchant's National Bank, which cost over \$100,00 to construct (**1057 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 47**). This two-part Classical Revival commercial block was one of the first tall buildings in the city. The next year, Ayers designed the Cameron County Jail (**outside district at 1201 East Van Buren Street, NRHP 1995¹⁸⁹**) and the Cameron County Courthouse, later renamed the Dancy Building (**1150 East Madison Street; Photo No. 12**), which the Texas Historical Commission described as one of his "most splendid Classical Revival buildings."¹⁹⁰ Although Ayers designed a limited number of buildings in Brownsville, his monumental public buildings in the Classical Revival style set the tone and precedent for future downtown construction.

Page Brothers

English immigrant Charles Henry Page Sr. moved his family from St. Louis to Austin to work as a stonemason for the new Texas State Capitol Building. Two of his sons, Charles Henry Jr. (1876-1957) and Louis Page (1883-1934) would open their own architecture firm, Page Brothers, which quickly rose to prominence after they received the commission for the Texas Pavilion for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.¹⁹¹ The brothers specialized in large-scale public projects, including multiple courthouses across Texas. Many of their projects embraced the eclecticism of the late nineteenth

¹⁸⁷ Brooks' own Victorian I-plan house survives, although it has been relocated twice, and is now located at 623 E. Saint Charles Street. "S. W. Brooks Residence," Plaque, *Brownsville Heritage Trail*, 623 East Charles Street, Brownsville, TX. Brooks originally built his home on East 13th Street and it was moved to East Jackson Street sometime during the 1950s before the Big Brothers & Big Sisters of the Rio Grande Valley moved to its current location on East Saint Charles Street in 1986. See also: Lund, "Historic Architecture in Brownsville and Matamoros," 194.

¹⁸⁸ Ayres & Ayres Architects, Atlee Bernard Ayres (1873-1969), Robert Moss Ayres (1898-1977), Architectural drawings, photographs and records, 1894-1977, San Antonio, South and Central Texas, Alexander Architectural Archives, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin. <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utaaa/00041/aaa-00041.html>

¹⁸⁹ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/94001594/94001594.pdf>.

¹⁹⁰ Emma Perez-Trevio, "Restoring History," *Brownsville Herald*, October 30, 2005.

http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/restoring-history/article_55948302-ee24-5adc-88bf-3280c2bda508.html

¹⁹¹ Local builder-architect Burt McDonald trained Charles Henry Jr. in Austin. Charles Henry then opened the firm Makin and Page at nineteen. He soon struck out with his own firm in 1898 as C. H. Page, Jr., soon known as C. H. Page and Bro., before they rebranded as Page Brothers. Roxanne Williamson, "Page, Charles Henry," *Handbook of Texas Online*, uploaded on June 15, 2010. <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpa76>. Accessed May 22, 2018. See also: "Louis Page, Sr. Prominent Austin Leader, Expires: Funeral Services are Set Tuesday Morning for Architect," *The Austin American*, Nov. 6, 1934.

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century and classicism during the early twentieth century before embracing the modern movement.¹⁹² During the late 1920s in Brownsville, the Page Brothers designed several commercial and mixed-use buildings. The Seabury George & Taylor Buildings (**847 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 55**) and the Manatou Building (**1201 East Washington Street; Photo No. 56**) both include Classical Revival and Prairie stylistic influences, notably their dominant horizontality and ribbon windows. For the Alberta Apartments (**1302 East Elizabeth Street**) and the Aziz Brothers Store (**1101 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 57**), the architects incorporated Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival stylistic elements. The decision of Brownsville merchants to commission the nationally-known Page Brothers showcases the ways in which the town's architecture started to follow larger state and national building trends while retaining localized stylistic elements that reflected the city's culture and climate.

Association with Significant Architectural Styles and Forms

Border Brick

Emerging from a variety of vernacular building traditions, the highly-detailed style specific to the Rio Grande Valley developed, melding Creole, Spanish, and Mexican elements with that of Greek Revival style. Later known as Border Brick, this style fashioned classical entablatures with bricks, creating moldings and dentils over the openings.¹⁹³ Other common features include wooden windows, double-leaf doors, and segmental arches. Many examples use multiple French doors in place of windows on the primary façade, such as the San Fernando Building (**1106 East Adams Street; Photo No. 16**) and El Globo Nuevo (**1502 East Madison Street; Photo No. 29**), designed by Adolfo Garza. Two-story buildings often showcase balconies supported by decorated wrought-iron posts, and typically the street-level served a commercial venture, and the second-story functioned residentially, such as the Gem (**400 East 13th Street; Photo No. 14, NRHP 1991**¹⁹⁴). Local architects and builders, rather than architects hired from other cities, tended to build in this style. Some, like former sea captains Henry Miller and John Webb, switched careers to capitalize on the construction boon. The pervasiveness of the Border Brick style is perhaps best demonstrated by Matamoros merchant J. S. Cross' corner store (**1452 East Madison Street**) that "represents the perpetuation of the vernacular Border Brick style outside of the neighborhoods of Brownsville most affected by the modernizing impulse."¹⁹⁵

The architecture along the US-Mexico border highlights the diversity of cultures and materials and building traditions that traveled along the trading routes, especially within Brownsville and Matamoros, known as the "Twin Cities of the Border."¹⁹⁶ The architecture here owes its origins to Northern Mexico as well as New Orleans, as Matamoros developed into a bustling sea port with close ties to Louisiana. As architectural historian Stephen Fox documented in his 1998 article in *Texas Highways*, Creole brick masons flocked to Matamoros and Brownsville and "brought with them a familiarity with the most common house type in New Orleans, the Creole town house—built right up to the street line and enclosing an interior patio. This also happened to be the most common house type in north-eastern Mexico," perhaps unsurprisingly as both locales share a common colonial legacy from Spain.¹⁹⁷ Yet as Fox has argued, Brownsville, in contrast to Matamoros, "exhibited distinct types for dwelling houses, business houses, public

¹⁹² "Page Sutherland Page, LLP of Austin," *Texas Historical Commission*, <http://www.thc.texas.gov/page-southerland-page-llp-austin>. Accessed May 22, 2018.

¹⁹³ Dase, *National Register Nomination: The Gem, Cameron County*, 6.

¹⁹⁴ A copy of the nomination is available at: <https://atlas.thc.state.tx.us/NR/pdfs/91000852/91000852.pdf>.

¹⁹⁵ Urban Prospects, "Brownsville Historic Resource Survey," 16.

¹⁹⁶ W. H. Chatfield, *The Twin Cities of the Border and the Country of the Rio Grande* (New Orleans, 1893).

¹⁹⁷ Stephen Fox, "Twin Cities of the Rio Grande: The Border Brick Style in Brownsville and Matamoros," *Texas Highways* (January 1988), 36.

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buildings, and religious buildings, rather than one dominant building types which was adapted to a multitude of uses.”¹⁹⁸

Victorian Era Styles

The term “Victorian” refers to the long reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) rather than a rigid stylistic definition, including Second Empire, Stick, Queen Anne, Shingle, Richardsonian Romanesque, and Folk Victorian. Several residential, commercial, and public buildings in Brownsville exhibit Victorian-era stylistic influences, including late Victorian, Queen Anne, and Folk Victorian, built from approximately 1870 until 1910.¹⁹⁹ Brownsville Victorian architecture remains notable for the ways in which designers continued subscribing to the style years after it fell out of fashion in the rest of the US, largely due to the city’s isolation from national railroads. Other small public and commercial buildings followed this style, such as the J.L. Putegnat & Brother Building (**1141 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 45**), but many of these were demolished throughout the twentieth century, including the Opera House. Victorian stylistic influences remained pervasive within residential architecture, though builders localized the style to better adapt to Brownsville’s climate. The Folk Victorian style simplifies and reduces costly ornamentation and thus became a more commonly built type throughout the US. Many Folk Victorian houses appear in Brownsville, such as the houses at **608 East Adams Street** and **818 East 9th Street**. These houses are characterized by their medium-pitched gabled roofs; decorative shingles; and inset porches with front ell, and ornamental railings, posts, and brackets. The 1904 Celaya House (**504 East Saint Francis Street**) designed by A. Rendon for Augustine and Laura Celaya for \$3,000, is a two-story brick Queen Anne residence with Italianate influences, characterized by a pair of five-sided two-story projecting bays on either side of the rounded-corner triangular corner. Its distinguished two-story entry porch includes turned wood posts, turned spindle balustrades, decorative brackets, and dentil moulding. The Celaya House stands as a premier example of how Rendon localized Queen Anne architecture, specifically through its 13 inch thick adobe brick walls, moveable vented shutters, and the way in which he oriented the site along the corner to best capture prevailing breezes off the Gulf.²⁰⁰

Americanization-Era Styles

Once connected to the larger US via railroad in 1904, builders and architects in Brownsville began to modernize away from Victorian and Border Brick styles. Some buildings, such as the José Besteiro y Hermano Building from 1908 (**1155 East Adams Street**) and the P. V. Farías & Brother Building (**1128 East Washington Street; Photo No. 21**) demonstrate the ways in which early modern buildings in Brownsville melded modern commercial styles with traditional elements of Border Brick.²⁰¹ Many people, including members of the local government and elites within Brownsville, “embraced modernization and economic development, which were implicitly tied to a program of ‘Americanization,’ indicating the extent to which the indigenous Mexican culture of the border was associated with under-development.”²⁰² Modern architecture, designed to be both utilitarian and accessible, also held wide-spread appeal for people across all economic and social classes in Brownsville.

During the 1920-1940s, several twentieth century revival styles, such as Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival, became common expressions for both domestic and commercial buildings. Both styles easily scaled for

¹⁹⁸ Fox, “Architecture in Brownsville,” 202.

¹⁹⁹ Lund, “Historic Architecture in Brownsville and Matamoros,” 193.

²⁰⁰ Laura Celaya G. Barber, Lucie Starr G. Schwartz, Sarah Ward G. McNair, with John Ferguson, THC, *National Register Nomination: Augustine Celaya House, Cameron County, Texas* (Austin, TX: Texas Historical Commission, Feb. 1986), 2.

²⁰¹ The Besteiro building “possess a dentil frieze combined with plate glass display windows (in place of shuttered French doors) and a chamfered corner entrance made possible by the insertion of a cast iron column.” Urban Prospects, *Brownsville Historic Resource Survey*, 16.

²⁰² Ibid.

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apartment buildings, such as the mid-1930 Mission Revival apartments at **1264 East Monroe Street (Photo No. 58)**. In Brownsville, commercial buildings tended to incorporate Mission Revival elements, such as the 1925 Garcia-Gomez Champion Wholesale Grocery (**1102 East Madison Street**); however, some larger commercial buildings display elements of both styles, such as the two-story stucco Aziz Brothers Store built in 1927 (**1101 East Elizabeth Street, Photo No. 57**). Some architectural historians have noted that many wealthy Anglo-American families tended not to build following Spanish Colonial or Mission Revival.²⁰³ Instead, they tended to build in other revival styles, tending more towards Italian and northern European influences. Merchant Henry Bollack built his three-story two-part commercial block building with Italianate form and decorative elements in 1911 (**1223 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 18**).

