

SG-2433

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Fernández and Laiseca Building  
Other name/site number: Fernández Building; Old Jail Building  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1142-1154 E. Madison 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Not for publication:  Vicinity: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  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 3/27/18  
Signature of certifying official / Title Date  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Deborah L. ...  
Signature of the Keeper

5/11/18  
Date of Action

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** Commerce/Trade / general store

**Current Functions:** Commerce/Trade / professional

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** OTHER / Border Brick Style Regional Vernacular

**Principal Exterior Materials:** BRICK

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-8)

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Architecture, Commerce, Ethnic Heritage/European (Spanish)

**Period of Significance:** 1915-1968

**Significant Dates:** 1915

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

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

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 9-15)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 16-20)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

### Primary location of additional data:

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

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** 0.1377

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 25.903522°N Longitude: -97.495675°W

**Verbal Boundary Description:** Lots 1-2, Block 113, Original Townsite of Brownsville, Cameron County Texas

**Boundary Justification:** This is the site historically associated with this property.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Stephen Fox / Juan M. Vélez, Historic Preservation Officer

Organization: Anchorage Foundation of Texas / City of Brownsville

Street & number: Anderson Hall, Rm. 100, Rice University, 6100 Main Street /

City of Brownsville Planning & Development Services Department, 1034 E. Levee  
Street, 2nd Floor

City or Town: Houston / Brownsville

State: Texas

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Date: 2 May 2017

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets 21-22)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 23-31)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets 5-6, 32-56)



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### Photograph Log

Fernández & Laiseca Building  
Brownsville, Cameron County, TX  
Photographs by Juan M. Vélez  
Date: March – May 2017

Photo #1

Northeast elevation (front) facing E. Madison Street, camera facing southwest.

Photo #2

Northeast and southeast elevations, camera facing west.

Photo #3

Southeast elevation (side) facing E. 12th Street, camera facing northwest.

Photo #4

Paneled double-leaf street doors, barred transom, and segmental brick arch, Detail from exterior.

Photo #5

Southwest elevation facing rear patio, camera facing east.

Photo #6

Southwest elevation, detail from exterior, camera facing northeast.

Photo #7

Vertical wood plank patio doors, barred transom, and segmental brick arch. Detail from exterior.

Photo #8

Cast iron grill screening vent opening on patio wall. Detail from exterior.

Photo #9

Exterior brick buttress at E. Madison-E. 12th streets corner, camera looking northwest.

Photo #10

Exterior brick buttress at E. 12th Street-rear alley corner, camera looking north.

Photo #11

Exterior brick buttress at rear alley-west property line corner, camera looking east.

Photo #12

Southeast and southwest elevations, camera facing north.

Photo #13

Brick parapet, corbelled cornice, and belt courses. Detail from exterior, camera facing north.

Photo #14

Southeast front of one-story, one-room brick dwelling in patio, camera facing northwest.

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Photo #15

Interior brick fireplace and hearth in one-room brick dwelling in patio. Detail from interior.

Photo #16

Northeast elevation of barred *zaguán* gates and alcove from inside patio, camera facing southwest.

Photo #17

North corner of patio showing southwest elevation of main building, partial southeast elevation of one-room brick dwelling, trees, and brick wellhead, camera facing north.

Photo #18

Cistern in patio, camera facing east.

Photo #19

Interior of 1152-1154 E. Madison Street bays, camera facing northeast. Doors on right face E. 12th Street.

Photo #20

Interior of 1152-1154 E. Madison Street bays looking toward patio wall, camera facing southwest. Doors on left face E. 12th Street.

Photo #21

Interior looking past line of wood structural posts toward doors facing E. 12th Street; doors on right face patio, camera facing southeast.

Photo #22

Interior of 1142 E. Madison Street bay, camera facing northeast toward E. Madison Street.

Photo #23

Interior of 1142 E. Madison Street bay, camera facing southwest toward patio.

Photo #24

Chamfered wood structural post and *zapata* bracket. Detail from interior.

Photo #25

Wood floor planks, Detail from interior.

**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.

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## Narrative Description

The 1915 Fernández & Laiseca Building located at 1142-1154 E. Madison Street is a one-story retail store building that occupies Lots 1 and 2 of Block 113 in the Original Townsite of Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas. The building faces northeast toward E. Madison Street and the 1913 Cameron County Courthouse. It backs up to a walled patio that abuts a midblock alley bisecting Block 113, spanning between E. 12th and E. 11th streets. Across the alley lies the 1883 Cameron County Courthouse (since 1914 the Masonic Lodge). The southeast elevation of the Fernández & Laiseca Building is aligned with E. 12th Street. The building's architecture represents an extremely conservative perpetuation of the nineteenth-century regional vernacular building practices of the Texas-Tamaulipas border called the Border Brick Style. Detailed brickwork including a decorative cornice, brick parapet, brick buttresses and segmental arches as well as wood windows, double leaf wood doors, and a flat roof constitute the primary character defining features of the building. The external brick structural walls of the building were constructed in 1883 as freestanding exterior walls enclosing the jail yard of the Cameron County Jail. The 1883 jail was demolished in 1915 but the enclosing walls were salvaged and recycled to become the perimeter walls of the new Fernández & Laiseca retail building. A small freestanding contributing patio dwelling and cistern are located behind the main building within these perimeter walls. In the book *Historic Brownsville: Original Townsite Guide* (1980), the Fernández & Laiseca Building is referred to as the Old Jail Building. This name represents a misunderstanding; the property was built to be a retail store and never served as a county or city jail.

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## Exterior

The 1915 Fernández & Laiseca Building is a one-story retail store building occupying Lots 1 and 2 of Block 113 in the Original Townsite of Brownsville. The northeast (primary) elevation of the building faces E. Madison Street and completely fills the pair of city lots, each 50 feet wide and 120 feet long. The right (north) half of the Madison Street elevation, 1142-1146 E. Madison, is pierced by eight regularly spaced openings with brick door or window sills and segmentally arched brick heads. Four of the openings contain single leaf, paneled wood doors set beneath rectangular barred transoms. The other four openings contain two-over-two-paned wood sash windows protected by an external grid of steel bars. The segmental arched openings are horizontally aligned. The left (south) half of the Madison Street elevation at 1152-1154 E. Madison is pierced by four irregularly spaced openings capped by segmental brick arches. One contains a window. The other three contain solid, paneled, double leaf wood doors beneath horizontally elongated barred rectangular transoms. The segmental arches are horizontally aligned but rise slightly higher on the wall plane than those on the right side of the Madison Street front.

The E. 12th Street, southeast side elevation contains five regularly spaced openings fitted with solidly paneled double leaf wood doors beneath barred rectangular transoms capped by segmental brick arches. The rear elevation, facing into the walled patio, contains double-door openings, single-door openings, and windows. The doors are set beneath barred transoms framed by segmental brick arches. The windows are barred. Doors are built of vertical wood planks, held in place by iron straps connected to the door hinges. Low-set vent openings are screened with cast iron grills ornamented with a raised guilloche decorative pattern.

An original and distinctive feature of the building is slender brick buttresses that step out beyond the exterior faces of the walls on the E. Madison, E. 12th, and rear alley elevations and terminate in sloped weathering planes. The buttresses at the Madison-12th and the 12th-alley intersections turn the corner.<sup>1</sup> Although the building was not built all the way to the alley, the exterior brick wall continues to the alley line and incorporates a *zaguán* (a driveway) screened by double leaf wood doors beneath a wood lintel facing E. 12th Street, and a barred one-over-one-pane

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<sup>1</sup> As evidenced by a circa 1907 photograph of the courthouse, the buttresses are visible on the rear wall of the jail yard, confirming they date to 1883 and were not part of the 1915 conversion to commercial use (see figure11).

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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wood sash window that open into the walled rear patio. The alley elevation of the patio bounding wall contains additional barred sash windows and a second, centered *zaguán* opening framed between projecting buttresses. The patio walls are capped with thick, sloped weathering courses. The tops of the building's street walls are articulated with a sequence of stacked, horizontal, projecting brick belt courses. The belt courses are separated by four intervening courses in the same plane as the lower wall and a superimposed cornice composed of three horizontal courses of molded brick, with each course corbelled out over the course below it. The wall terminates in a horizontally continuous capped brick parapet. The street and alley walls of the Fernández & Laiseca Building are painted. The rear brick wall of the building and interior walls of the patio are not painted and exhibit the mixed blend of rose- and gold-tinged local brick that denotes mesquite firing of the brick.

The rear patio of the Fernández & Laiseca has experienced the most change during the building's history. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1914, 1919, 1926, 1930, and 1949 are the primary source for tracking these changes. A freestanding, one-story, one-room brick dwelling containing a substantial brick fireplace (the only fireplace in the complex) is present in all the maps. A one-story structure labeled "shed" extending along E. 12th Street to the rear alley and incorporating the E. 12th Street and alley portions of the patio perimeter wall as its external walls, is present in all of the maps, but no longer exists. A third structure, apparently a one-room dwelling, was attached to the alley wall of the patio and stood just east of the one-room detached dwelling with the fireplace. This second dwelling appears in the 1930 and 1949 Sanborn maps, but no longer exists. The rear *zaguán*, opening into the alley, is set into an alcove that projects into the patio, constructed by thickening the depth of the patio wall where it frames the opening. Gates are made of overlapped diagonal boards. Several trees grow in the patio, which appears to have been used as a workspace rather than as a garden. A freestanding cylindrical cistern, an *albije*, built of brick and surrounded by an upwardly sloping, ground-level brick apron, survives in the patio, although it does not appear in any of the Sanborn maps.

