

Guide for Bexar County, Texas OST100 Inventory Sheet

We thank you for volunteering to take time to help with the Bexar County, Texas OST100 Inventory. We have put together these pages of explanation to aid you in filling in the blanks of the form. OST100 volunteers are available to help new volunteers by accompanying them on their first few outings to begin cataloging properties, or to help them with the computer aspects of the project. We suggest teams for accomplishing the inventory. Not all individuals have the stamina, legible handwriting, photographic, interviewing, research or computer skills, to create a completed inventory we will be mapping for the www.OLDSPANISHTRAILCENTENNIAL.com website. Altho' when scheduling all those sorts of talented folks becomes troublesome, sometimes it's 'just easier to do it yourself.'

Suggested tools for the inventory are clipboard, at least two sharp pencils with huge erasers, ruler for curb measurements, tape measure for signage, sidewalk and roadway measurements, reading glasses and OST100 informational cards, to show the curious who may ask what you are doing in their neighborhood. Printed forms can be downloaded from the ARTICLES area on the Old Spanish Trail website mentioned above, or from OST100. For legibility it may be best to circle the information on a printed form if a laptop computer is not available.

PHOTOS and DRAINAGE

It may be advisable to take the photos on a separate trip. Best photos of commercial properties are taken on days when cars are not parked to block features of the building. Winter photos allow openness of tree cover. Sun shining onto the façade helps eliminate shadows. This would entail photoing the west side of the street in the morning and east side in the evening. Efficiency of drainage will have to be checked during a heavy rain event to find places water runs inappropriately. Standing water is best assessed just following the rain. A small space is allotted for the date the drainage was checked.

BUILDINGS

Building descriptions will be used to document the historic significance or to help developers find a suitable OST property for revitalization.

The building section of this form is used with permission of the San Antonio Historic Office of the Planning Department. They have prepared **House Style** and **Commercial Form** photos booklets to aid in identification. Copies are available from OST100 for use with our inventory form.

To fill in **Resource Name**, use the residential property owner's name followed by explanation of 'family home' or 'rental.' For business properties use the name of the business posted on signage or listed in the phone book. Sources for finding the property owner are listed near the end of this explanation in the **Digitizing** section.

The **Photo ID** will be two letters for the state, followed by two letters for the county, then two letters for the street name and finally the street address. CDs of labeled digital photos are recommended with duplicate back-up copies stored separately. For Bexar County we are using the following two-digit street lettering. '78' FM78, 'NS' N. Seguin St., 'SS' S. Seguin St., 'US' Upper Seguin Rd., all in Converse, 'OS' Old Seguin Rd. in Kirby, and 'SE' Seguin Rd. and Seguin St. in San Antonio. '35' IH-35, '10' IH-10, 'NB' New Braunfels Ave., 'HN' Houston St., 'FL' Flores St., 'FR' Fredericksburg Rd, 'OF' Old Fredericksburg Rd. and 'BS' Boerne Stage Rd.

Include full **Address:** number, street, city, state and zip code.

Historic Use/Function: can be ascertained by using City Directories of the past, located in the Texana Room on the sixth floor of the Central San Antonio Public Library. Take care to find out from knowledgeable library staff if the street addresses of a particular street may have changed over the years. The city of San Antonio realigned many street numbers where original numbering jumped rivers or streams.

Additions or Alterations may be ascertained by asking the owner or neighbors or by looking at past copies of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Copies of these maps are located in the Institute of Texan Cultures, SA www.OLDSPANISHTRAILCENTENNIAL.com

Public Library and the San Antonio Conservation Society. **Unknown** is included for those not wishing to take the time to knock on doors or search the map records.

SAMPLE

Resource Name: Bob's Restaurant
Address: 456 Seguin St., San Antonio, Tx 78299

Photo ID: TxBxSE456
Year Built: 1958

Corner Lot: yes no

Current Use/ Function: Domestic, Commerce, Industrial, Church, Social, Government, Vacant Lot, Other

Historic Use/Function: Domestic, Commerce, Industrial, Church, Social, Government, Vacant Lot, Other

Stories: 1, 1 1/2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7+

Primary Wall Material:

wood, brick, stone, stucco, vinyl/aluminum siding, asbestos, permastone, metal, glass, other _____

Secondary Wall Material:

wood, brick, stone, stucco, vinyl/aluminum siding, asbestos, permastone, metal, glass, other _____

Additions: unknown no yes

Alterations: unknown no yes

DESCRIBE:

DESCRIBE: enclosed porch

House Style:

Influence:

Commercial Form:

INFRASTRUCTURE

This infrastructure section will be shared with public entities in their assessment of improvement needs of roadways, sidewalks or drainage. It can also be useful to those wanting to add amenities or design enhancement to OST corridors.

The wording in parentheses explains the lettering to be circled to indicate the size of signage or location of feature on the property.

It is helpful to know what direction the road is running, in a north/south direction or east/west direction. Those running at angles can be shown as NE to SW or NW to SE in the **NOTES** section. There is little distinction between a new or excellent **curb**, **sidewalk** or **retaining wall**. You may find some older concrete work without chips or cracks in excellent condition. A metal grate will indicate a drainage drop box to the underground storm sewer. **Utilities**, **Signage** or **Street Furniture** not listed may be added in the **NOTES** section at the bottom of the form. Large traffic signal, electrical or telephone junction boxes stand in some property easements. Under **Public Signage** there is a section for a traffic light pole with the button attached for pedestrians to change the signal. Under **Advertising Signage**, mark the height and width measurements nearest the designation **on pole**, **free standing** or **attached** to the building. The **billboard** designation is for the huge overhead signage usually rented to another advertiser to be viewed at great distance from the property.

(less than -, more than +, front f, back b, center c, side - north n, south s, east e, west w)

Roadway: asphalt, concrete, brick, cobblestone, gravel, width _____ ft. direction: n/s e/w

Curb: none, new, excellent, good, uneven, cracked, chipped, crumbled, height _____ in.

Drainage: standing water, drop box, water flowing n s e w date: _____

Sidewalk: none, new, excellent, good, uneven, cracked, chipped, crumbled

Retaining Wall: none, f, side n s e w, new, excellent, good, uneven, cracked, chipped, crumbled
concrete, stone, timbers, other _____

Alley: none, b, side n s e w, paved, gravel, dirt, grass, overgrown

Utilities: fire hydrant n s e w c, overhead wires: f, b, side n s e w c, all underground,
street light n s e w c, junction box n s e w c, dumpster: side n s e w c at back but seen from street

Signage Public: none, street name, school zone, speed limit _____ mph, neighborhood watch, ped. crossing,
traffic light with ped. button, bus stop # _____, bike lane, curve, caution _____ mph, other _____

Signage Advertising: height: attached - 4ft +4ft, free standing -4ft +4ft, on pole - 4ft + 4ft,
billboard width: - 6ft + 6ft, -6ft +6ft -6ft +6ft

Street Furniture: none, bus bench, bus shelter, park bench, phone, newspaper box,
public mail box, trash receptacle

LANDSCAPE

The landscape section will be used by various civic organizations, community groups or public and private entities wishing to improve the OST corridor with design enhancements, trees or other beautification features.

Porch and yard lighting fixtures are usually more decorative than **security** lighting. **Canopy** trees are those with large branches providing shade. Those tall trees not providing shade can be listed as **other**.

Understory trees are smaller, usually decorative, varieties. **Palm** trees have become one of the themes of the OST.

Wooden fencing for **privacy** leaves no space between slats, such as the opening allowed between **picket fencing** boards. Commercial properties may have solid fences of metal, stone or brick – more like a freestanding wall. Actual **retaining walls** to hold back or terrace earth are above in the infrastructure section. If more than one type of fence is present, it may be necessary to include the information of material, height and position on the lot in the **NOTES** section for the second or third fence.

To complete the **% of street view section**, just estimate about the amount of each sort of ground covering that can be seen from the street. If a long building covers most of the street front, you may not be able to see around it and can just put 100% in the driveway section if there is a drive leading next to the building to the back of the lot. Measuring and precision are not needed, just a rough estimate to let us know if areas are mostly paving or landscaped. In the case of a large side yard, rear fences or dumpsters are sometimes seen from the street.

In the **parking** section, first indicate whether there is a parking lot or just a driveway and then the composition. Driveways on corner lots will sometimes run from the OST; sometimes parallel to the OST, from the side street. Driveway **direction** can be indicated. A **ribbon** driveway is two strips of concrete with a grassy strip between. A **walkway** is in addition to a public sidewalk and can run from the sidewalk to the building, or along the building to the parking lot. Walkway directions can also be shown.

Landscaping: # of each lighting fixture: none, porch ___, yard ___, security ___

of each tree: none, canopy ___, understory ___, palm ___, other (eg tall cedar)___

of each shrub: none, - 4ft tall ___, + 4ft tall ___ **#of flower pots** ___

% of street view: grass ___, flower beds ___, ground cover ___, stone beds ___,
driveway ___, walkways ___, parking lot ___

fence: none, wood/picket, wood/privacy, chain link, iron/picket, metal solid, stone, brick
f side n s e w height: ___ ft at back but seen from street

parking: lot or driveway, ribbon or solid, concrete, asphalt, brick, pavers, gravel, direction: n/s e/w

walkways: concrete, asphalt, brick, pavers, gravel, width: ___ ft, direction: n/s, e/w

NOTES

The **NOTES** section has been included for anything of interest you may notice or find about the property. Names of owners or individuals interviewed or documentary sources for building age or alterations can be placed in that section. One of the goals of OST100 is preservation of buildings, sites or enhancements of historic importance to OST travel or the community. Notes about significant use or architectural style or ownership by a prominent or distinctive person could help preservation efforts. Names of those taking the inventory will be helpful if questions arise. The date the present inventory was filled out will help indicate when updates to the information may be needed. If a particular property is in transition – for sale, new construction or alterations occurring – notes to that effect will indicate a need for a more timely revisit or increased preservation vigilance.

SAMPLE

NOTES: Year Built from BCAD records. Alterations discussed with nextdoor neighbor to the south, name.

SURVEY BY: _____ **DATE:** _____

DIGITIZING THE INFORMATION

By opening the Bexar County Appraisal District (BCAD) mapping website, <http://www.bcad.org/website/bexar/> and zooming in on the street you are inventorying, you will be able to hit the ‘identify’ button for each individual property. The address, owner and BCAD account number will appear in the box to the right of the map. Using the owner’s name or the address, you can go to <http://www.bcad.org/clientdb/main.asp?id=1> to open the property indexes. It is important to click on the proper search option to have the index open. Sometimes the whole owners name will open the index. Most times it is necessary to open the index with just the owner’s last name and scroll to the individual and property address. Clicking on the ‘Property ID number’ in the far left column of the index will bring up the property information. Clicking on the ‘Improvements’ tab will open the card listing year each building was built and additions were made.

When transposing to a disc, the circled information from a print-out of the form can be underlined on the computer copy. When adding information to the present underlined blank spaces, it will be necessary to delete sections of the underlining to keep the form from becoming distorted.

This form was created by OST100 to help us become familiar with the assets or eyesores along the Bexar County, Texas corridor of the Old Spanish Trail auto highway. As mentioned above, it will be shared to build business and political partnerships in the hope that the assets can be preserved and the rest revitalized and beautified to create a pleasant scenic alternative to Interstate-10 for centennial travelers.