Variations on Modern Movement

After World War I, architects and builders began to design and erect buildings with a variety of modernistic and modern architectural stylistic influences. The Prairie style, brought to Texas by followers of Frank Lloyd Wright, appeared in some commercial buildings, such as The Seabury George & Taylor Buildings (**847 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 55**) the J. L. Calderoni Building (**1136 East Washington Street**) and the Manatou Building (**1201 East Washington Street; Photo No. 56**).²⁰⁴ The Craftsman Bungalow, one of the most prolific house-types in early twentieth century America, became increasingly popular in Brownsville (**828 East 14th Street; 1323 East Jefferson Street; 1226 East Monroe Street; Photo No. 10**). Thanks to a nationally-connected railroad, plans, materials, and even kits arrived in Brownsville, making this style of house more affordable and accessible to people across all income levels. Several lumberyards stood in proximity to the railroads and the historic district, such as the Frontier Lumber Company (corner of Saint Francis Street and 10th Street, no longer extant).

Following the end of the Great Depression and World War II, the majority of buildings were constructed with twentieth century modern aesthetics, especially for commercial construction with “storefront buildings constructed in party wall configuration to form solid street walls.”²⁰⁵ With a growing economy, Sears & Roebuck built a two-story two-part commercial block building with combined Modern and Art Deco stylistic influences in 1948 (**925 East Elizabeth Street, Photo No. 52**). J.C. Penny remodeled the 1910 Combe Building the same year, more closely following the tenets of Modern design, especially with its three-story enframed metal window wall (**1032 East Elizabeth Street, Photo No. 53**). In 1949, the Majestic Theatre Building opened next door (**1002 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 31**). It stands as a prominent and noteworthy example of the Modern style in Brownsville, distinguished by its green metal panels and marked by a theater marquee and neon sign that projects outward from the building. Built in 1927, Brownsville’s Kress Building originally displayed the terra cotta Art Deco stylings characteristic of the nation-wide “five and dime” stores (**1031 East Elizabeth Street; Photo No. 3**). As part of a larger campaign to show they were “smart, modern, [and] thrifty,” Kress resurfaced and remodeled this store in 1959, creating a black façade with modern-style lettering.²⁰⁶

One exception, to the Modernism taking hold in Brownsville’s downtown was the 1949 reconstruction of the City Market building (**1100 Market Square; Photo No. 15**) in a modernized Spanish Colonial Revival style as a nod to Brownsville’s Spanish and colonial roots. When the Market Square building was erected in 1850, like many of the city’s earliest institutional and commercial buildings, it displayed characteristics of the Border Brick Style and Spanish Colonial styles including a hipped roof with no overhand, brick detailing at the roof cornice, round arches, engaged

²⁰³ Ibid., 22.

²⁰⁴ Enrique Manatou also commissioned his house to be designed in the Prairie style, which stands as a rare example of residential Prairie design in borderlands Texas (**outside of district at 5 East Elizabeth Street**).

²⁰⁵ Urban Prospects, *Brownsville Historic Resource Survey*, 24.

²⁰⁶ “Kress Advertisement,” *Brownsville Herald*, November 15, 1959.

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pilasters, and a wrought iron balustrade. Many of these features were retained after the second floor was reduced following a hurricane in 1867 and through a significant enlargement and renovation in 1912. Following damage from another hurricane in 1933, the bell tower was destroyed, and the bell given to the Guadalupe Catholic Church.²⁰⁷ In 1949, the City Market underwent a significant renovation under San Antonio architect Ellis F. Albaugh, Jr., who implemented a Spanish Colonial Revival re-design. The breezeway between the main building and 1912 firehouse was enclosed and transformed into a stairwell, and a new stairwell constructed and the south end of the building. The open-air, ground floor market was enclosed. A large bell tower was erected at the southwest corner of the new stairwell and the exterior walls of the City Market were coated with "Monterey Plaster." The remaining portion of the south plaza was occupied by a Spanish-style water fountain and reflecting pool.²⁰⁸ The original bell was returned and installed in the cupola in 1974.²⁰⁹

Brownsville's Collection of Resources as a Whole

All of the styles and building plans and forms found within Brownsville, and the ways in which many of these overlap, demonstrate this historic district's architectural significance. Since the builders and designers represented in the district continued to use and build upon styles that were no longer considered in vogue in much of the rest of the US, their buildings stand today as remarkable examples of architectural conservatism and the ways in which Brownsville, unlike other towns and cities in Texas, did not participate in the swift succession of styles.²¹⁰ The district's architecture reflects the changing social, political, and economic forces within the city, especially the ways in which transportation transformed both architectural styles and materials. Vernacular buildings built without subscribing to a specific high style reflect the time in which they were built and used, with their forms and materials informed by other trends. As the Border Brick style remained clustered around the Rio Grande, the prevalence and prominence of such notable examples of it within Brownsville reflects the history of the American Civil War and the importance of cultural and economic exchange and trade across the border.

²⁰⁷ Fernandez, Request for Determination of Eligibility, 18.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 16, 18.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 19.

²¹⁰ Fox, "Architecture in Brownsville," 211.

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8. Statement of Significance

Architects and Builders (continuation from cover sheet)

Albaugh, Ellis F., Jr.
Ayres, Atlee B. and Robert M.
Bliss, Stanley W.
Brooks, Samuel W.
Calloway, A. A. & Co.
Cook & Company
Cueto, Andres
Elliot, S. B. & Co.
Ellis, Lyman
Fernandez family
Garza, Adolfo
Green, Herbert H.
Heister, Bowman
Holliday, Edward Guy
James-Dickinson Co.
Keralum, Father Pierre Yves
Montes family
Nix, J. M.
Page Bros.
Peeler, Henry A.
Preston, J. N. & Son
Ramon, Don Jose San
Rogers, A.
Siclen, W. D. Van
Torres, Baltasar
Tracy, M. E.
Whitmore, James A.
Woolridge, A. H.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 78.8919 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

Point	Longitude	Latitude
1	-97.496100	25.905500
2	-97.495800	25.905300
3	-97.495500	25.905500
4	-97.492000	25.902300
5	-97.493100	25.901400
6	-97.492800	25.901000
7	-97.493100	25.900700
8	-97.493400	25.901100
9	-97.493800	25.900800
10	-97.495200	25.902100
11	-97.495900	25.901500
12	-97.495200	25.900800
13	-97.497300	25.899100
14	-97.498800	25.900400
15	-97.499500	25.899900
16	-97.500200	25.900500
17	-97.499600	25.901100
18	-97.500300	25.901800
19	-97.500000	25.902100
20	-97.500600	25.902800
21	-97.500300	25.903100
22	-97.501000	25.903800
23	-97.500700	25.904100
24	-97.499900	25.903400
25	-97.499600	25.903700
26	-97.498900	25.903000

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundaries roughly follow East Levee Street from East 14th Street northwest to East 12th Street, then southwest to East St. Charles Street, then northwest to East 11th Street, then northeast to East Levee Street and northwest to East 10th Street and then head northeast to the alley between East Levee and East Elizabeth Streets where it heads northwest to East 9th Street, and then heads northeast to East Elizabeth Street where it turns northwest to East 8th Street. From East 8th Street, the boundary turns southeast down the alley between East Elizabeth and East Washington Streets, to East 9th Street where it turns northeast to East Washington Street where it heads southeast to East 10th Street. The boundary follows East 10th Street northeast to the alley between East Monroe and East Jackson Streets, where it then turns southeast to East 15th Street. The boundary heads southwest on East 15th Street to East Madison Street where it turns southeast to include the southern edge of the El Globe Nuevo property. The boundary wraps around this property and turns northwest onto the alley between East Madison and East Jefferson Streets to East 15 Street. The boundary heads southwest on East 15th Street to East Jefferson Street where it turns

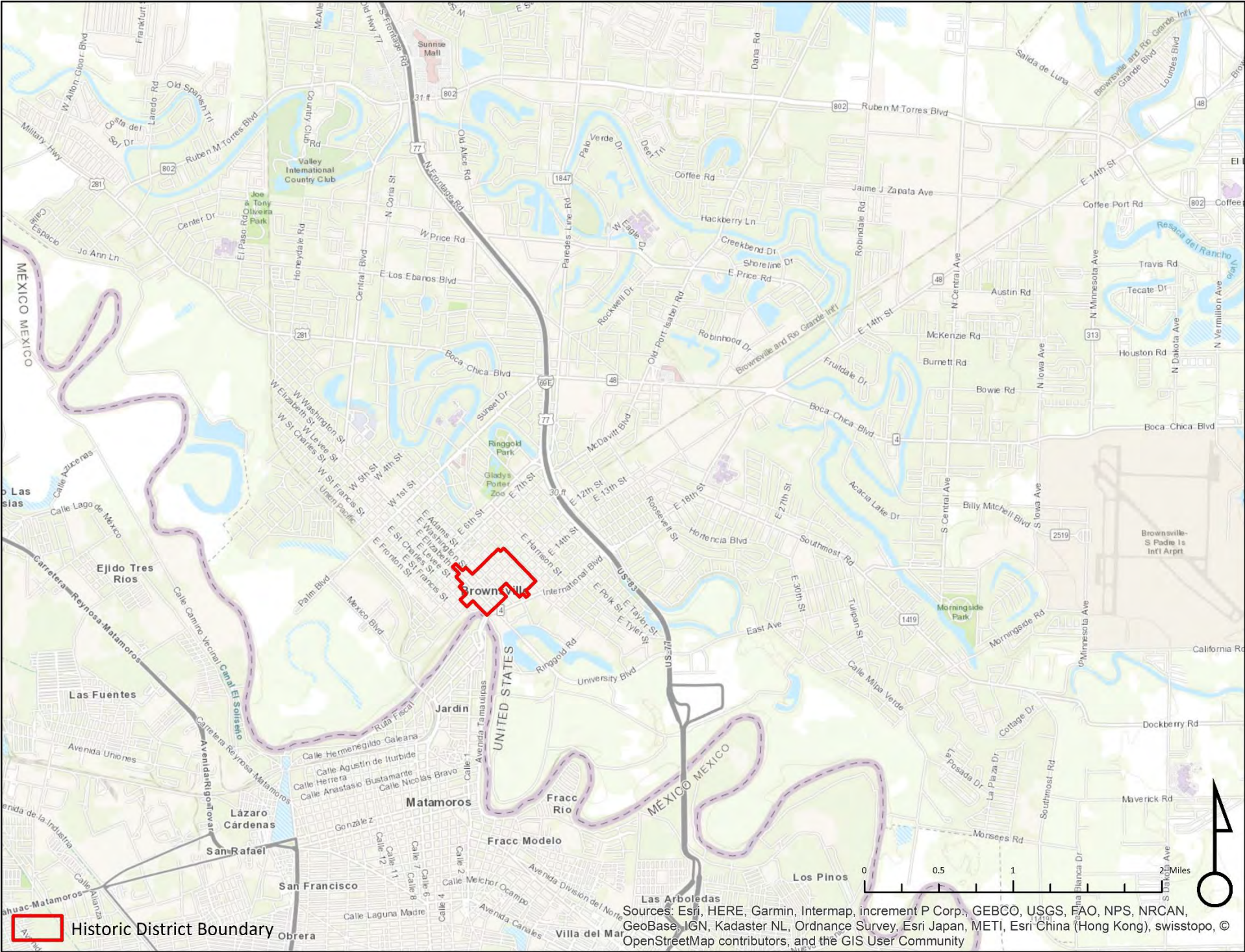
Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

northwest to East 13th Street and then southeast onto East Adams Street, and then southwest onto East 14th Street and then back to East Levee Street.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries of the Brownsville Historic District contain the largest intact concentration of historic resources that represent the founding, growth, and development of Brownsville. The boundaries were drawn to include significant commercial resources that reflect the city's history and include the historically and currently significant commercial streets, including East Elizabeth and East Washington Streets and East 13th and East 12th Streets. The boundaries also extend northeast to include important government, religious, and residential properties that reflect the growth of the city. The areas west and southwest of East Levee Street contain more vacant lots, more non-historic infill, and predominantly more industrial resources that differ in their significance. The areas north and east of the boundaries largely consist of residential areas. Though these resources share a similar significance with those resources within the district boundaries, the integrity of the buildings themselves and the cohesiveness of the streets are insufficient to convey this significance. The areas south of the boundaries, which contain a variety of commercial, residential, and government resources—both historic and non-historic—also do not retain sufficient integrity to convey any historical significance.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Maps



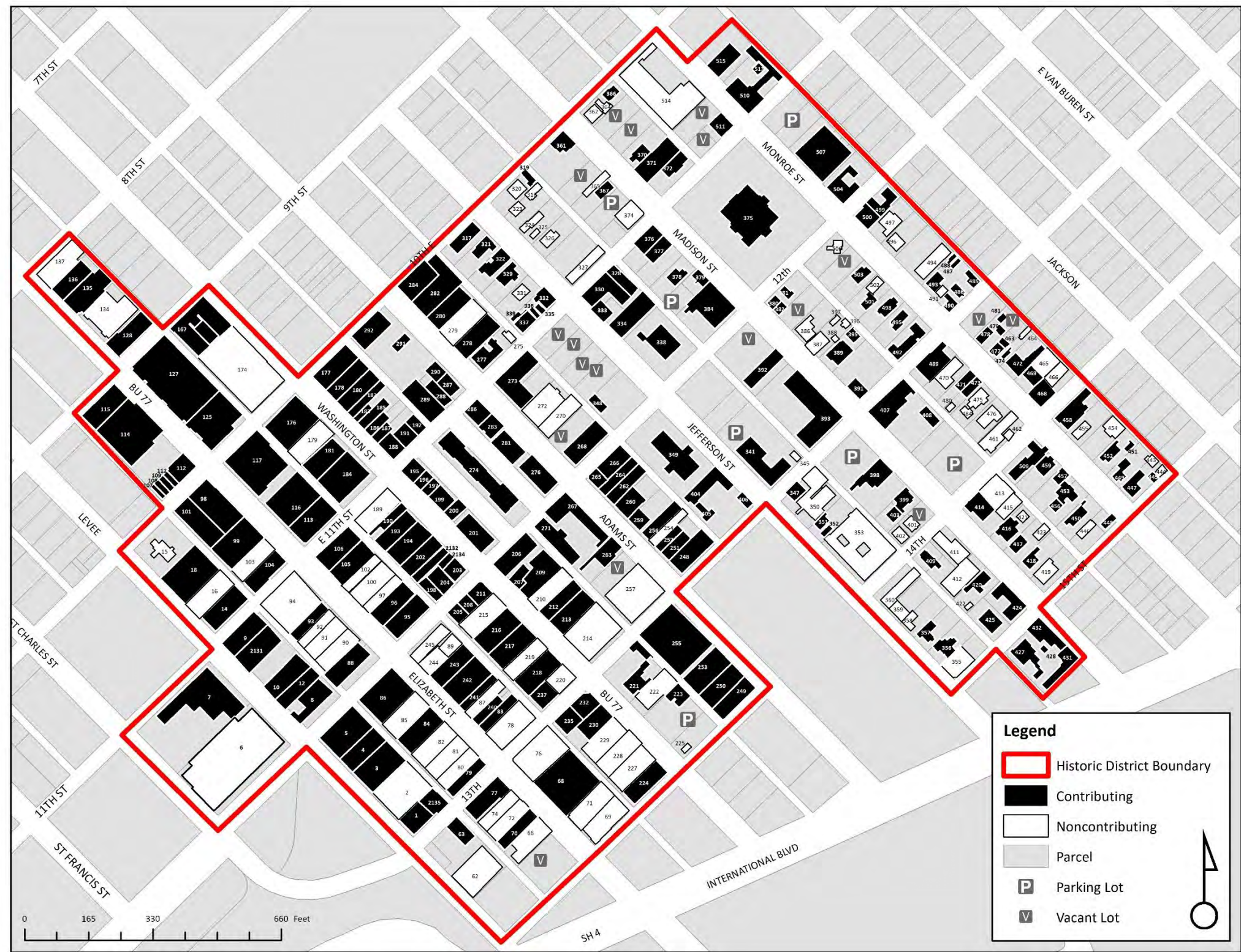
Map 1. Overlay showing current aerial view of Brownsville, Texas with boundaries of the Brownsville Historic District and latitude/longitude coordinates. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Map 2. Overlay showing current aerial view of Brownsville, Texas with boundaries of the Brownsville Historic District and latitude/longitude coordinates. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

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Map 3. Sketch map of the Brownsville Historic District with Boundaries and Contributing/ Noncontributing Resources. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

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Map 3a (southwest detail)

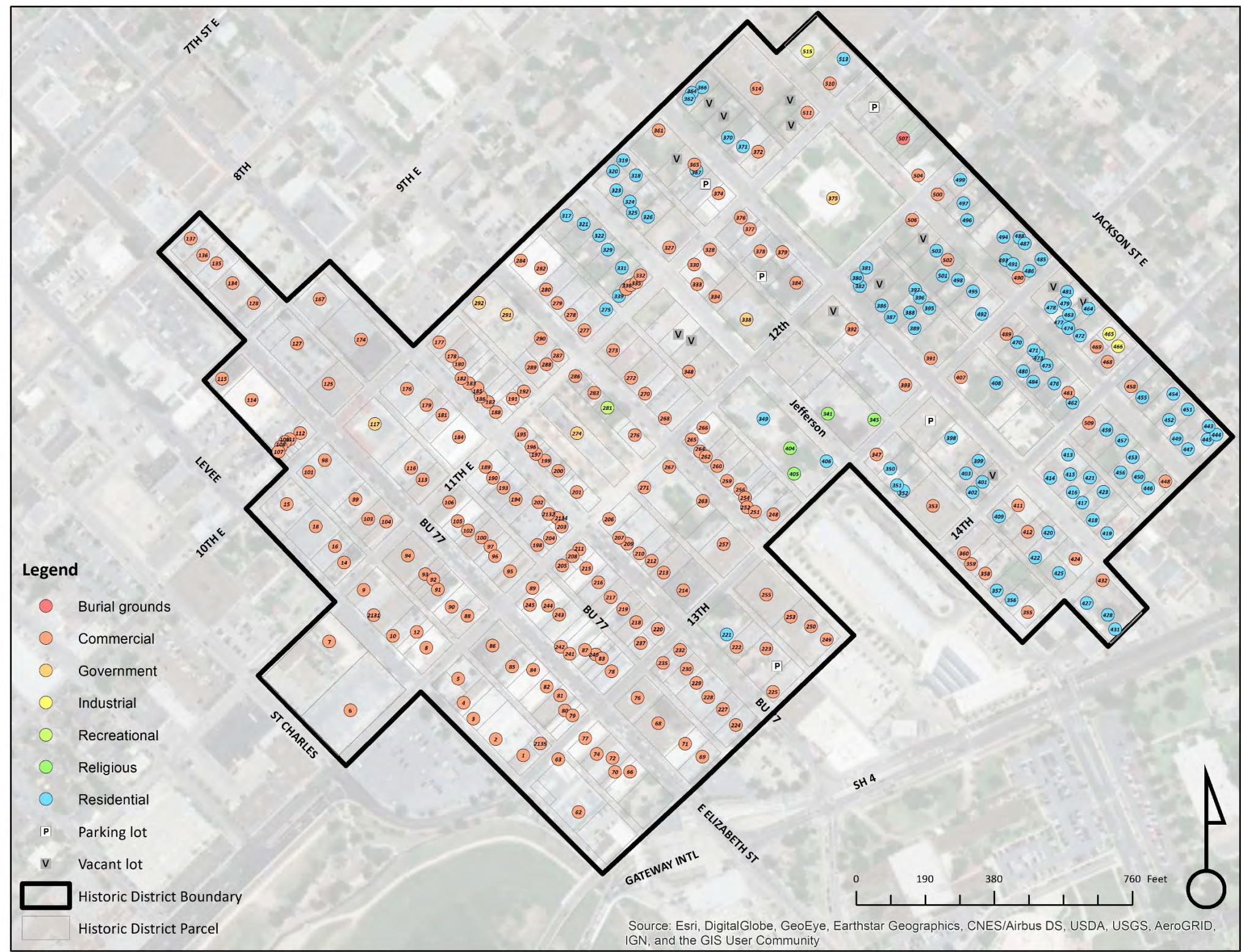


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Map 3b (northeast detail)