The existing one-room patio dwelling contains two openings facing the patio, a door and a pair of wood casement windows, both set beneath brick jack arches. The side walls of the house rise into tall parapets framing a shallow pitched, wood-framed roof. The interior fireplace has a projecting high-set hearth, suggesting that it was used for baking.

### Interior

The interior of the Fernández & Laiseca Building is divided into spatial bays by interior rows of seven structural wood posts that run parallel to the E. 12 Street elevation. These posts have chamfered corners and support wooden impost blocks (*zapatas*) that are framed into continuous wood beams. A wood deck ceiling, wood plank flooring, and exposed brick walls constitute the primary interior finishes. Spatial intervals between the posts have been filled in with vertical wood plank partitions to subdivide interior spaces.

### Integrity

The Fernández & Laiseca Building remains in the same location and the setting is largely intact. The exterior and interior of the building also retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship to an exceptional degree. Because of the conservatism of the Fernández family, few changes appear to have been made to the building, patio, wellhead, and back building during its history. The paneled street doors, the wood plank patio doors, the alley *zaguán* gates, the hardware attached to these openings, the window bars, the brick *noria*, the back building with its fireplace (*horno*), the cast iron vent grills, the chamfered wood interior posts with their *zapatas*, and the simple, elementary, straightforward interior finishes contribute substantially to the historical integrity of the property. Combined, the building's intact character defining features reinforce integrity of feeling and association with the Matamoros's merchant's house type and Border Brick Style commercial development in Brownsville.

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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## Statement of Significance

The Fernández & Laiseca Building in Brownsville, Texas is a one-story brick commercial building significant at a local level under Criterion A and C in the areas of Commerce, Spanish Ethnic Heritage, and Architecture. It was constructed in 1915 for Spanish immigrant merchants—brothers José Fernández-Cano and Joaquín Fernández-Cano and their business partner, Andrés Domingo Laiseca-Fernández—on what was then the northern outskirts of the downtown business district of the border town of Brownsville, Texas. The Fernández & Laiseca Building is architecturally significant under Criterion C because it perpetuates the distinctive characteristics of a building type (the Matamoros merchant’s house) and method of construction (the Border Brick Style) that took form ninety years earlier in the Mexican city of Matamoros, Tamaulipas, which lies across the Río Grande from Brownsville. This Mexican Creole vernacular building tradition—the conjunction of the Matamoros’s merchant’s house type and the Border Brick Style—spread from Matamoros to Brownsville after the U.S.-Mexico War of 1846-48 and then as far upriver as Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, in the post-Civil War period. In the early twentieth century, these vernacular building practices were challenged by “modern” “American” building types, construction materials, and architectural trends, as is evident from the mixture of buildings in downtown Brownsville. The Fernández & Laiseca Building and several other late examples of the Border Brick Style are significant because of their conservative perpetuation of regionally distinctive nineteenth-century architectural practices into the second decade of the twentieth century. The Fernández & Laiseca Building is nominated under Criterion A because it is associated with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of Brownsville and the South Texas borderlands. Since the building was continuously owned and operated by the Fernandez family until 1980, the period of significance is 1915 to 1968, adhering to National Park Service 50-year threshold.

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## Overview of Brownsville

Brownsville, Texas, county seat of Cameron County, is in 2017 a city of more than 180,000 people. Brownsville is located near the mouth of the Río Grande at the southmost tip of Texas, across the border from its sister city, Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico (founded 1784), twenty miles west of the Gulf of Mexico. Brownsville was founded in 1848 at the end of the U.S.-Mexico War in order to establish a U.S. trade gateway opposite Matamoros, which had risen to prominence as a Gulf port in the 1820s. During its first twelve years of existence (1848-1860), Brownsville was one of the largest cities in Texas. As the site of the U.S. Army’s Fort Brown, Brownsville was occupied by both the Confederacy and the U.S. during the Civil War. Because Matamoros was not subject to the U.S. Naval blockade of Confederate ports, it became the gateway for funneling Confederate cotton to Europe and the United States between 1862 and 1865, generating immense wealth for the Texan, Mexican, and European merchants participating in this trade. [1] After the Civil War, Brownsville lost its commercial primacy as railroads that linked Texas and Mexico were built in the early 1880s much farther upriver, bypassing the entire southern tip of Texas [2] until construction of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway, which linked Brownsville to Corpus Christi and Houston in 1904-05. [3] Railway construction opened the door to rapid social change as developers bought tens of thousands of acres of arid ranch land and installed steam-driven irrigation systems to transform the fertile alluvial delta of the Río Grande into highly productive agricultural real estate. Developers encouraged the immigration of Midwestern farmers and investors in the 1900s and 1910s and founded thirteen new railroad towns and associated farming tracts in Cameron and Hidalgo counties to accommodate the newcomers. Developers sought to appeal to affluent Midwestern Anglo-American transplants by constructing modern American style buildings in the 1910s. Rapid population growth created social instability however, as newcomers sought to impose Southern style segregation on the borderland’s primarily Mexican-descended and Mexican immigrant population, provoking such violent reactions as the Sedicioso Uprising of 1915. [4]

The Fernández & Laiseca Building intersects these trends in a provocative way. Its conservative vernacular architecture implied resistance to the forces of aggressive modernization associated with the arrival of the railroad,

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the drastic change in social and economic relations that subsequently ensued, and the promotion of new building types, construction materials and techniques, and architectural styles associated with the historic processes of modernization and Americanization. This despite the fact that the builders of the property were themselves immigrants.

Background of Historic Persons Connected

The Fernández & Laiseca Building is associated with two brothers, José Fernández-Cano (1879-1945) and Joaquín Fernández-Cano (1882-1964) of Valle de Villaverde, Cantabria, Spain, and their business partner, Andrés Domingo Laiseca-Fernández (1884-1954), of Zalla near Bilbao, Vizcaya, Spain, all immigrants to the Texas-Mexico border, where they spent their professional lives as retail merchants.

In the Census of 1900, José Fernández is enumerated as a salesman born in April 1879 in Spain, who had immigrated to the U.S. in 1893, and as a boarder in the household of another Spanish immigrant, Manuel Sámano in Hidalgo, Texas. In the Census of 1910, Fernández is enumerated as being thirty-one years old, as having immigrated in 1898, and as living in Brownsville with his business partner, Andrés Domingo Laiseca-Fernández. In 1910 Domingo Laiseca is enumerated as being twenty-five years old and as having immigrated in 1901. In the Census of 1920, José Fernández is enumerated as having immigrated in 1895 and as married to Irene García de Fernández, age thirty-five, the Texan-born daughter of parents who were also born in Texas. Joaquín Fernández is first listed in the Census of 1920 as residing in his brother and sister-in-law's household. In the Census of 1930, he is listed as having immigrated in 1913. In the Brownsville City Directory of 1913-14, the first city directory published for Brownsville, Fernández & Laiseca, general merchandise, is listed at the corner of E. 12th and Market Square (presumably the corner of the alley and E. 12th across from Market Square). Domingo Laiseca and his wife Julia [sic] are listed as living at 1113-1/2 E. Washington Street, a mid-block, two-story commercial building backing up to Market Square, and José Fernández, his wife, and his brother Joaquín are listed as rooming a half-block away at 12th and Washington, presumably the same building where their store was located. [5]

In 1977 historian Betty Bird interviewed the children of Juliana Fernández and Domingo Laiseca for the Historic American Buildings Survey. They told her that their father was from Zalla near Bilbao, Vizcaya, Spain and that their mother, who was born in Matamoros. The Laiseca children reported that their father was first in business from 1908 to 1911 at E. Jefferson Street and E. 13th Street in Brownsville. From 1911 until 1915 he and José Fernández were in business at the site facing Market Square and from 1915 to 1916 they occupied the building at 1142-1154 E. Madison. In 1916, Laiseca left the Fernández brothers to begin his own general merchandise business, and in 1921 moved to a wood building at 925 E. 11th Street and E. Monroe Street, diagonally across the Courthouse Square from 1142-1154 E. Madison Street, where he and his children would operate El Globo Chiquito (The Little Globe) until his children closed the store in the late twentieth century. [6]

Betty Bay in *Historic Brownsville: Original Townsite Guide* (1980) interviewed the Brownsville historian A. A. Champion, who remembered that the two brothers, José with his wife and their son, José, Jr., and Joaquín, who never married, lived on the premises. The José Fernandez family lived at 1142 E. Madison and Joaquín Fernández lived at 811 E. 12th Street. [7] The 1919 and 1926 Sanborn Maps show the square-planned building, 100 feet by 100 feet in dimension, as divided into two separate shop spaces by a central line of wood structural posts perpendicular to the Madison Street front. A shed-roofed porch projected along the backside of 1142 and a small (possibly one-room) dwelling was freestanding in the back patio alongside this porch. A second one-story dwelling was located inside the patio bounding wall at the corner of the alley and E. 12th Street in the 1930 edition of the Sanborn Map. The 1930 Sanborn map shows that the interior of the primary building had been subdivided to contain an office at 1146 E. Madison, a second retail space at the 1154 E. Madison-819 E. 11th corner, and the largest retail space at 815 E. 11th Street. In 1949 this pattern remained the same, except that the dwelling at 811 E. 12th had become a plumbing supply store. [8]

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After the death of José Fernández, Jr., in March 1980, the property was inherited by the descendants of another of his father's brothers, Amador Fernández-Cano of Toluca Ranch and Mercedes, Texas, in Hidalgo County. The Fernández & Laiseca Building remained in Fernández family ownership until 2011, when it was acquired by the present owners. [9]

General trends in Building Practice and Architectural Development

The Fernández & Laiseca Building is a late example of the Matamoros merchant's house type and the Border Brick Style, a transnational architectural vernacular that took form in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico, in the 1820s and 1830s and by the end of the nineteenth century had migrated as far upriver as Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, two hundred miles northwest of Brownsville and Matamoros. The Border Brick Style initially represented a merger of Mexican vernacular building typology—one-room-deep houses lining the street fronts of a property to enclose an open-air internal patio—with construction practices—brick as the principal material of construction, use of French doors instead of sash windows, and, in two-story buildings, second-floor balconies with wrought iron rails—transmitted to the lower Río Grande from Creole New Orleans. New Orleans was Matamoros's chief trading partner and it supplied not only foreign merchants but also building professionals to the Matamoros market. [10]

After the Civil War, the Tamaulipas-Texas Border Brick Style began to be characterized by elaborate decoration in molded brick. The best-known personality associated with this phase of the trend was the German immigrant brick mason and manufacturer, Enrique Portscheller (1840-1915), who worked in Roma and Río Grande City, Texas, midway between Brownsville and Laredo, and in Mier, Tamaulipas near Roma, Texas, between the mid 1880s and the mid 1890s. [11] In post Civil War Brownsville, the architect-builders S. W. Brooks (1829-1903), the Norwegian immigrant Martin Hanson (1825-1902) and his son, Martin Hanson, Jr. (1857-1916), and James McCoy (1863-1925) produced distinctive examples of the Border Brick Style, perpetuating not only the ornamental details associated with this vernacular but also the use of such Mexican building typologies as the Matamoros merchant's house. [12] Brooks and the two Hansons came to the lower Río Grande from New Orleans at the time of the Civil War. Martin Hanson, Jr., built such notable late Border Brick Style buildings as the central core of the François Laborde House and Store in Río Grande City (1902, NRHP Río Grande City Downtown Historic District), and the two-story brick house of Sóstenes Cano-Fernández and Florencio Sáenz-Hinojosa at Toluca Ranch in Hidalgo County (1904-05; inherited by their adopted daughter, Manuela Champion-Cano, and her husband, Amador Fernández-Cano, younger brother of José and Joaquín). [13] The Teacherage in Hidalgo, Texas, another late example of the Border Brick Style built the same year as the Fernández & Laiseca Building, displays virtuoso ornamental detailing in its roofline pinnacles. [14]

The (now defaced) Fernández-Schodts Building at 1049 E. Washington Street (c. 1867), the M. Alonso complex at 510-514 W. St. Charles Street, the J. H. Fernández y Hermano Building at 1200-1220 E. Adams Street (1884, 1894), the Celedonio Garza Building at 1247 E. Madison Street (1886), the Miguel Fernández Building at 1101-21 E. Adams Street (1890, 1894), La Madrileña, the Adrián Ortiz Building at 1002 E. Madison Street (1892, James McCoy and Modesto Adame, builders), El Alamo, the Lucio Bouis store at 900 E. Adams Street (1893), La Nueva Libertad, the Andrés Cueto complex at 1301-1311 E. Madison Street (1893), the H. M. Field & Company (Field-Pacheco) complex at 1049 E. Monroe Street (1894), and El Globo Nuevo, the Adolfo Garza complex at 1502 E. Madison Street (1897), are the major surviving examples of Border Brick Style corner store complexes in Brownsville. [15]

In Brownsville, James McCoy was responsible for constructing the twelve-foot-high brick walls that surrounded the new Cameron County Jail (1913, NRHP) at 1201 E. Van Buren Street. Like the exterior walls of the Fernández & Laiseca Building, the 1913 jail walls exhibit brick structural buttresses and sloped weathering. Brick buttresses with



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sloped weathering were also incorporated in the construction of the one-story wing of the Hynes-Rabb ranch house complex at Rancho Santa María near Santa María, Texas, on which McCoy worked (1894) [16], and the Tomás Tijerina House (1913) at 333 E. Adams Street in Brownsville. [17] In comparison to the best-known examples of the Border Brick Style vernacular, the Fernandez & Laiseca Building is architecturally subdued, in part, perhaps, because of the extraordinary conservatism of the builders, who elected to maintain the thirty-year-old walls of the 1883 Cameron County Jail and construct their new building within them.

The *Brownsville Herald* published several reports on the construction of the Fernández & Laiseca Building, although the newspaper never identified the building professionals responsible for its construction. On June 23, 1915, the *Herald* reported that Fernández & Laiseca, who had bought the property for \$6,000 in September 1914, would demolish the 1883 jail as well as the surrounding jail yard walls to prepare the site for construction of a new commercial building. [17] The article noted that in addition to the store building, two or three residential rental units would be erected on the site. In a feature article of July 1, 1915 entitled “32-Year-Old Brick Wall to Form the Sides of New Building on Twelfth Street,” the *Herald* reported that “what will be the most ingenious building in Brownsville is in the process of construction...occupying the site of the old county jail.” [18]

“Last week the mercantile firm [of Fernández & Laiseca] had started to tear down the jail building. The jail is now razed. But the fourteen-foot wall was preserved. Only the topmost two feet of brickwork have been shaved off, leaving a solid twelve-foot wall 16 inches thick, with four sides 100 feet in length. Simply cut holes for windows and doors, put on a roof and there is a house! That is what Fernández & Laiseca are doing. Pillars will be put in the middle to support the flat roof, every trace of the jail building in the center will be cleared away, a floor will be laid, the roof put on, doors and windows fitted in the spaces now being cut in the walls and the store will be ready to move into.

“The brick wall which makes this unique construction possible was built in 1883 under contract with the county by Louis Kowalski, now district clerk. The bricks put in thirty years ago are good for thirty more years of service.” [19]

The conservatism of the Fernández brothers and their partner was made clear in March 1916 when the *Brownsville Herald* reported that the City Manager of Brownsville had ordered construction of a brick sidewalk being laid adjacent to the Fernández & Laiseca Building halted because city ordinances mandated that only concrete sidewalks be constructed within the city limits. [20]

Re-use of the walls of the county jail and retention of a Mexican vernacular patio building type and Border Brick Style architectural detailing highlighted the conservatism of the Fernández & Laiseca Building in downtown Brownsville, where modern business buildings were replacing older Mexican type buildings in the 1910 period. In 1909 don Francisco Yturria, patriarch of Brownsville’s business community, retained the San Antonio architect Henry T. Phelps to add a modern California Mission style façade to the venerable Miller Hotel, a Border Brick Style complex constructed in 1867. The Besteiro Brothers retail building at 1155-1157 E. Adams Street (1909) is a modern business building, albeit with a residual Border Brick Style corbelled brick cornice. In contrast to the architectural ambivalence of the Besteiro Building, the three-story Bollack’s clothes store at 1223 E. Elizabeth Street (1910, Cooke & Co., architects), John G. Fernández’s two-story brick business building at 1101 E. Washington Street (1911, M. E. Tracy, architect) and Fernández’s four-story building for the Merchant’s National Bank at 1057 E. Elizabeth Street (1912, Atlee B. Ayres, architect; altered), the two-story Stegman Building at 543 E. 11th Street (1912, A. Goldammer, architect), and the monumental classical First National Bank Building at 1054 E. Elizabeth Street (1912, Philip J. Rocker for Hoggson Brothers of New York City, architect; defaced) exemplified the modernization of downtown Brownsville with commercial buildings that exhibited mainstream early twentieth-century U.S. architecture and construction practices. [21] The most imposing of these modern buildings was the

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three-story Cameron County Courthouse (1913, Atlee B. Ayres), centered on a full city block on E. Madison Street between 11th and 12th streets, facing the site of the Fernández & Laiseca Building. [22]

The Fernández & Laiseca Building departs somewhat from the Mexican Creole typology by virtue of its square plan, which resulted from reuse of the jail yard's bounding walls. Therefore the building encloses its rear patio on one side only, rather than with the more common L plan configuration. It is presumed that the decorative brick banding at the top of the street walls is part of the 1915 modification of the 1883 walls. The newspaper article describes the walls as being reduced in height from fourteen feet to twelve feet (this probably accounted for removal of the sloped weathering courses atop the jail yard walls) whereas the Sanborn Maps mark the street walls of the Fernández & Laiseca Building as being seventeen feet high. [23]

Spanish European Ethnic Heritage in Brownsville

The Mexican vernacular Matamoros merchant's house type and Border Brick Style detailing of the Fernandez & Laiseca Building affiliate it with the use of commercial space and architectural practices associated with Brownsville's Spanish immigrant merchant community from the 1870s to the 1910s. Matamoros rose to prominence as a Gulf port as merchants from the U.S. and Europe established operations there in the 1820s. Not even the Anglo-American rebellion in Texas in 1835-36 disrupted the businesses of foreign merchants in Matamoros. [24] During the U.S.-Mexico War of 1846-48, the U.S. Army occupied Matamoros for the duration of the war, attracting additional merchants such as José San Román-Palacio (1822-1882) of Valle de Arcentales, Vizcaya, who came to the lower Río Grande from New Orleans during the war and operated in both Matamoros and Brownsville. San Román built the San Román Building at 1231-37 E. Elizabeth Street in 1850-51 (defaced). [25] There he conducted a general merchandise business as well as functioning as a commission merchant and banker. San Román lived on the second floor, above his counting and storerooms. [26] San Román recruited relatives in Spain to immigrate to the U.S. to work for him. These included Simón Celaya (1823-1908), who joined San Román in Brownsville in 1850 and was associated with him until 1871, San Román's nephews Fulgencio (1839-1871), Enrique (b. 1845), Feliciano (1848-1899), and Justo San Román (1851-1890), and Fulgencio López-San Román (1864-1927), the son of José San Román's sister. Fulgencio López lived—and died—in the San Román Building. Juan Rico and Wenceslao Junco de la Vega (1825-1875) were other Spanish immigrants who successfully established commercial houses in Brownsville before the Civil War. [27]

Following the Civil War, the brothers José Fernández-Toral (1836-1911) and Miguel Fernández-Toral (1839-1905) of Pendueles, Asturias, Spain, came to Brownsville and about 1867 constructed a substantial two-story brick building at 1049 E. Washington Street on the west corner of Market Square, where they conducted a general merchandise business until dissolving their partnership in 1885. [28] The Fernández brothers' commercial house marked a transition in commercial architecture in Brownsville as the brothers acquired adjoining lots and expanded their two-story corner building into a compound incorporating internal patios. Their nephew, Juan Hano-Fernández (1859-1921), emulated his uncles' example when he built the Juan H. Fernández y Hermano two-story corner store on the east corner of Market Square at 1200 E. Adams in 1884, then proceeded to expand into adjoining lots, incorporating a spacious internal patio in the complex. [29] Other relatives recruited by Miguel Fernández included Manuel (1864-1947) and Antonio Barreda-Pacheco (1868-1951) and their cousin Celestino Pardo-Barreda (1858-1953) of La Penilla, Cantabria, Spain, and Celestino's brothers Dimas and Antonino Pardo-Barreda. [30] Another Spanish immigrant, Victoriano Fernández (1843-1910), immigrated to the U.S. in 1859. Like the Fernández-Cano brothers, Victoriano Fernández does not seem to have been related to the Fernandez-Toral brothers. Victoriano Fernández built a Border Brick Style complex at 1100-1116 E. Adams Street (c. 1874-75) that backs onto Market Square. Because of the shallow site, Victoriano Fernández's building does not contain a patio. [31]

In the post Civil War period, Spanish immigrant merchants—most of them from the adjoining north coast provinces of Asturias, Cantabria, and Vizcaya—Manuel Alonso-Martínez (1842-1922), José Besteiro-Rey (1842-1879),

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Andrés Cueto (1859-1927) and his brothers Manuel, José, and Fernando, and Adrián Ortiz (1860-1957) made their presence felt in Brownsville through the substantial commercial brick complexes they constructed in residential neighborhoods in the First, Third, and Fourth Wards outside downtown [32]. The Alonso, Cueto, and Ortiz buildings embody the distinctive characteristics of the one- or two-story Matamoros merchant's house and the Border Brick Style, as do the commercial houses constructed by Mexican-American merchants Celedonio Garza (1851-1911), Lucio Bouis-Alcalá (1863-1908), and Adolfo Garza-Galván (1856-1923), and the Anglo-American merchant Henry M. Field (1842-1907). [33] Many of these corner store buildings contained one or more dwelling units in addition to commercial premises. Although the number of Spanish immigrants in Brownsville's population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not large, the architectural prominence of these corner store complexes gave the city's Spanish immigrant community exceptional visibility.

José San Román and Wenceslao Junco de la Vega made so much money trading cotton during the Civil War that both retired to Spain after the war [34]. The Spanish novelist Benito Pérez-Galdós includes in his novel *Tormento* (1884) a character, don Agustín Caballero, a merchant who retired to Spain after a thirty-year career in Matamoros and Brownsville, where he first worked for his uncle and eventually employed his cousins to work for him. [35] Simón Celaya and the Matamoros entrepreneurs and brothers Francisco and Eugenio Armendaiz-Arsuaga (originally from Valle de Somorrostro, Vizcaya) invested in railroads and banking. [36] The Armendaiz brothers, along with other members of the Matamoros elite, shifted their operations to Monterrey in the 1880s once Monterrey was connected to the Mexican National Railway line between Laredo and Mexico City. [37] The Fernández-Toral brothers also diversified their investments, with José Fernández moving to Huatusco, Veracruz, where he became a coffee planter while Miguel Fernández remained in Brownsville. [38] Celestino Pardo-Barreda, who managed the San Román properties in Brownsville after 1927, also operated ranches in Mexico, a sugar cane plantation in Cuba, and had extensive real estate investments in Brownsville and the Lower Río Grande Valley at the time of his death in 1953. [39]

In contrast, most of Brownsville's Spanish immigrant merchants, such as the Fernández-Cano brothers and Domingo Laiseca, relied on their general merchandise businesses for their livelihoods and lived out their lives in their storehouse-dwellings. [40] The twentieth-century novelist, Mary Lubbock Lasswell, who grew up in Brownsville in the first two decades of the twentieth century, sought to describe the austerity and reserve of Brownsville's Spanish immigrant community with a humorous comparison in her popular travel book *I'll Take Texas* (1958): "Someone has said that the characteristic difference between the Spaniard and the Mexican is that the Spaniard will offer you his common everyday fare and say: 'Isn't this wonderful *cocido*? Do you not find this wine superior in every respect?' while the Mexican will mortgage his salary for months in advance, go into debt in every way to regale his guests with costly viands, and when complimented on the excellence and abundance of the fare will say: '*La comidita de todos los días*—just our everyday fare.'" [41] The Fernández & Laiseca Building reflects the conservatism of Brownsville's Spanish immigrant commercial community at the conclusion of this chapter in the commercial and architectural history of Brownsville.

#### Commerce: General Merchandise

The Fernández & Laiseca Building is associated with ways of doing business that in Brownsville were rooted in nineteenth-century commercial practices. The commercial context of the Fernández & Laiseca Building can be inferred from contemporary literary works, such as Américo Paredes's "Mexicotexan" novel *George Washington Gómez* (written in the 1930s and early 1940s but not published until 1990). [42] Paredes has the novel's young protagonist work in a neighborhood store in the Fourth Ward of Brownsville that mirrors the scale of business operation and the clientele that likely characterized the Fernández brothers' operations. The decline of this cultural economy is addressed in an essay published in 1930 by Jovita González in the *Southwest Review*, "America Invades the Border Towns." González describes the disruptive impact of American chain stores on the Hispanic neighborhood merchants of the borderland as part of the broader wave of modernization that accelerated

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dramatically after completion of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway in 1904. [43] This disruptive change is also the historical theme of Paredes's *George Washington Gómez*. Such changes affected not only the neighborhood merchants of Brownsville but also those of Point Isabel, Hidalgo, Río Grande City, Roma, and Laredo, Texas, who conducted business from one- and two-story Mexican Creole building types built in the Border Brick style. The Charles Champion Building in Port Isabel (317 E. Railroad Avenue, 1899), the William Odell Building in Hidalgo (E. Flora Street and S. 1st Street, 1889); the Manuel Guerra House (E. Main Street and N. Corpus Christi Street, 1886), the Silverio de la Peña Building, 423 E. Main Street, 1886, Enrique Portscheller), and the François La Borde Building (1902, 1918, 601 E. Main Street), all in Río Grande City; the Manuel Guerra Building (702 Portscheller Street 1884, Enrique Portscheller) and the Nestor Sáenz House, 507 Portscheller Street, 1884, Enrique Portscheller) in Roma; and the Monte Pío El Mexicano (503 San Bernardo Avenue, 1885-1896) and the Varela Building (502 Hidalgo Street, c. 1910) in Laredo are architecturally distinctive examples of the Mexican Creole Border Brick Style building type of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that comprise the commercial context within which the Fernández & Laiseca Building is evaluated. The building's architectural restraint and conservatism reflect resistance to the modernization of retail business trade after railroad access made a much wider array of nationally advertised and distributed products available locally than had been the case before 1904. Just as the Sedicioso Uprising of 1915-16 grew out of a populist reaction against aggressive modernization and Americanization in the south Texas borderlands, so the efforts of the Fernández brothers and Domingo Laiseca to perpetuate accepted methods and scales of retail trade are materialized in the architectural conservatism of their commercial premises. [44]

Summary

The Fernández & Laiseca Building is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance in the areas of Commerce and Ethnic Heritage/European (Spanish) for its association with episodes in the history of Brownsville that contributed to broad patterns of economic and social history along the Texas-Tamaulipas border during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is significant for being built within the walls of the 1883 Cameron County Jail yard and is significant for its association with Brownsville's Ethnic European community of Spanish immigrant merchants. The Fernández & Laiseca Building is also nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance in the area of Architecture because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Mexican Creole vernacular Matamoros merchant's house building type, late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century time period, and method of brick construction associated with the Tamaulipas-Texas Border Brick Style. Finally, the property is significant because it is associated with the distinctive spatial settings of Brownsville, Texas, a border town where Mexican Creole building types were constructed alongside Anglo-American building types to shape a hybrid urban cultural landscape. The period of significance is 1915-1968.

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[27] Very little material has come to light on the careers of Juan Rico and Wenceslao Junco de la Vega. Junco’s brother seems to have been Manuel Junco de la Vega (1824-1877), who remained in Matamoros and was the father of Celedonio Junco de la Vega-Jáuregui (1863-1948), poet, playwright, journalist, and member of the Academia Mexicana de la Lengua. “Junco de la Vega, Celedonio,” in Oscar Rivera Saldaña, *Diccionario Biográfico de la Heróica Matamoros*, H. Matamoros: Librería Española, 2001, pp. 314-319. The Mexican journalist and Grupo Reforma founder Alejandro Junco de la Vega Elizondo (b. 1948) is a grandson of Celedonio Junco de la Vega.

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[36] On Celaya see Chatfield, *The Twin Cities*, p.12 and "Don Simón Celaya Dead," *San Antonio Daily Express*, 27 November 1908, p. 2. On the Armendaiz-Arsuaga brothers see Norman Rozeff, "The Armendaiz Ranch," *Valley Morning Star*, 3 October 2009; Jesús Ruiz de Gordejuela Urkijo's entry on Francisco Armendaiz Arsuaga in the Auñamendi Eusko Entziklopedia at <http://www.euskomedia.org/aunamendi/23571>; and Mario Cerutti, "Empresarios españoles en el Norte de México (1850-1912)," *La historia económica en Latinoamérica*, 17 (March 1999): 143-189.

[37] Historian Alex M. Saragoza identifies many of the leaders of Monterrey's business community who migrated from Matamoros in his book *The Monterrey Elite and the Mexican State, 1880-1940*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988.

[38] Bay, *Historic Brownsville: Original Townsite Guide*, pp. 180-181. On the industrial improvements Fernández introduced to coffee production in Huatusco see the article by Cecilia Guarneros Mendoza, "Historia y cultura de Huatusco: Mesa del Rancho," *El Imparcial*, 24 June 2009: <http://imparcialdehuatusco.blogspot.com/2009/06/historia-y-cultura-de-huatusco.html>.

[39] "Rites Held Today for C P. Barreda," *Brownsville Herald*, 4 February 1953, p. 2.

[40] The Laiseca store, El Globo Chiquito, was owned by the estate of Domingo Laiseca's last surviving child, Mariano Laiseca, until 2008, thirteen years after Mariano Laiseca's death, when it was acquired by Cameron County. Bay, *Historic Brownsville: Original Townsite Guide*, pp. 93-95.

[41] Mary Lasswell with Bob Pool, *I'll Take Texas*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1958, p. 57.

[42] Américo Paredes, *George Washington Gómez: A Mexicotexan Novel*, Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990, pp. 201-204.

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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[43] Jovita González, "America Invades the Border Towns," *Southwest Review*, 15 (Summer 1930), p. 471.

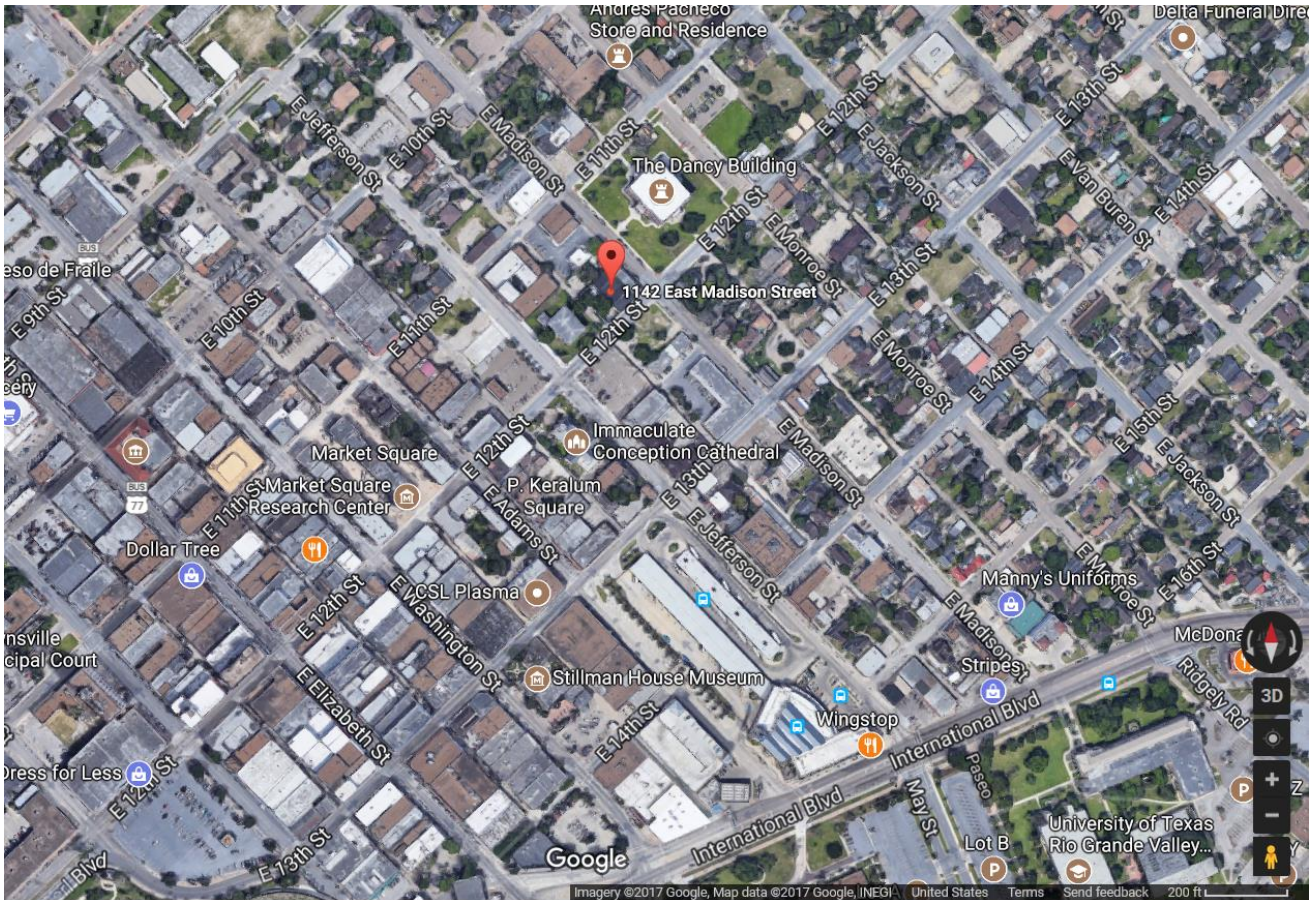
[44] One of the leaders of the Sediocioso Uprising, Luis de la Rosa, had been involved in the retail trade in Brownsville before becoming an insurrectionist. See James Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego, 1904-1923*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992, and Kearney and Knopp, *Boom and Bust*, pp. 215-218.

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Maps



Map 1: Cameron County, Texas

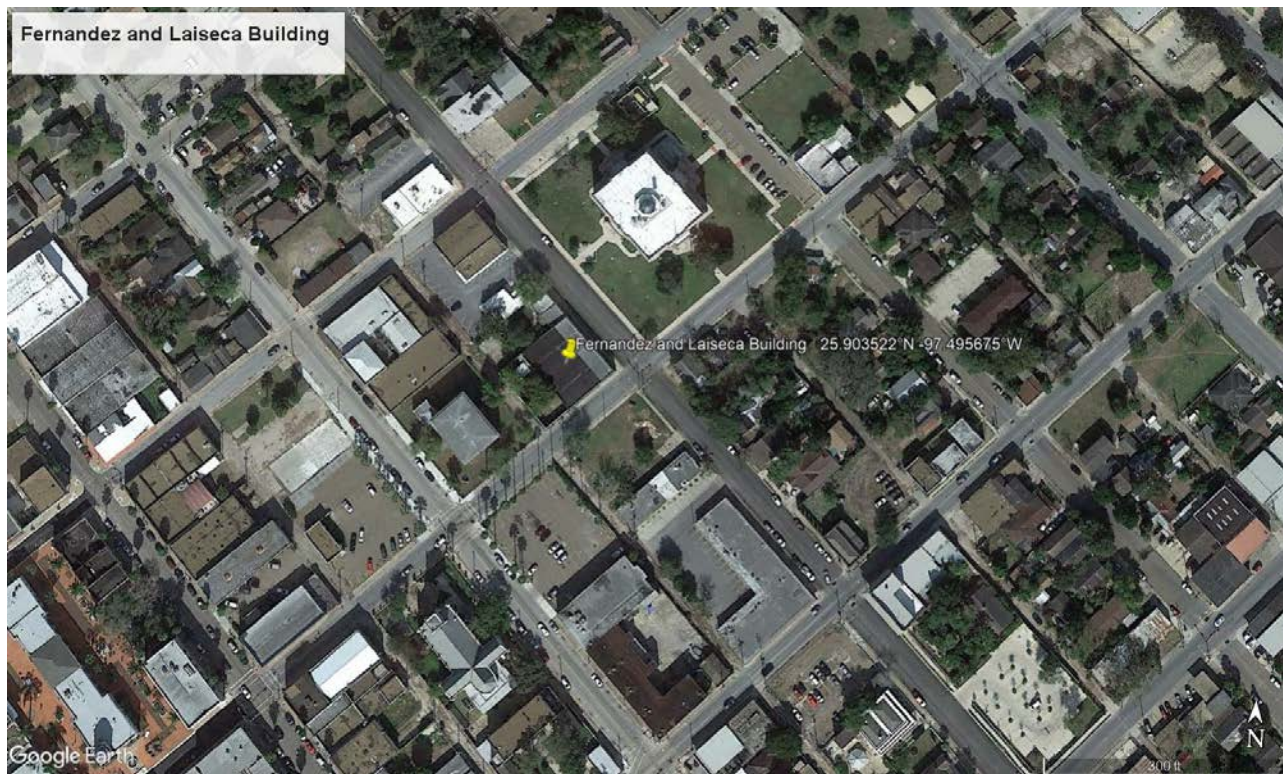


Map 2: Fernandez and Laiseca Building, 1142-1154 E. Madison Street, Brownsville. Google Maps accessed October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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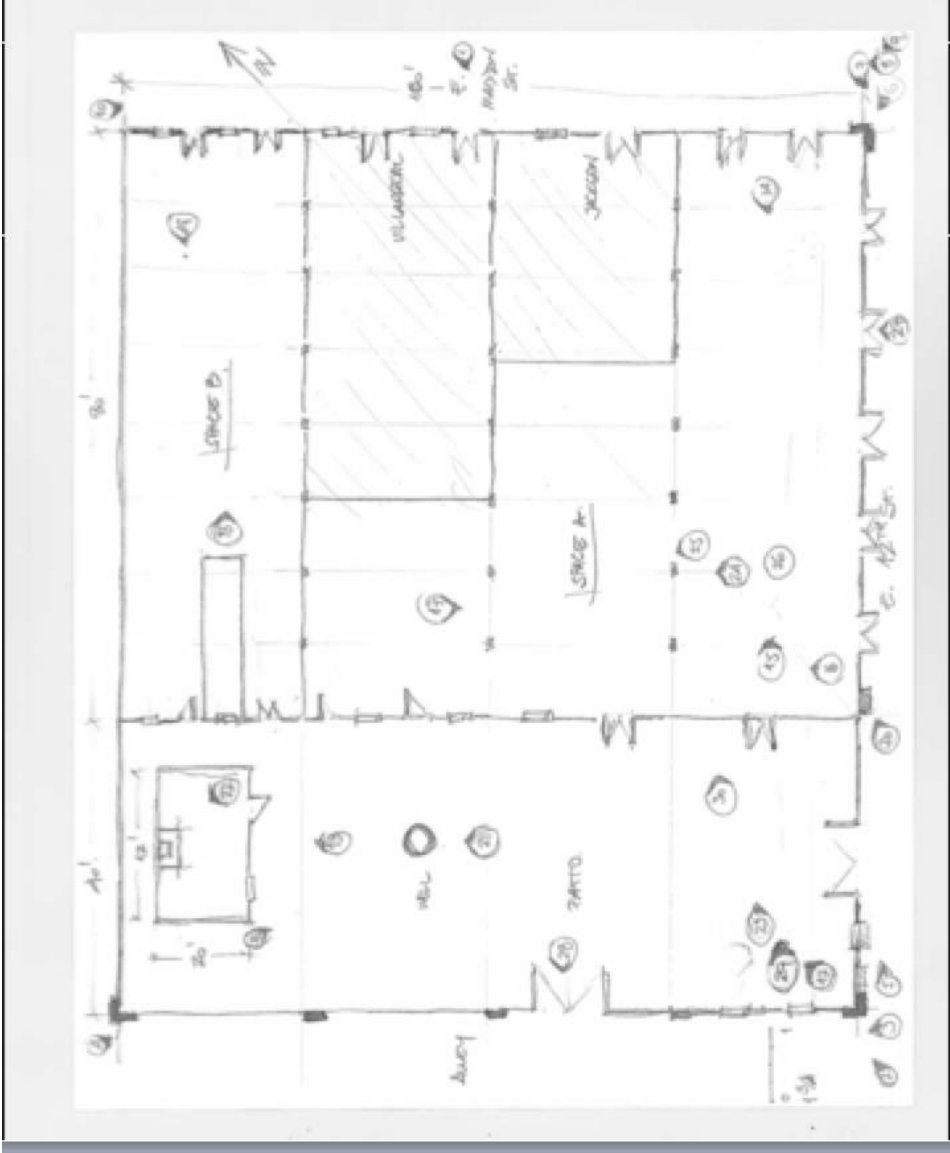


Map 3: Google Earth Aerial accessed March 23, 2018.

Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figures

Figure 1. Sketch plan by Juan M. Vélez, April 2017.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Figure 2: Front (Madison Street) Elevation

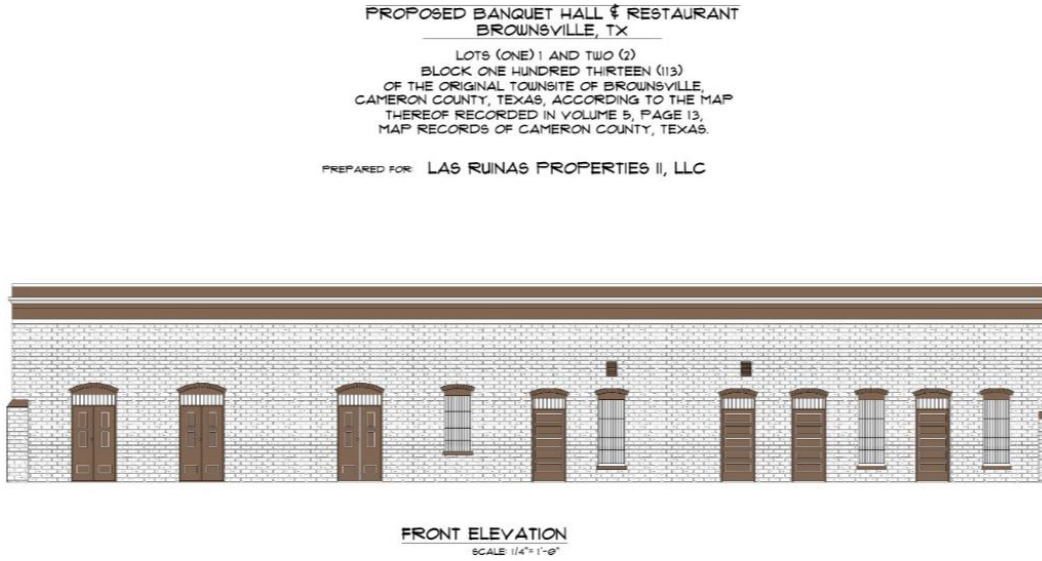


Figure 3: Left Side (E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street) Elevation



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 4: Rear Elevation of 1883 Exterior Wall

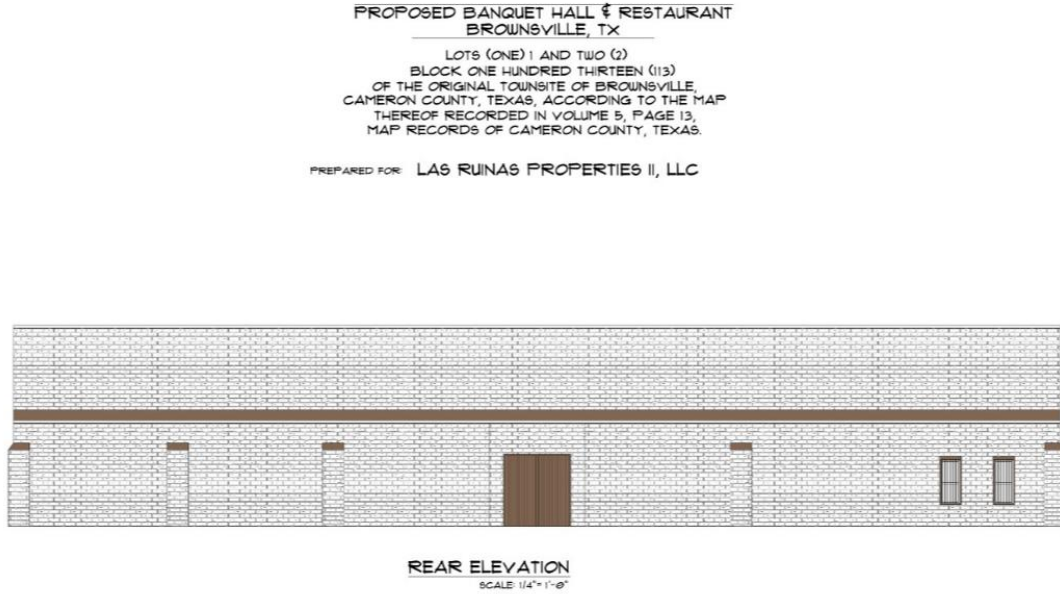


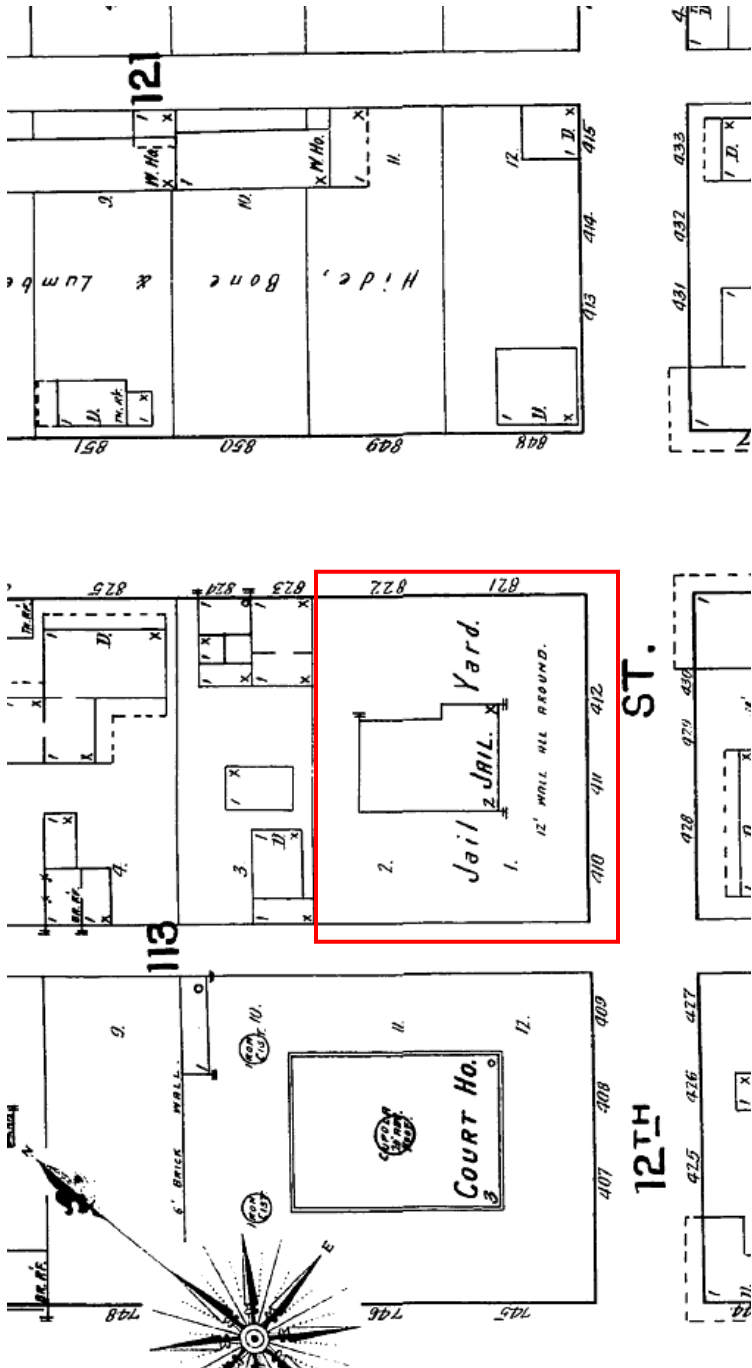
Figure 5: Rear Elevation of 1915 portion of Fernandez and Laiseca Building





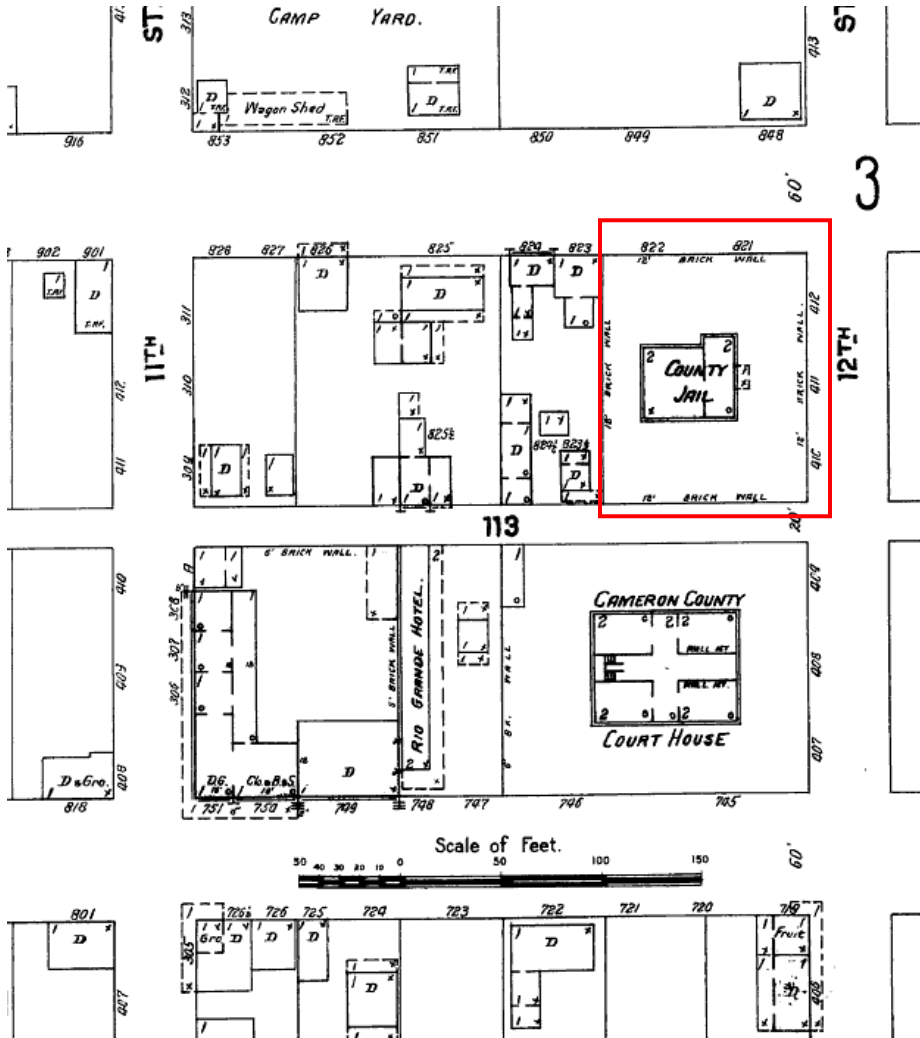
Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 6: Sanborn Map Company, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, 1894, Sheet 5. "Jail Yard" dates to 1883 on site of Fernandez & Laiseca Building. Notice brick perimeter wall and 1883 Cameron County Courthouse to south.



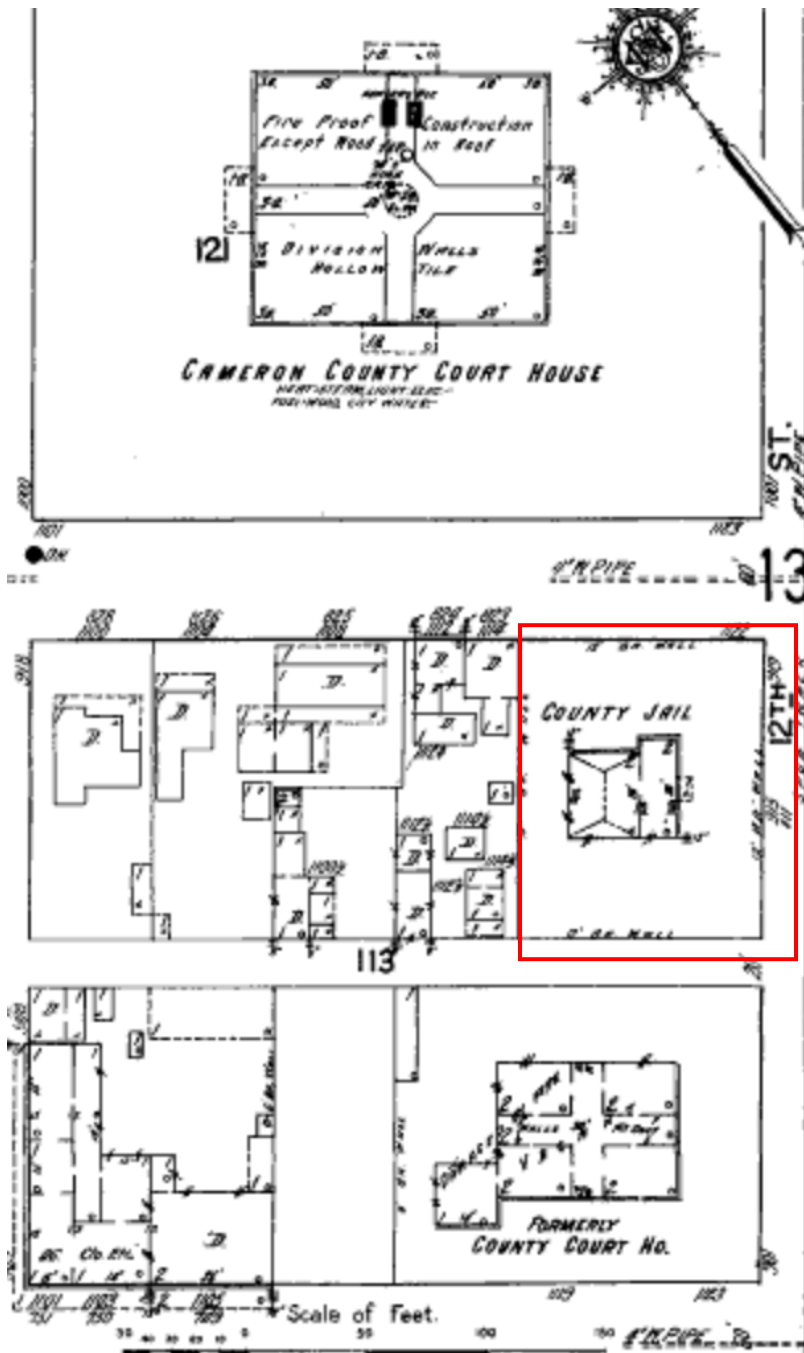
Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 7: Sanborn Map Company, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, 1906, Sheet 2. Site labeled "County Jail" is location of future Fernandez & Laiseca Building. Note brick perimeter wall and 1883 Cameron County Courthouse to south.



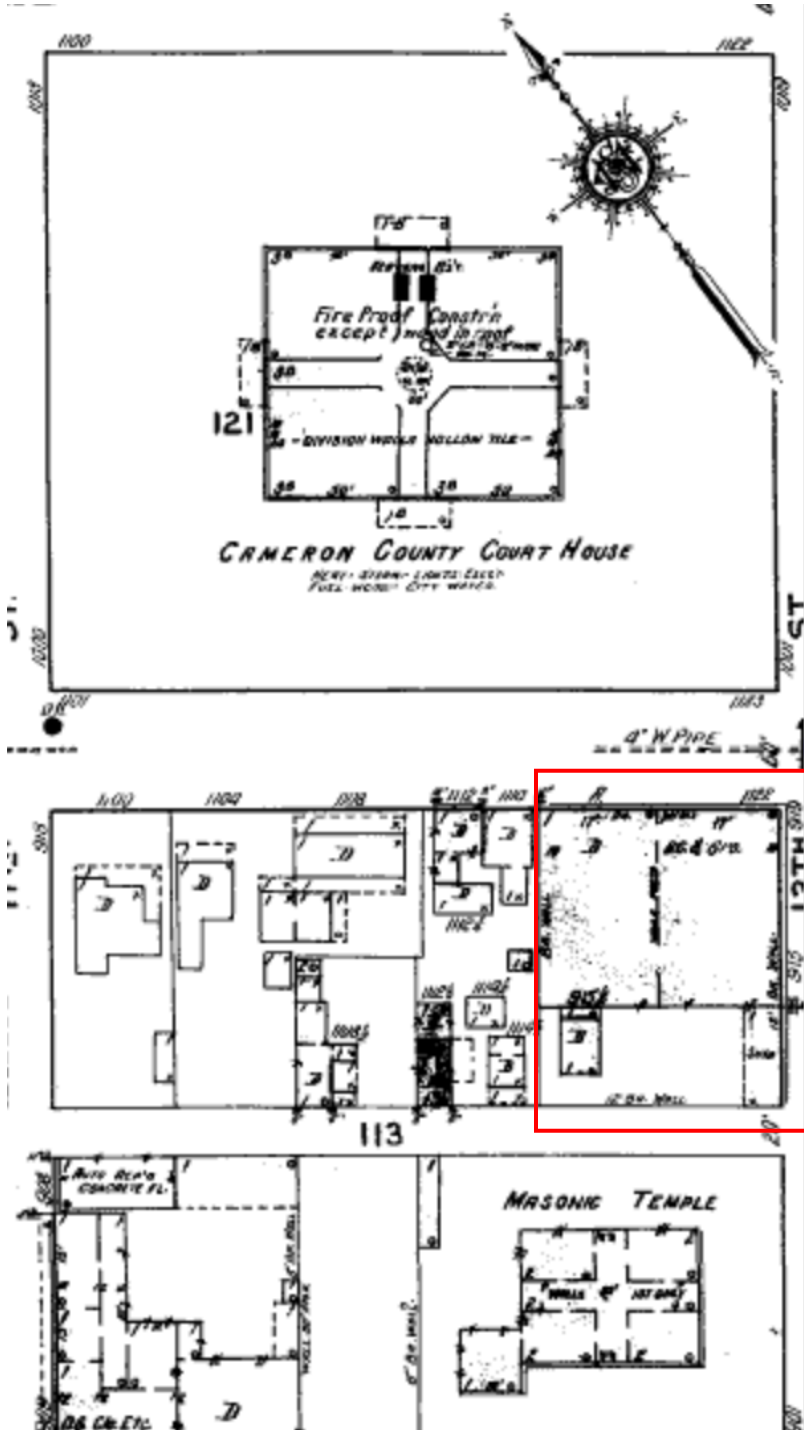
Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 8: Sanborn Map Company, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, March 1914, Sheet 10.  
Site labeled "County Jail" is where Fernández & Laiseca Building would be constructed. 1913 Cameron County Courthouse to north.



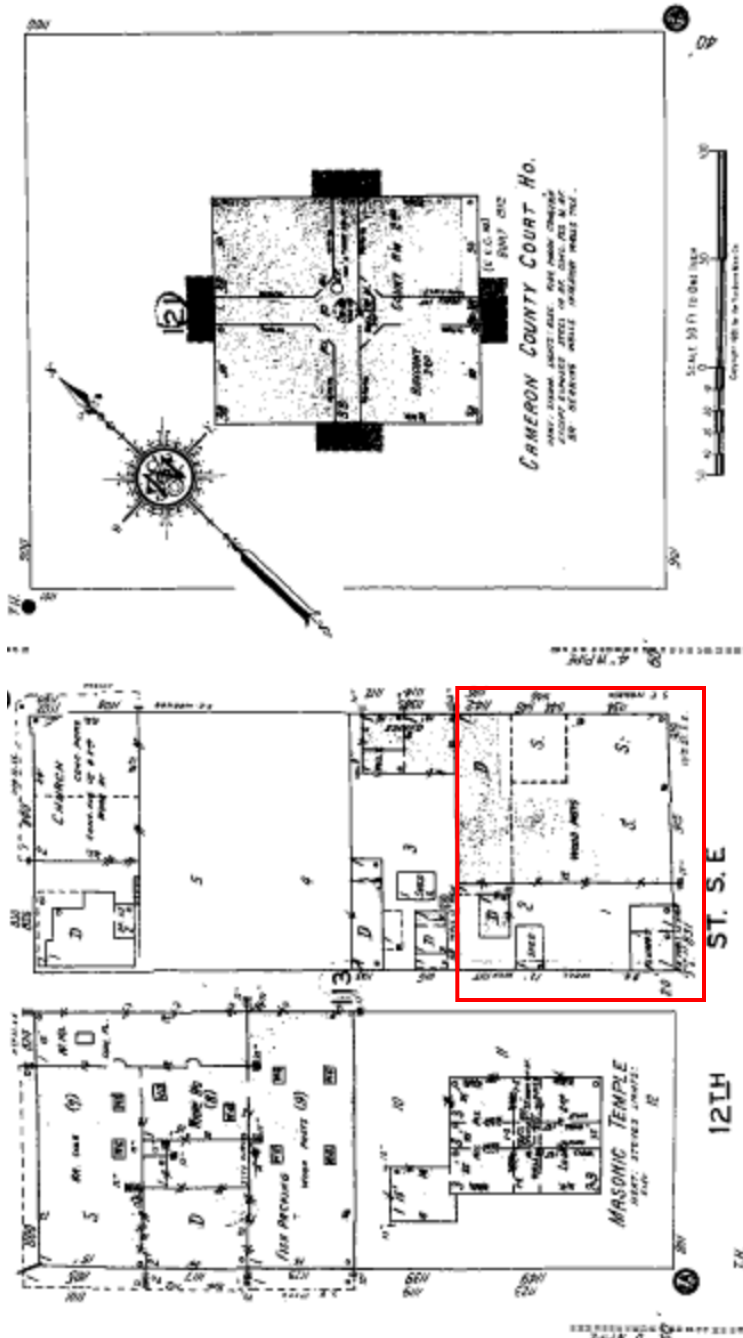
Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 9: Sanborn Map Company, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, May 1919, Sheet 10. 1915 Fernandez & Laiseca outlined in red.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

Figure 10: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, September 1930-February 1949, Sheet 4. 1915 Fernandez & Laiseca Building and extant freestanding patio dwelling outlined in red.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Figure 11: Circa 1907 View of South Elevation of 1883 Cameron County Courthouse and Cameron County Jail. The rear wall of the jail yard is visible at lower right. This confirms the character defining buttresses were part of the original 1883 design. Photo courtesy THC.



Figure 12: View of Rear (North) Elevation of 1883 Cameron County Courthouse with County Jail in Foreground. Photo courtesy of THC.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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## Photographs

Photo #1

Northeast elevation (front) facing E. Madison Street, camera facing southwest.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #2

Northeast and southeast elevations, camera facing west.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #3

Southeast elevation (side) facing E. 12th Street, camera facing northwest.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #4

Paneled double-leaf street door, barred transom, and segmental brick arch, Detail from exterior.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #5

Southwest elevation facing rear patio, camera facing east.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #6

Southwest elevation, detail from exterior, camera facing northeast.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #7

Vertical wood plank patio doors, barred transom, and segmental brick arch. Detail from exterior.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #8

Cast iron grill screening vent opening on patio wall. Detail from exterior.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #9

Exterior brick buttress at E. Madison-E. 12th streets corner, camera looking northwest.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #10

Exterior brick buttress at E. 12th-rear alley corner, camera looking north.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #11

Exterior brick buttress at rear alley-west property line corner, camera looking east.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #12

Southeast and southwest elevations, camera facing north.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #13

Brick paralet, corbelled cornice, and belt courses. Detail from exterior, camera facing north.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #14

Southeast front of one-story, one-room brick dwelling in patio, camera facing northwest.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #15

Interior brick fireplace and hearth in one-room brick dwelling in patio. Detail from interior.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #16

Northeast elevation of barred *zaguán* gates and alcove from inside patio, camera facing southwest.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #17

North corner of patio showing southwest elevation of main building, partial southeast elevation of one-room brick dwelling, trees, and brick wellhead, camera facing north.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #18

Cistern in patio, camera facing east.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #19

Interior of 1152-1154 E. Madison Street bays, camera facing northeast. Doors on right face E. 12th Street.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #20

Interior of 1152-1154 E. Madison Street bays looking toward patio wall, camera facing southeast. Doors on left face E. 12th Street.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #21

Interior looking past line of wood structural posts toward doors facing E. 12th Street. Doors on right face patio, camera facing southeast.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #22

Interior of 1142 E. Madison Street bay, camera facing northeast toward E. Madison Street.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #23

Interior of 1142 E. Madison Street bay, camera facing southwest toward patio.





Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #24

Chamfered wood structural post and *zapata* bracket. Detail from interior.



Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

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Photo #25

Wood floor planks. Detail from interior.







**VILLARREAL**  
INCOME TAX & NOTARY PUBLIC  
SERVICE  
950-544-5650 — AND — 950-544-5978  
FAX: 950-544-8481

1134

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VILLARREAL  
NORTH BAYVIEW TOWER  
1152 - 1154 - 1156 - 1158 - 1160 - 1162

1154

1152

Blue sign with a wheelchair icon, likely a handicapped parking sign.

ONE WAY



































NO  
DUMPING  
\$1,000 FINE





















































3/4" CAN-TEX SUNLIGHT RESISTANT RIGID









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 4/2/2018      Date of Pending List: 4/26/2018      Date of 16th Day: 5/11/2018      Date of 45th Day: 5/17/2018      Date of Weekly List: 5/11/2018

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      5/11/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer Control Unit      Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



**TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

*real places telling real stories*



**TO:** Paul Lusignan  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

**From:** Mark Wolfe, SHPO  
Texas Historical Commission

**RE:** Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas

**DATE:** March 29, 2018

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 of the Fernandez and Laiseca Building, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas
	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:

