

**INTENSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY
ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
AT UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD, SAN
ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS**

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prepared for
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ABSTRACT

On September 5, 2007, the Center for Archaeological Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio conducted an archaeological survey of 1 acre on the University of Incarnate Word (UIW) campus located in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The archaeological work was completed for McChesney Architects, who have planned the construction of a dormitory, and dining hall/ parking garage on the property. A significant portion of the UIW campus is located in the River Archaeological District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the proposed construction abuts 41BX285, a historic period archaeological site. Multiple prehistoric and historic archaeological sites are located on the campus, five of these sites are State Archaeological Landmarks. Due to the likelihood that other prehistoric and/ or historic sites may also be found in the vicinity, it was recommended that an archaeological survey be conducted prior to construction in accordance with the San Antonio Uniform Development Code. There are no federal or state permits, or funds associated with this project conducted on private property and therefore a Texas Antiquities Permit was not required.

Eight shovel tests were placed within or adjacent to the footprint of the two proposed buildings. All shovel tests were negative, although, one non- diagnostic lithic tool was found on the surface. No evidence of site 41BX285 could be identified within or in the immediate vicinity of the proposed buildings. It is highly likely that the site destroyed by recent construction activities prior to this survey. No features were identified during the survey and no new sites were recorded. Therefore, since no intact cultural deposits available for research were located, no further archaeological work is recommended on this property. We recommend the proposed development proceed as planned.

All project-associated documentation is curated at the Center for Archaeological Research according to Texas Historical Commission guidelines.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On September 5, 2007, the Center for Archaeological Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio (CAR-UTSA) conducted an archaeological survey of approximately 1 acre associated with the planned construction of two building on the campus of the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) in the city of San Antonio, Bexar, County, Texas. The work was completed for McChesney Architects, who have designed and will oversee the construction of a dormitory and dining hall/ parking garage. This area can be seen on the San Antonio East 7.5 minute series USGS topographic quadrangle (Figure 1-1). A significant portion of the UIW campus is located in the



River Archaeological District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The proposed construction abuts 41BX285, a historic period archaeological site. Multiple prehistoric and historic archaeological sites are located on the UIW campus; five of them are State Archaeological Landmarks. For these reasons, the City Historic Preservation Office (CHPO) recommended archaeological investigations prior to construction in accordance with the San Antonio Uniform Development Code. Therefore, McChesney Architects contracted with CAR to

conduct an intensive pedestrian archaeological survey of the proposed footprint of these two buildings.

The CAR performed the necessary tasks to meet the SAHPO's requirements. The current project does not require a Texas Antiquities Committee Permit because no federal or state owned land or funds will be used during development and no other state permits will be required to complete the planned development. CAR conducted fieldwork that included a pedestrian survey using shovel testing and surface inspection to meet the Minimum Standards set forth by the Texas Historical Commission.

Project Area Setting

The survey area lies within the urban watershed of the Olmos Basin and the headwaters of the San Antonio River. The project area consists of two parcels upon which two building are to be constructed. The first and northern most parcel is the site of the proposed dormitory building. Part of its footprint will fall on an existing parking lot (see Figure 1-2). However, construction activities may impact a previously undisturbed area north of the parking lot. The second parcel is east and uphill from the proposed dormitory. It will be the site of a dining hall/ parking garage is to be constructed lies within a relatively steep drainage (see Figure 1-3). This parcel is an undisturbed heavily vegetative area (see Figure 1-3). The total area of the combined parcels is approximately .95 acres.



Figure 1-2. *The site of the proposed dormitory.*

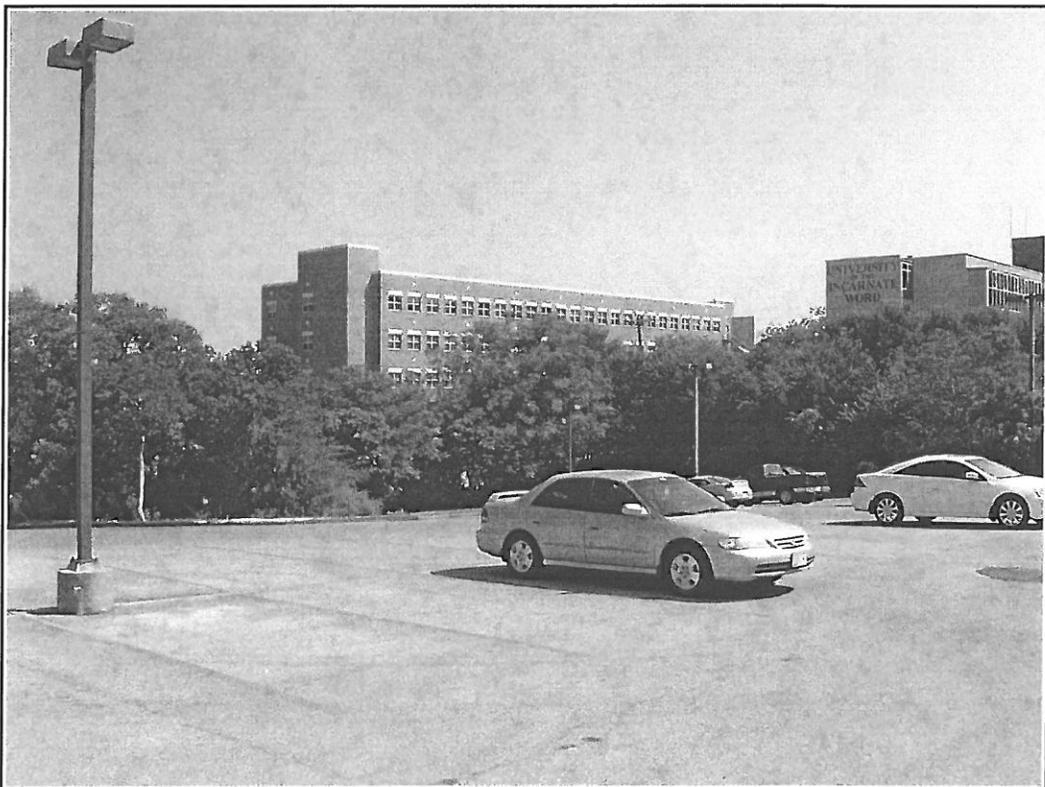


Figure 1-3. *The site of the proposed dining hall/ parking garage (center is the "new dorm" and far left is the International Center on the UIW campus).*

The project area lies within the southern end of the Olmos Basin and near the headwaters of the San Antonio River. The Olmos Creek flows from northwest San Antonio approximately 15 miles southeast and flows into the San Antonio River on the campus at the San Antonio Spring also known as the "Blue Hole." The stream is dammed midway through its course by the Olmos Dam. Prior to historic development, this section of the basin was a riparian zone consisting oak-juniper-hickory, and mesquite (Stothert 1989:5).

Previous Surveys and Archaeological Sites

In 1975, the Center for Archaeological Research conducted archaeological surveys of the UIW campus owned by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (Fox 1975:1). During that survey, thirteen sites were identified and recorded. Between 1976 and 1982, UIW initiated a program of summer field school that resulted in the investigation of the following sites: 41BX291, 41BX509, 41BX510, 41BX24, and 41BX338 (Stothert 1989:26). In 1978, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, and the then named Incarnate Word College listed a large portion of the campus on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) known as the "River Archaeological District" to preserve and foster research of known archaeological sites (Stothert 1989:80-82). There are thirteen prehistoric and historic sites in this district, of these, five sites are listed as State Archaeological Landmarks under section # 108 of the Antiquities Code of Texas (see Table 1). These sites date from approximately 8000 BP through the late nineteenth century.

Table 1. List of THC registered sites on the UIW Campus.

Site Number	Name or Type	Status
41BX24	prehistoric midden prehistoric site and 19th century refuse area	SAL- unknown
41BX261	area	unknown
41BX282	San Antonio Spring ("The Blue Hole")	unknown
41BX283	Historic Quarry	unknown
41BX284	"Old Mill" site	unknown
41BX285	historic foundations	presumed destroyed
41BX286	prehistoric quarry/ lithic workshop	unknown
41BX287	19th century refuse area	SAL- unknown
41BX288	prehistoric midden	SAL-unknown
41BX289	Brackenridge Villa	unknown
41BX290	prehistoric midden	SAL- unknown
41BX291	prehistoric site	SAL-unknown
41BX292	prehistoric site	unknown

CHAPTER 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD AND LABORATORY METHODS

Based on the area impacted by construction (less than 1 acre), only one shovel test was required to fulfill the THC minimum survey standards, of one shovel test for every two acres. Due to the archaeological significance of the area, eight shovel tests were proposed across the footprints of the buildings.

Shovel tests measured 30 cm in diameter, and when possible were excavated to a depth of 60 cm below surface (cmbs) in 10-cm increments. All soil from each level was screened through 1/4-inch hardware cloth. All collected artifacts were to be recorded with appropriate provenience for laboratory processing, analysis, and curation. A shovel test form was completed for every excavated shovel test. Data collected from each shovel test included the final excavation depth, a tally of all materials recovered from each 10-cm level, and a brief soil description (texture, consistence, color, inclusions). The location of every shovel test was recorded with Trimble Geo XT GPS units. Shovel test locations were also sketched onto aerial photographs as a backup to GPS provenience information.

For the purposes of this survey, an archaeological site must contain a certain number of cultural materials or features that at least 50 years old within a given area. The definition of a site used for this project is as follows: (1) Five or more surface artifacts within a 15-meter radius, (2) a single cultural features such as a hearth, observed on the surface or within a shovel test, (3) a positive shovel test containing at least three artifacts within a single 10-cm level, (4) a positive shovel test containing at least five total artifacts or (5) two positive shovel tests located within 30 meters of each other.

All records generated during the project were prepared in accordance with federal regulation 36 CFR part 79 and THC requirements for State Held-in-Trust collections. Additionally, these materials were curated in accordance with current CAR guidelines. Digital photographs were printed on acid-free paper, labeled with archival appropriate materials, and placed in archival-quality sleeves. All field forms were completed with pencil. All collected materials are housed at CAR.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

A total of eight shovel tests were excavated within the foot prints of the proposed buildings. Three shovel tests were excavated on the dormitory footprint and five shovel tests were excavated on the western portion of the footprint of the dining hall/ parking garage. The eastern portion of the dining hall/ parking garage footprint lies within a steep drainage (grade of >20%) and consequently could not be shovel tested (see Figure 3-1 and 3-2). The surface area of both footprints was visually inspected to locate any cultural features, and relocate site 41BX285. The drainage was examined extensively for any eroding features.



Figure 3-1. *The eastern portion of the dining hall/ parking garage footprint. Note the heavy vegetation and the steep drainage on this portion.*

The results of the shovel tests demonstrated that soil was relatively shallow (approximately 20-50 cm below surface) with degraded limestone bedrock. Soils in the area are within the Tarrant and or Tarrant association Series. Generally, these soils are a thin layer of calcareous clay loam over limestone bedrock (Taylor et al.1991:30). No artifacts were found in any of the shovel tests. One non-diagnostic biface tool was found on the surface in the vicinity of shovel test 4. It was photographed and left in situ (Figure 3-3). No surface or subsurface evidence of 41BX285 could be relocated. It is likely that the site was destroyed or buried by recent construction. It was noted that several cut limestone blocks were found and serving as borders for planted vegetation that are possibly the remains of the 41BX285.

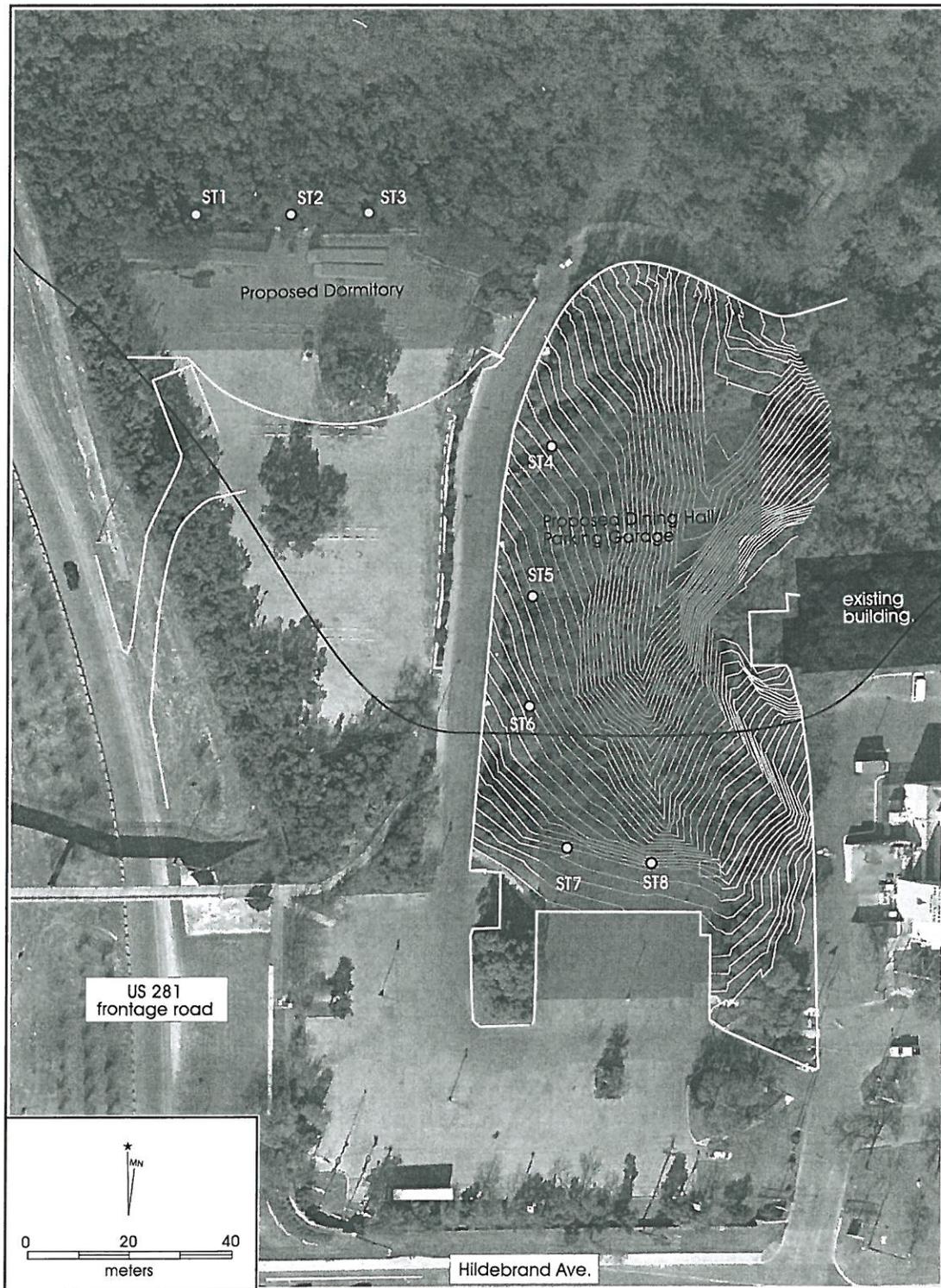


Figure 3-2. The project area showing the locations of the proposed buildings and shovel tests. Area shaded in blue is the designated NHRP River Archaeological District.

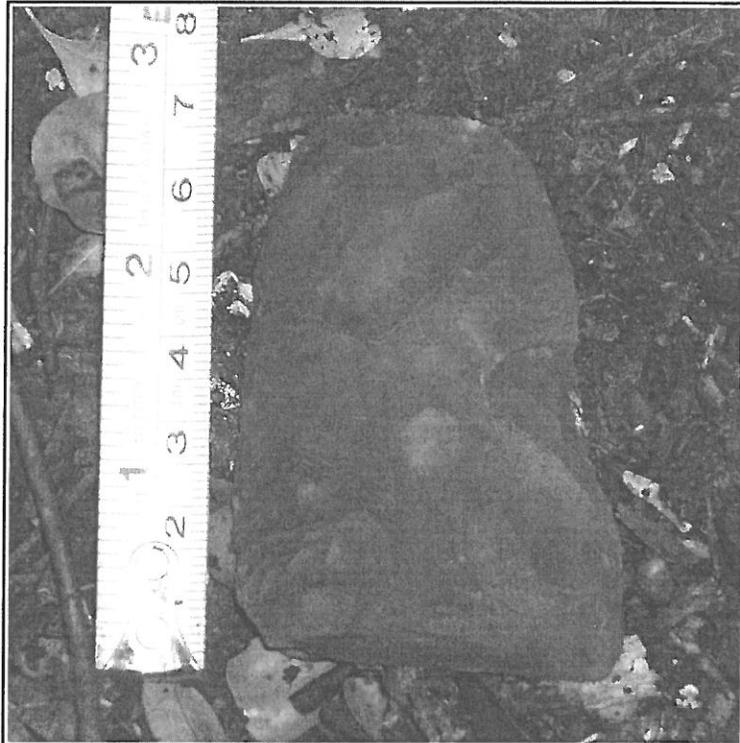


Figure 3-3. *Photo shows the isolated find of non- diagnostic biface.*

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center for Archaeological Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio conducted an archaeological survey of less than one acre on the campus of the University of the Incarnate Word located in San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, on September 5, 2007. The archaeological work was completed for McChesney Architects, who designed and will oversee the construction of a dormitory, and dining hall/ parking garage on the property. The SAHPO, in accordance with the city's Uniform Development Code, recommended archaeological investigations prior to construction because the proposed construction partially lies within a National Register of Historic Places archaeological district, and is adjacent to 41BX285, an archaeological site. There are no federal or state permits, properties or funds associated with this project, therefore a Texas Antiquities Permit was not required.

CAR excavated eight shovel tests within the project area and visually inspected the surface of the project area. The tests revealed shallow soils over a limestone bedrock. All shovel tests were negative for cultural materials. A non-diagnostic prehistoric artifact was found on the surface, photographed, and left in situ. No features were identified during the survey and no sites were recorded. Site 41BX285 was described as a historic period limestone foundation and was located adjacent to the project area. **CAR searched for and could not locate any surface or subsurface indications of 41BX285. The site is presumed destroyed by previous and recent construction.** Since, no intact cultural deposits were identified; we find no archaeological research potential within the project area. CAR recommends that no further archaeological work is necessary, and the proposed development project may proceed as planned. **However, CAR notes that future construction or improvements on the campus take into consideration the original intents of the NRHP listing made by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and UIW, that of preservation and research, to fulfill the spirit of that agreement.**

All project-associated documentation are curated at the Center for Archaeological Research according to Texas Historical Commission guidelines.

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