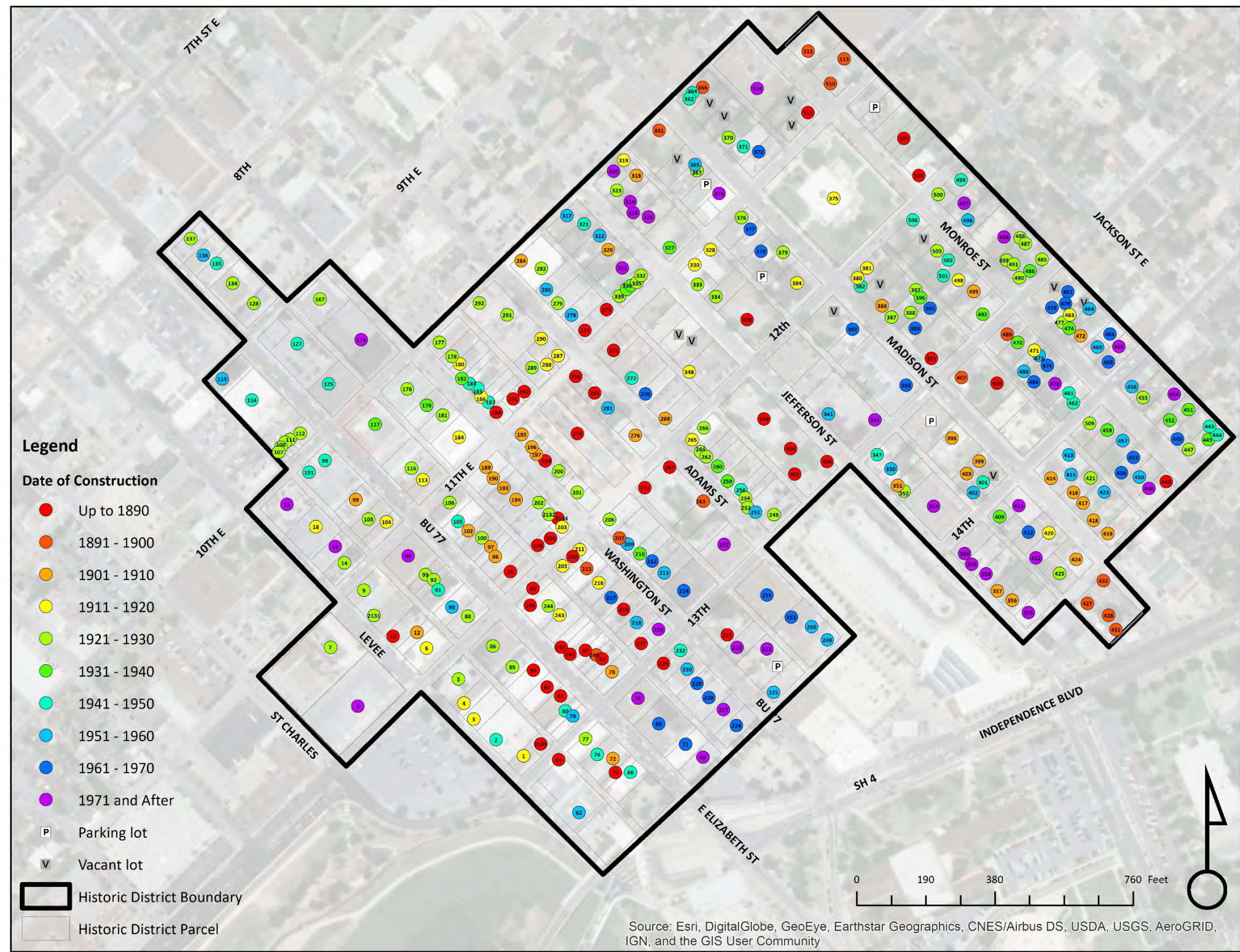


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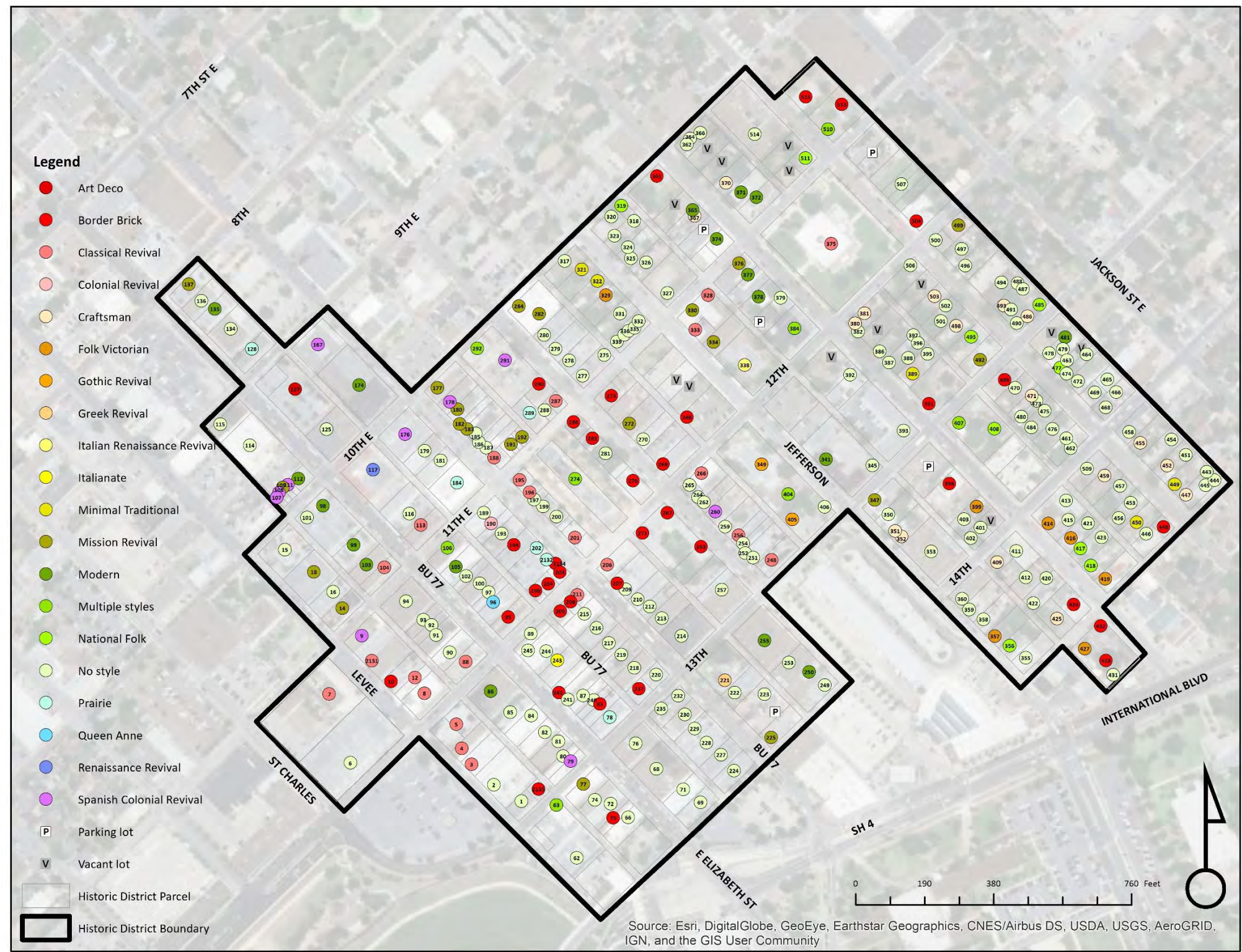
Map 4. Sketch map of the Brownsville Historic District with boundaries and building type. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Map 5. Sketch map of the Brownsville Historic District with boundaries and construction dates. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

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Map 6. Sketch map of the Brownsville Historic District with boundaries and building styles. Source: Aerial from ESRI ArcMap software program basemap, overlay by HHM.

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Figure 7-1. Postcard view of East Elizabeth Street, looking southeast from East 10th Street, in the late 1920s depicting a variety of architectural styles from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as well as contemporary street features including traffic lights and street lamps. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-1. Detail of 1873 map of Cameron County showing the "El Potrero" or "El Agostadero del Espiritu Santo" grant originally granted to Don Jose Salvador de la Garza by the old Spanish government in 1781. Source: Texas General Land Office.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

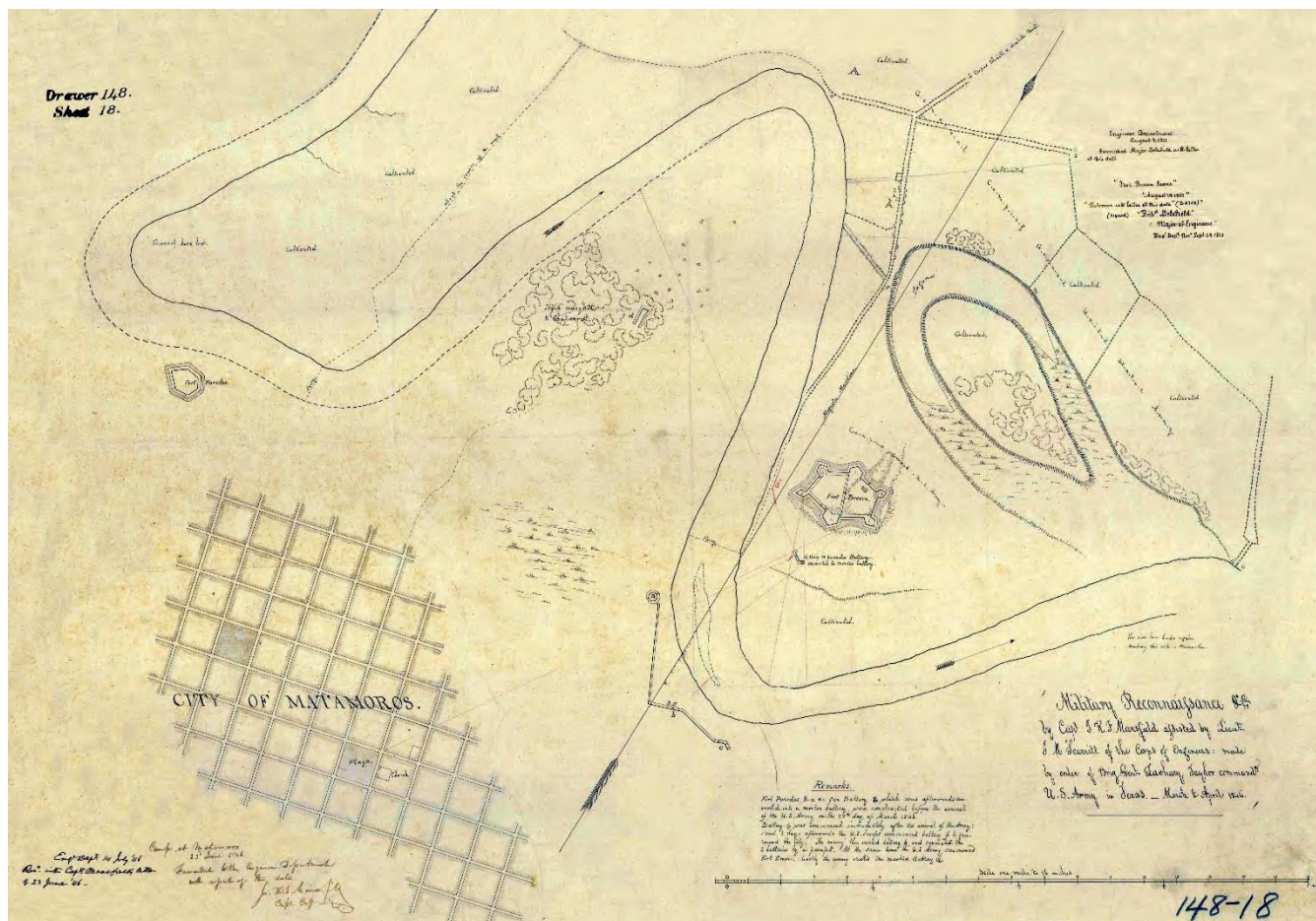
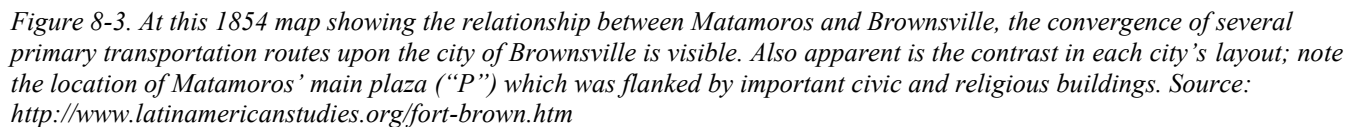


Figure 8-2. Military reconnaissance map of Fort Brown from 1848 showing the original location of the fort, south of the lagoon. The Fort was relocated west and north of the lagoon. The unidentified road that ran southwest-northeast formed the fort's new northern boundary and the southern city limits of Brownsville. Source: <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/fort-brown.htm>



Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

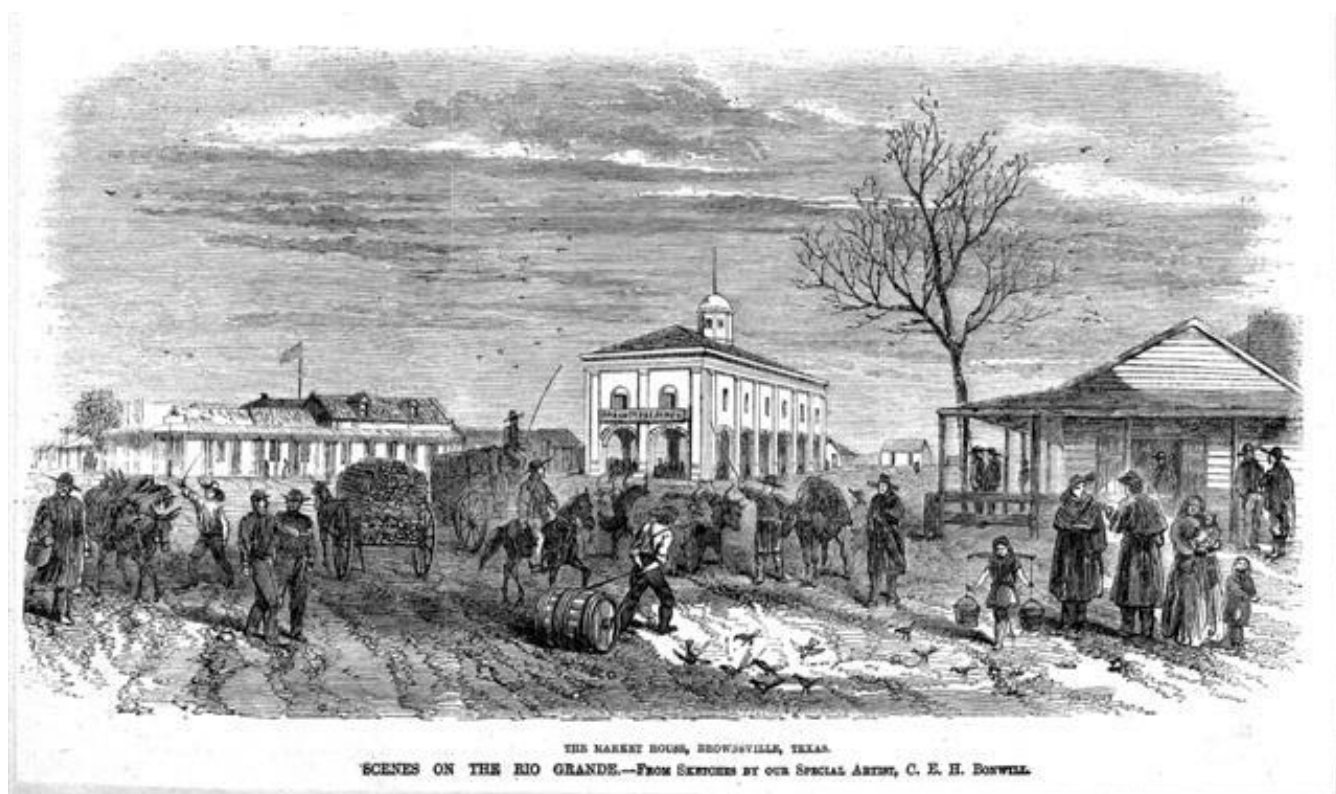


Figure 8-4. View of Market Square around 1850. Sketch by C. E. H. Bonville. Source: <http://photobucket.com/gallery/user/brownsvilletx/media/bWVkaWFJZDoxNDM4OTU1NDk=/?ref=>, crediting UTB/TSC Hunter Room

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Figure 8-5. View of Brownsville from a curve in the river near Fort Brown. From "United States and Mexican Boundary Survey" by William H. Emory. 1857. Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Photo Library (<http://www.photolib.noaa.gov/htmls/libr0141.htm>)

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Figures 8-6 and 8-7. Views of the 1200 block of Elizabeth Street, north side, in the 1860s. Photographs attributed to Louis De Planque. Source: Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog.

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Figures 8-8 and 8-9. Views of East Levee Street in the late 1860s. The La Joya building, with “Libreria” painted on the side is clearly visible among the other commercial buildings and warehouses. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com (top) and Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Collection (bottom).

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

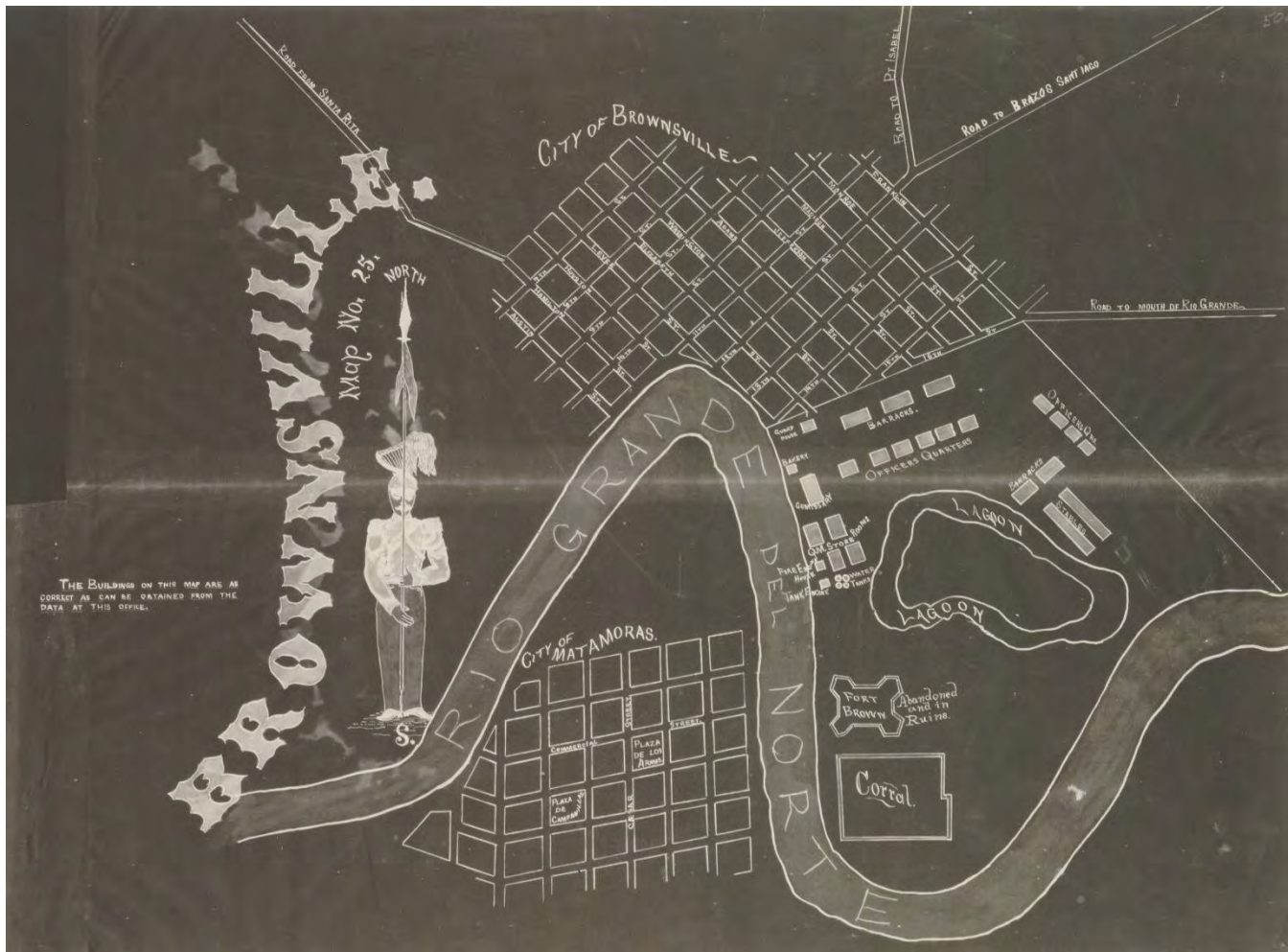


Figure 8-10. This map from 1868 illustrates the extent of Brownsville's city limits as well as the limitations on the city's growth enforced by the locations of the Rio Grande and Fort Brown. Source: Texas State Library and Archives.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

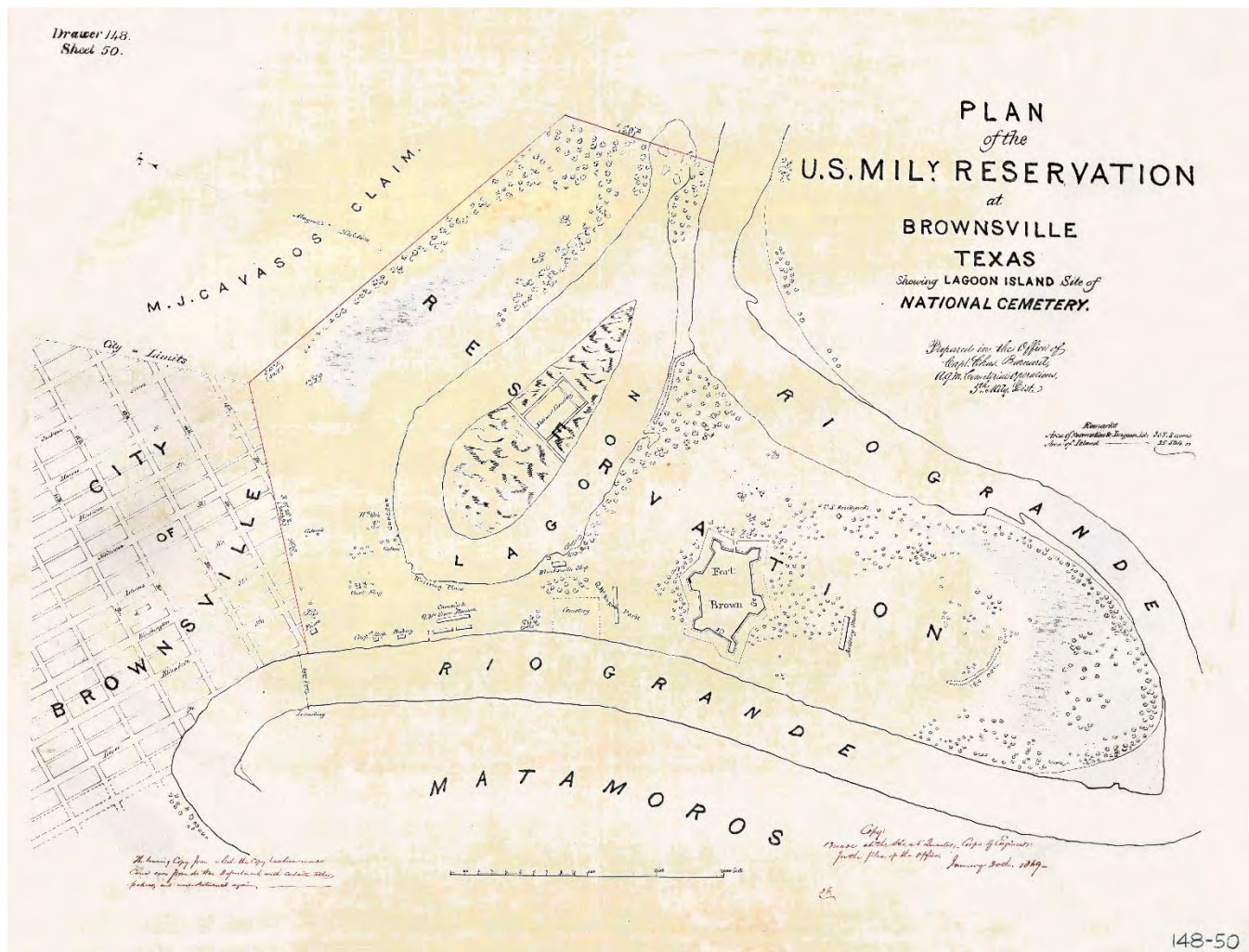


Figure 8-11. The 1869 Plan of the U.S. Military Reservation at Brownsville, Texas illustrates the original location of Fort Brown south of the lagoon within the expanded boundaries of the military site, the northern boundary of which formed the southern city limits of Brownsville. Source: <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/fort-brown.htm>

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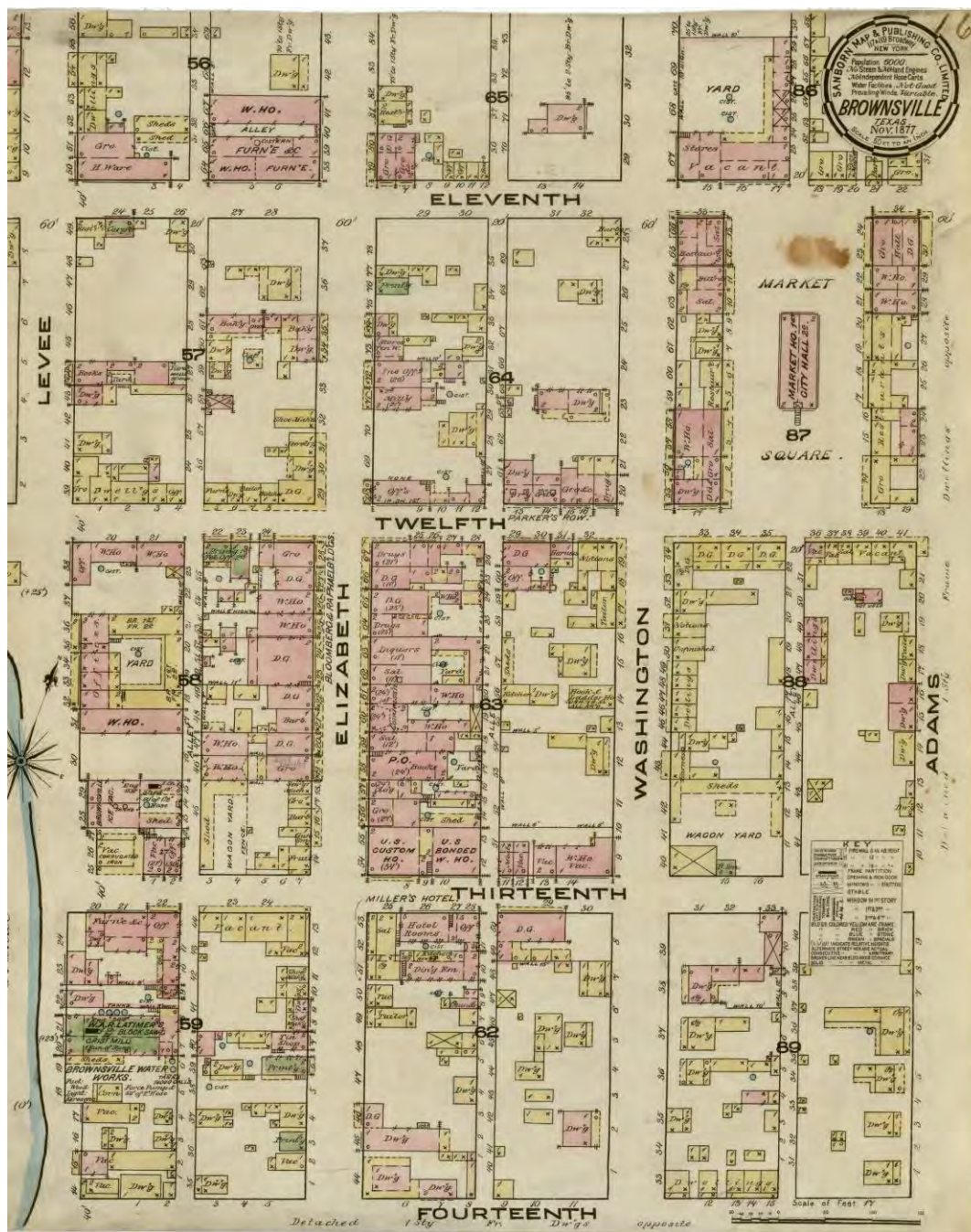


Figure 8-12. The nodes Brownsville's commercial development at the 1877 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map. Source: University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castañeda Map Collection.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-13. View from the (First) Cameron County Courthouse looking south around 1893. The entry courtyard and a portion of the façade of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception are visible at the right. Commercial buildings visible include the J. H. Fernández and Brother building (right middle ground) and the rear of the Yturria Bank Building and San Roman Building. Source: The Twin Cities of the Border.

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Figure 8-14. View from the (First) Cameron County Courthouse looking west around 1893. At the bottom left, a portion of the roof of the Fernández Hide Yard is visible. Otherwise, the area remained occupied by mid- to late nineteenth century homes that were identified as “Mexican Dwellings” on the 1894 Sanborn Map. Source: The Twin Cities of the Border.

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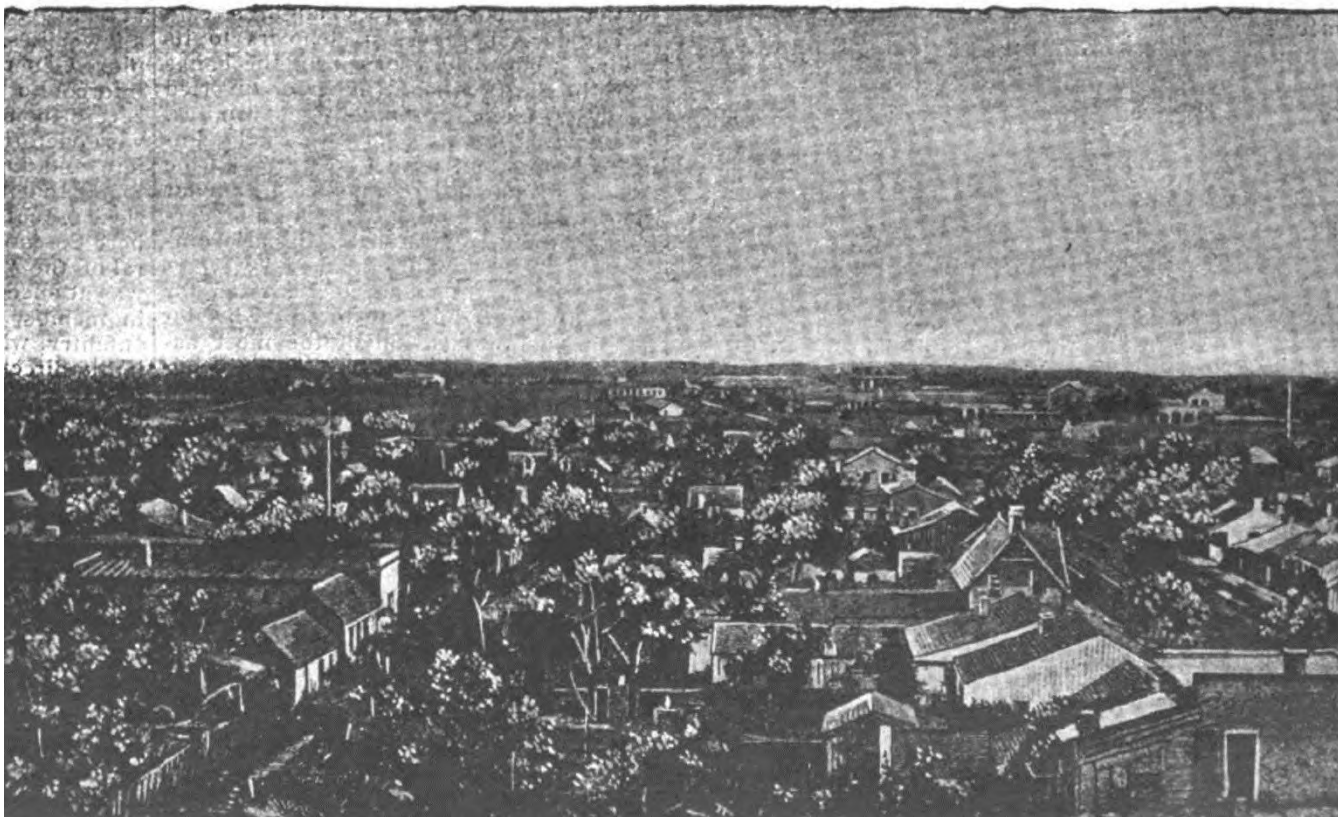


Figure 8-15. View from the (First) Cameron County Courthouse looking east around 1893. Source: The Twin Cities of the Border.

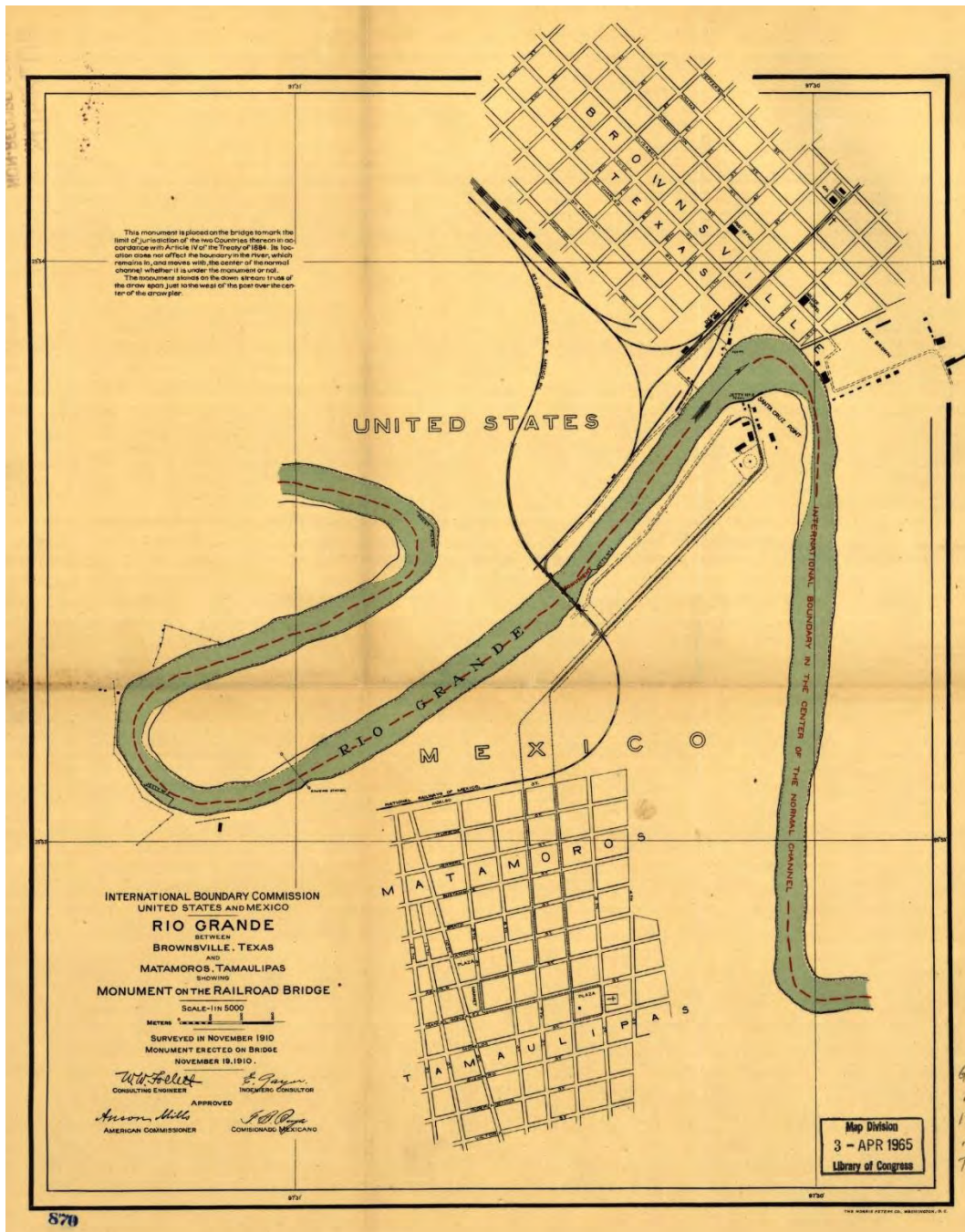
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Figure 8-16. View from the (First) Cameron County Courthouse looking north around 1893. At the left middle foreground, the double-gable-roofed Laiseca Store and front-gabled warehouse of the H. M. Field Lumber, Bone, and Hide yard are visible. Source: The Twin Cities of the Border.

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Figure 8-17. Source:
Library of Congress



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Figure 8-18. Troops parade toward Fort Brown past buildings in the 1200 block of East Elizabeth Street in this Robert Runyon photo taken after electricity was introduced in the original townsite. Note the electric poles and the addition of street lamps. Source: The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin

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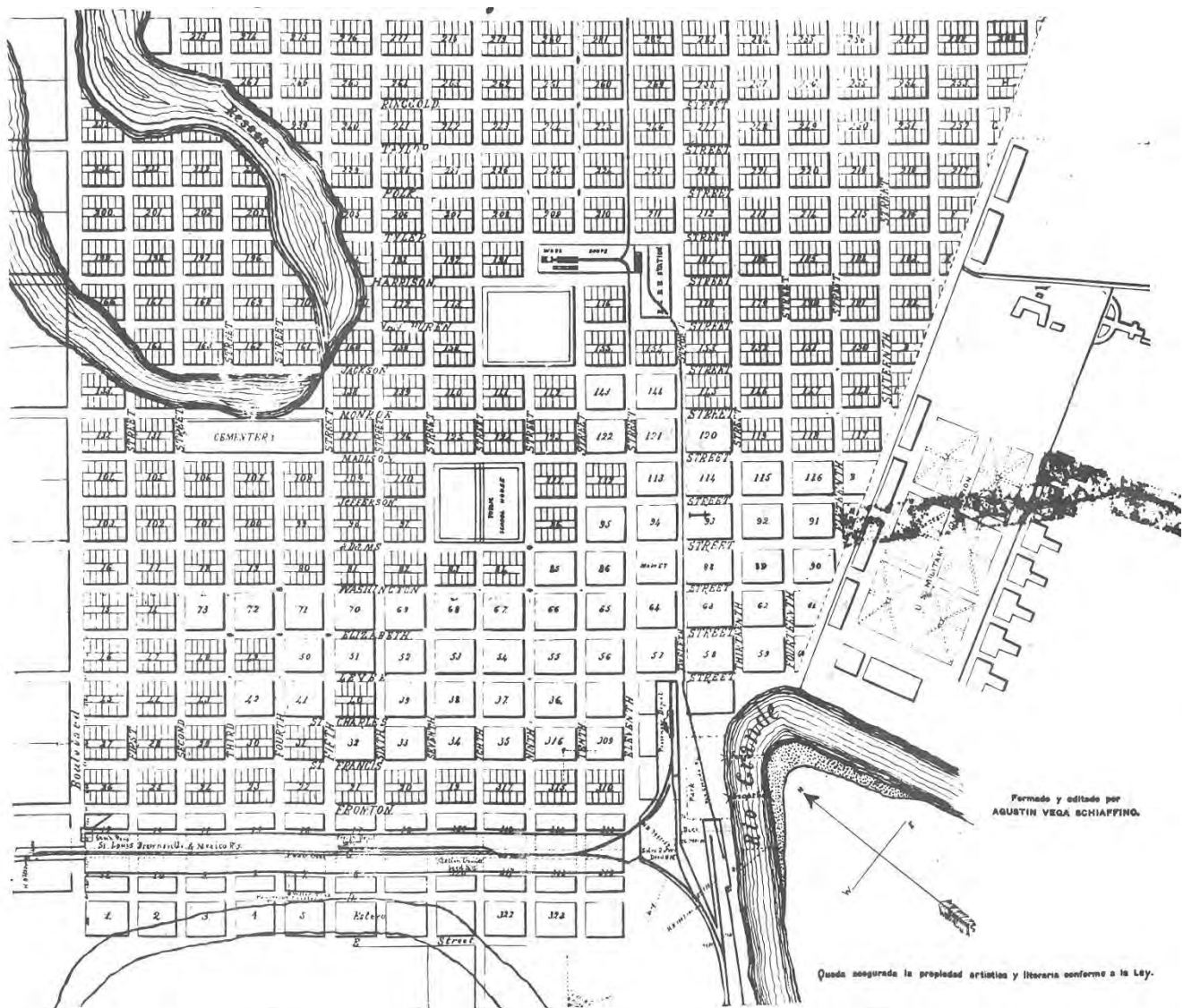


Figure 8-19. Brownsville businessman Lewis Kowalski published a map of city around 1910 based on the original townsit plat. The majority of the Brownsville Historic District is depicted as solid blocks, indicating that the area was already well developed. Note the location the southeastern boundary created by the Quartermaster Wall at Fort Brown. The resources associated with the Rio Grande Railroad are located just beyond the northern boundary of the district, those of the St. Louis, Brownsville, and Mexico Railway are located several blocks south of the district. The spur track that connects the two rail lines bisects the historic district along East 12th Street. Source: Brownsville Historical Association

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-20. This view of East Elizabeth Street looking northwest from the 1300 block shows the newly installed Brownsville Street and Interurban Railway. Source: The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

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Figure 8-21. This view takes in one of the trolleys of the Brownsville Street and Interurban Railway at a stop at East Elizabeth and East 10th Streets around 1912. Photo by Robert Runyon. Source: The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin

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Figure 8-22. This photograph from around 1930 in the city's comprehensive plan shows that utilities have been removed from main streets to alleys in the historic district. The plan highlights development in the city center in its recommendations for suburban development outside of the downtown area. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com, crediting "A Comprehensive City Plan For Brownsville, Texas," by E.A. Wood of Dallas Texas (1930)

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-23. This scene from Brownsville's 1916 Decoration Day parade shows the state of East Elizabeth Street and the overall appearance of this commercial node of the Brownsville Historic District. Source: The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-24. This scene of the construction of the Gateway International Bridge in 1928 at the southern end of the Brownsville Historic District shows the commercial development still active on East Levee Street. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-25. A view of East Levee Street showing traffic and parking patterns. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com, crediting The Library of Congress.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-26. The Hotel El Jardin with its modern electric signage as depicted in its heyday. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

EL JARDIN HOTEL

"The Finest Hotel in the Rio Grande Valley"

THE CENTER OF CHARRO DAY ACTIVITIES

MAKE IT YOUR HEADQUARTERS

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-27. The Capitol Theater, opened on East Washington Street in 1928, had modern electric signage to draw in moviegoers. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-28. In the early 1950s, traffic still ran in both directions on East Elizabeth Street. The westward expansion of the business district and abundance of auto-related businesses is apparent in this photograph taken at the intersection of East 8th Street. Source: Brownsville Historical Association.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-29. The development of International Boulevard leading to the Gateway international Bridge created an even more definitive southwestern boundary of the Brownsville Historic District where Fort Brown's Quartermaster Wall had been located. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

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Figure 8-30. In the 1970s, parking meters beckon automobile traffic to the downtown area as seen in this view of the 1200 block of East Elizabeth Street. Many business owners added modern signage and storefronts to continue to attract their consumer base. Source: bronsbilestacion.blogspot.com

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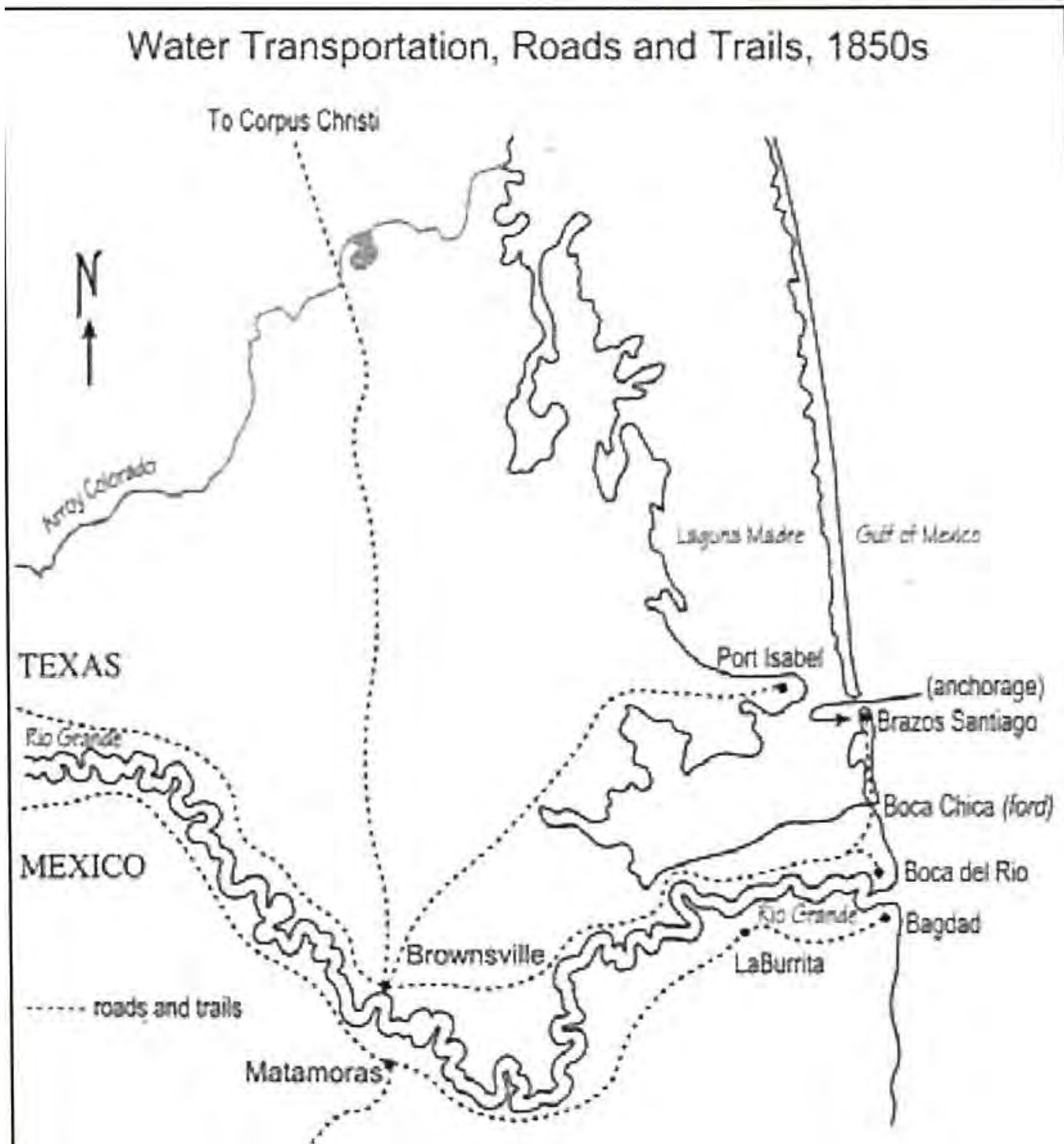


Figure 8-31. This map illustrates the various routes that converged at Brownsville at the city's founding and which would remain important thoroughfares into the era of highway development. Source: Historic Brownsville: An Illustrated History

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Figure 8-32. A photograph from around 1915 illustrating a number of bars and saloons on East Elizabeth Street. Source: Brownsville Historical Association

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas

Photographs



*Photo No. 1 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0001)
Contextual view of district alleyway through the 400 block of East 11th Street looking north.*



*Photo No. 2 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0002)
Contextual view of district from 1200 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing northwest.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 3 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0003)
Contextual view of district from the 1000 block of Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.



Photo No. 4 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0004)
Contextual view of district from 1000 block of East Washington Street, facing southeast.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 5 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0005)
Contextual view of district from 900 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing northwest.



Photo No. 6 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0006)
Contextual view of streetscape, sidewalks from 1000 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing south.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 7 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0007)
Contextual view of district from the 1100 block of East Washington Street, facing southeast.



Photo No. 8 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0008)
Contextual view of district from the 1100 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 9 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0009)
Contextual view of district from the 1100 block of East Elizabeth Street, facing southeast.



Photo No. 10 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0010)
Map ID No. 503, 1226 East Monroe Street, oblique view of home, camera facing southeast.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 11 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0011)
Map ID No. 403, 1316 East Madison Street, oblique view of the residence, facing southwest.*



*Photo No. 12 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0012)
Map ID No. 375, 1150 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Dancy Building (formerly the Cameron County Courthouse), view facing west.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 13 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0013)
Map ID No. 405, 1218 East Jefferson Street, oblique view of Immaculate Conception Cathedral, facing southeast.*



*Photo No. 14 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0014)
Map ID No. 63, 400 East 13th Street, oblique view of The Gem Building, view facing south.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 15 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0015)
Map ID No. 274, 1100 Market Square, oblique view of the Market Square Building and landscaping, view facing west.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 16 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0016)
Map ID No. 283, 1106 East Adams Street, facade view of San Fernando Building, view facing southwest.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 17 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0017)

Map ID No. 338, 1131 East Jefferson Street, oblique view of Masonic Lodge #81 (Formerly the Old County Courthouse), view facing north.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 18 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0018)
Map ID No. 243, 1223 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Bollack Store, view facing north.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 19 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0019)
Map ID No. 509, 936 East 14th Street, oblique view of a circa 1930s Gas Station, view facing south.*



*Photo No. 20 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0020)
Map ID No. 511, 1054 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Laiseca Store, view facing north.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 21 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0021)
Map ID No. 194, 1128 East Washington Street, oblique view of the P.V. Farias & Brothers Building, view facing south.



Photo No. 22 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0022)
Map ID No. 221, 1325 East Washington Street, front façade view of the Stillman House Museum, view facing northwest.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 23 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0023)
Map ID No. 428, 828 East 15th Street, front façade view of the Garza-Barreda House, view facing southwest.*



*Photo No. 24 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0024)
Map ID No. 371, 1047 East Madison Street, oblique view of the residence, view facing north.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 25 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0025)
Map ID No. 515, 1039 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Field-Pacheco Warehouse, view facing north.



Photo No. 26 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0026)
Map ID No. 291, 1024 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Brownsville Public Library (old), view facing west.

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Photo No. 27 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0027)
Map ID No. 204, 535 East 12th Street, oblique view of the Parker's Row Building, view facing west.



Photo No. 28 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0028)
Map ID No. 510, 1049 East Monroe Street, oblique view of the Field/Pacheco Building, view facing north.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 29 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0029)
Map ID No. 432, 1502 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Globo Nuevo Building, view facing south.



Photo No. 30 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0030)
Map ID No. 177, 1001 East Washington Street, oblique view of the Clay & McDavitt Building, view facing east.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 31 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0031)
Map ID No. 98, 1002 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Majestic Mall Building, view facing south.



Photo No. 32 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0032)
Map ID No. 265, 1201 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Maldonado Pharmacy Building, view facing east.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 33 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0033)

Map ID No.95, 1159 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Bank and Customs House/Celaya Building, view facing north.



Photo No. 34 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0034)

Map ID No. 198, 533 E. 12th Street, facade view of Parker's Row storefront, view facing northwest.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 35 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0035)
Map ID No. 203, 1152 East Washington Street, façade view of Parker's Row Storefront, view facing northwest.*



*Photo No. 36 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0036)
Map ID No 89, 1201 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the New Drug Store (Federal Courthouse Site, view facing east.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 37 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0037)
Map ID No. 87, 1245 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the San Roman Building, view facing north.



Photo No. 38 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0038)
Map ID No. 83, 1255 East Elizabeth Street, façade view of the Yurria Bank Building, view facing northeast.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 39 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0039)
Map ID No. 16, 1049 East Washington, oblique view of the Fernandez-Schodts Complex, view facing north.



Photo No. 40 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0040)
Map ID No. 448, 947 East 15h Street, oblique view of The Tamayo Store, view facing west.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 41 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0041)
Map ID No. 273, 1105 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Fernandez Hide Yard, view facing east.



Photo No. 42 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0042)
Map ID No 119, 1115 East Washington, oblique view of the Jose Fernandez Building, view facing east.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 43 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0043)
Map ID No. 267, 1200 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Juan H. Fernandez y Hermano Building, view facing south.



Photo No. 44 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0044)
Map ID No. 361, 1002 East Madison Street, oblique view of the La Madrileña Building, view facing south.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 45 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0045)
Map ID No 96, 1141 East Elizabeth Street, facade view of the J.L. Putegnats & Brothers Building, view facing east.



Photo No. 46 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0046)
Map ID No 104, 1054 East Elizabeth Street, facade view of the First National Bank Building, view facing northeast.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 47 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0047)
Map ID No. 113, 1057 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Merchant National Bank Building, view facing north.



Photo No. 48 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0048)
Map ID No. 276, 1150 East Adams Street, oblique view of the Park Hotel, view facing south.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 49 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0049)
Map ID No. 8, 1147 East Levee Street, oblique view of the Travelers Hotel, view facing north.*



*Photo No. 50 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0050)
Map ID No. 398, 1324 East Madison Street, facade view of the Webb-Martinez Residence, view facing southwest.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 51 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0051)
Map ID No. 117, 1001 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Federal Building, view facing east.



Photo No. 52 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0052)
Map ID No. 127, 925 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Sears & Roebuck Building, view facing north.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 53 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0053)
Map ID No. 99, 1032 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Combe-J.C. Penny Building, view facing west.



Photo No. 54 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0054)
Map ID No. 384, 1144 East Madison Street, oblique view of the Fernandez and Laiseca Building, view facing west.

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



*Photo No. 55 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0055)
Map ID No. 128, 847 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Seabury George & Taylor Buildings, view facing north.*



*Photo No. 56 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0056)
Map ID No. 2016, 1201 East Washington Street, oblique view of the Manitou Building, view facing east.*

Central Brownsville Historic District, Cameron County, Texas



Photo No. 57 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0057)
Map ID No. 106, 1101 East Elizabeth Street, oblique view of the Aziz Brother Building, view facing east.



Photo No. 58 (TX_CameronCounty_BrownsvilleHistoricDistrict_0058)
Map ID No. 492, 1264 East Monroe Street, oblique view of a circa 1935 mission revival apartment building, view facing west.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Central Brownsville Historic District

Multiple Name:

State & County: TEXAS, Cameron

Date Received: 4/23/2019 Date of Pending List: 5/9/2019 Date of 16th Day: 5/24/2019 Date of 45th Day: 6/7/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004008

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

☒ Accept ☐ Return ☐ Reject 5/31/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Central Brownsville Historic District is locally significant and meets National Register Criteria A and C under the areas of Architecture, Commerce and Community Planning & Development. The district resources reflect the commercial growth of the historic townsite into a major regional center of trade and commerce. Located along the southern U.S. border with Mexico at the confluence of major transportation routes, the city thrived from the mid-nineteenth century up through the mid-twentieth century erecting varied commercial, civic, and residential properties reflecting typical regional and national patterns.

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer Paul Lusignan Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229 Date 5/31/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : Yes

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
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TO: Paul Lusignan
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

From: Mark Wolfe, SHPO
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Central Brownsville Historic District, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

DATE: April 17, 2019

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination for <i>Central Brownsville Historic District, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas</i> .
	Resubmitted nomination
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk
	Resubmitted form
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

- ___ SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
___ The enclosed owner objections (do___) (do not___) constitute a majority of property owners
___ Other:

