

(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1768

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Roughly bounded by Myrtle St., Camp St., Washington St., and Crockett St.  
CITY OR TOWN: Seguin VICINITY: N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A  
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Guadalupe CODE: 187 ZIP CODE: 78155

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (x 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 ( x meets) ( ) does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ( ) nationally) ( ) statewide) ( x locally). ( ) See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

6-23-03

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_meets \_\_\_does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  
See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

8/14/03

**5. CLASSIFICATION**

**OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:** Private

**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY:** District

**In revised and expanded district**

CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
79	36	BUILDINGS
		SITES
1	1	STRUCTURES
		OBJECTS
80	37	TOTAL

**In boundary increase area only**

CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
9		BUILDINGS
		SITES
		STRUCTURES
		OBJECTS
9		TOTAL

**NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER:** 62 extant contributing buildings listed within original boundaries

**NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:** NA

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** RELIGION: religious facility  
 COMMERCE/TRADE: business, department store, print shop, barber shop  
 GOVERNMENT: post office  
 DOMESTIC: single dwelling, tourist cabin

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:** COMMERCE/TRADE: business, office building  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
 VACANT

**7. DESCRIPTION**

**ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century: Greek Revival  
 Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Tudor Revival, Mission Revival  
 Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements: Craftsman  
 Other: 1-part commercial block

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION CONCRETE, STONE  
 WALLS CONCRETE, WOOD, STONE, STUCCO, BRICK  
 ROOF ASPHALT  
 OTHER

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-12).

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

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The purpose of this nomination amendment is to increase the boundary of the Seguin Commercial Historic District (NR 1983), extend the period of significance to 1953, and reconsider the contributing status of properties previously considered *noncontributing* or *compatible*. All properties in the district have also been reexamined to determine if any previously contributing buildings have undergone changes that adversely effect their contributing status. The boundary increase includes three separate areas, all of which are immediately adjacent to the original boundary. Together, these areas contain nine contributing buildings and no noncontributing properties. These properties all relate to the commercial and/or institutional development of Seguin and represent all extant historic properties located immediately adjacent to the original district.

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The revised Seguin Commercial Historic District encompasses 115 individual buildings and two structures constituting the central business district. Most of the buildings, constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, reflect typical small town construction techniques by being structurally load-bearing brick and modest in facade ornamentation. Corbelled brick cornices, sawtooth brick details, multi-light transoms, and a few concrete block buildings define the district. In form, many of the buildings are typically in a three-part composition and fit the 1- and 2-part commercial blocks as defined by Richard Longstreth in the 1980s. Several buildings reflect Moderne influences, most notably the Guadalupe County Courthouse. Three distinct areas are being added to the district (two to the east, one to the west) in this boundary increase.

**Area 1** is the half block facing Camp Street bounded to the north by Mountain Street, and to the south by Gonzales Street. This block contains the 1934 US Post Office with its 1960s addition, and one 1-part commercial building dating to c.1915.

- **Property 115 (Old Seguin Post Office, 1934)**  
202 N. Camp

The Old Seguin Post Office, built in 1934 and designed by Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon of the U.S. Treasury Office, is representative of the reserved style reflected in other designs under his supervision. A product of the New Deal, the Old Seguin Post Office, is characteristic of Mediterranean Revival style, with restrained ornamentation, concrete construction with applied stucco, clean straight lines, red roof tiles and a flat roof with parapets. The main doorway features decorative stonework. The main lobby features brass postal boxes, double hung wooden windows, and polished terrazzo floors. The Old Seguin Post Office is an good local example of the Depression-era architecture, and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The post office is directly across the street from a block of noncontributing properties, including a parking lot and other open space occupying the west side of the block, but the building is visually and historically connected to the district. The building is visible from several vantage points from within the district, and likewise, portions of the district are visible from the post office. The location of the 1934 post office, on the edge of the commercial center of the town, is in keeping with the location of post offices throughout the United States, which were often located on secondary commercial streets. The Seguin Post Office was enlarged in 1965, but the addition shares similar materials with the original building. There is a clear line of demarcation of the old versus new structure. No character-defining features of the original building were altered. The Old Seguin Post Office was rehabilitated in 2001 through the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit program, and is now used as a law office.

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- **Property 116 (1-part commercial block, c.1915)**  
200 Block N. Camp

This building was constructed c. 1915, based on evidence from Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Although the parapets on the north and south portions feature different decorative elements, they are united under a simple flat cornice. Sanborn maps indicate that the property has historically served as a single building. The building is a 1-part commercial block of buff brick. The southern section is divided into two equal bays with large tinted plate glass windows; the second bay features a recessed entryway, most likely the original configuration, but featuring a modern metal door and fixed transom. The parapet features a long cast stone or concrete panel with simple shields at both ends. The northern portion of the building is divided into two unequal bays. The first bay features three large tinted plate glass windows. The second (smaller) bay is slightly recessed, asymmetrically arranged, and features a contemporary metal door and fixed transom to the left of a single tinted glass window. The parapet on this portion of the building features seven long panels delineated by raised buff brick. The chamfered northeast corner once featured a doorway, which has been filled.

The building is not shown on the 1912 Sanborn map, but appears on the 1916 map, subdivided into three sections. The northernmost section, accounting for about a quarter of the floor space, served as an electric-powered printing plant; the middle section was grocery store, and the southernmost section (roughly half the floor space) was occupied by the post office. The 1930 Sanborn map reveals that the printing plant had expanded into the center section, and the southern half of the building is identified simply as an "office." The building was still used as a print shop through the mid-1940s, and possibly later.

**Area 2** contains all the properties associated with the Baxter-Fennell-Tips Complex, which are currently being rehabilitated through the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit program. It is located at the southwest corner of River and Walnut.

- **Property 117 (Tips House, 1851)**  
202 E. Walnut

Built by William Chester Baxter in 1851 and occupied by the Fennell-Tips family since 1860 to the present, the Baxter-Fennell-Tips House is an excellent example of Texas Greek Revival architecture. The primary (south) facade exhibits a five-bay division with a one-story entry portico at the center bay. The two-story house features a gable roofed sheathed in corrugated metal over the original wood shingles at a six-on-twelve pitch. Rising above each gable are plastered brick chimneys on stone foundations capped with brickwork termini. Chimney girths reduce above the first floor articulating fireplaces that occur only on the first floor. The interior fireplace surrounds have been modified. Clad in tapered cypress clapboard siding, the building is braced balloon frame set upon rock piers. The house retains its original five-bay facade with original paneled walnut double doors and transom and rear entry door and transom, and 6/6 double-hung wood windows. The entry portico, west elevation porch and west elevation entry door are products of the early 20th century additions. Originally the house featured a central hall plan with two rooms on each floor. Evidence on site indicates the stair has been reversed from its original configuration. In addition to the 1920s entry portico and west porch, a rear two-story ell (north) was added incorporating a second story bathroom and bedroom, and a first story kitchen/utility space rendering the house to approximate the appearance of a "salt box" profile. In 1937, the house was documented under the Historic American Buildings Survey (Survey No. Tex-347)

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Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

Located on a large parcel in downtown Seguin, the Baxter-Fennell-Tips House property includes five additional buildings to the east and north of the house. The original function of these late 1920s-late 30s structures were residential (four buildings, known collectively as "Tips Court") and commercial (one building). The southernmost building (204 E. Walnut, Property 118) is a Craftsman style cottage clad in wood shingles. The other buildings (labeled C-F on site plan) are relatively unadorned and are constructed of an early proprietary 20th century modular and cheeked block system which required only a thin mortar slurry for binding the assembly. The system was used in several buildings in Seguin. Mr. Eugene Tips was affiliated with the product.

- **Property 118 (Tips Cottage, c.1930)**  
204 E. Walnut, Craftsman Style  
1-story Craftsman Style wood shingled cottage; symmetrical façade with single door, flanked by 1/1 wood windows; side-gabled roof with exposed rafter ends
- **Property 119 (Tips Cottage, c.1930)**  
206 E. Walnut  
1-story stucco Tudor Style cottage with asymmetrical front-gabled arcaded porch with arched doorway and window opening; porch flanked by 1/1 wood windows; exposed rafter ends
- **Property 120 (Tips Cottage, c.1930)**  
208 E. Walnut  
1-story stucco Tudor Style cottage with asymmetrical front-gabled arcaded porch with arched doorway and window opening; porch flanked by 1/1 wood windows; exposed rafter ends
- **Property 121 (Tips Cottage, c.1930)**  
210 E. Walnut  
Center-plan cottage with symmetrical primary elevation featuring a single door flanked by single 1/1 wood windows; narrow gabled porch roof over door supported by brackets
- **Property 122 (1-part commercial block, c.1930)**  
409 N. River  
This 1-part commercial building was used as an office, and later as a barbershop. Its façade is symmetrical, with a single central door flanked by wood 4/1 windows, corner pilasters and a flat parapet. The building has been faced with textured stucco. A center-gabled porch roof has been removed, but the wooden brackets remain, and the outline of the roof is visible.

**Area 3** contains the First Baptist Church Building and is located the northeast corner of the block at Camp and Center streets.

- **Property 114 (First Baptist Church/South Texas Printing Co., c.1877; current configuration c.1915)**  
201 W. Center

This property, a 2-story Mission Style church, is one of the last 19<sup>th</sup> century concrete buildings in the district. The church was built c.1877 to replace an earlier concrete church on the east side. The building appears on the 1885 Sanborn map

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with a simple rectangular plan. The 1902 map reveals a small addition on the north east built after 1896. By 1916, the building attained its present configuration, with a 2-story corner tower and the east side built out towards the street. The flat-roofed tower is slightly inset at the northeast corner of the building. The building's predominant features include three curved parapets typical of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Mission Style: two on the east façade, and one on the north. The building retains a high degree of integrity.

Frederick Law Olmsted noted the concrete buildings of Seguin in his 1856 book *Journey Through Texas*. Dr. John Esten Park (b. 1814, Eatonton, Putnam County, Georgia) is credited with the local promotion of this construction technique, common in (and unique to) Seguin in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The materials necessary for concrete production (lime, silica/sand and aluminous earth) were readily available in Seguin. Park brought his family to Seguin c.1847. Trained at the Louisville Medical Institute, his interest in concrete construction may have been spurred through familiarity with the burgeoning Louisville cement industry. As a general contractor, he built the 1850 Guadalupe Male Academy and the 1852 "Female Department" building. The concrete wall method promoted by Park was used in 100 or more buildings in Seguin, 29 of which were extant when surveyed in the late 1970s. The best known of these buildings is the Greek Revival Joshua Young House ("Sebastapol"), built in 1854-56. Sebastapol (NR 1970) is owned and maintained by Texas Parks and Wildlife.<sup>1</sup>

**Resurvey of district, 2003**

In 2003, Texas Historical Commission staff conducted a survey of the Seguin Commercial Historic District. All properties in the district were reexamined to determine if any previously contributing buildings have undergone changes that adversely effect their contributing status. In addition, several buildings not considered significant in the early 1980s are clearly contributing today. These properties include the moderne Palace Theater, featuring a large vertical neon sign and horizontal marquee (314 S. Austin), and the 1949 Masonic Lodge, a 2-story buff brick symmetrical modern building featuring paired metal sash windows and ornament limited to raised brick banding on the upper portion (200 S. Crockett).

**Table 1- Properties added to historic district through boundary increase**

ID #	Address	Date	Status	Notes
114	200 S. Camp	Late 19 <sup>th</sup> cent; remodeled c.1915	C	First Baptist Church – Mission Revival
115	202 N. Camp	1934	C	Former Post Office – Moderne
116	214 N. Camp	c.1915	C	1-Part commercial block
117	202 E. Walnut	1851	C	Tips House – Greek revival
118	204 E. Walnut	c.1930	C	Tips cottage - Craftsman
119	206 E. Walnut	c.1930	C	Tips cottage - Craftsman
120	208 E. Walnut	c.1930	C	Tips cottage - Craftsman
121	210 E. Walnut	c.1930	C	Tips cottage - Craftsman
122	409 N. River	c.1930	C	1-part commercial block (office/barbershop)

<sup>1</sup> Hauser, Vincent Paul. *A Survey of the Technologies Contributing to the Concrete Era of Seguin in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (MA thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1980), pp 46-62.

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**Table 2 – Revised Contributing/Noncontributing Summary**

62	Buildings previously considered Contributing remain Contributing
33	Buildings previously considered Noncontributing remain Noncontributing
8	Buildings previously considered Noncontributing are now Contributing
1	Building previously considered Contributing is now Noncontributing
1	Contributing structure moved; now noncontributing
9	Contributing buildings added to district through boundary expansion
2	Noncontributing buildings built in district since initial listing
(2)	Noncontributing buildings demolished since listing
(6)	Contributing buildings demolished since listing
<b>117</b>	<b>Total properties present in expanded district</b>

**Table 3 - Seguin Commercial Historic District Revised Inventory (2003)**

ID #	Address	Date	Orig. Status	Current Status	Notes
1	430 N Austin	c.1975	N	N	
2	420 N Austin	c.1960	N	N	
3	420 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	
4	427 N Austin	c.1925	C	C	
5	425 N Austin	1925, 1945	C	C	
6	417 N Austin	c.1925	N	N	
7	102 E Mosheim	c.1930	N	N	
8	424 N River	c.1925	N	N	
9	406-416 N Austin	c.1910-1915	C	Demo.	
10	406-416 N Austin	c.1910-1915	C	Demo.	
11	NE Corner Camp & Walnut	c.1915	N	N	
12	415 N Austin	c.1930	N	N	
12a	411 N Austin	c.1930	C	C	
13	409 N Austin	1893	C	C	
13a	409 N Austin	c.1893	C	N	Gazebo moved to lot across street to 2020 E. Walnut
14	409 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	
15	112 W Mountain	c.1910	C	C	
16	110 W Mountain	c.1905	C	C	
17	314 N Austin	c.1905	N	N	
18	304-310 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	
19	304-310 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	
20	304-310 N Austin	c.1900	C	Demo.	
21	300-302 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	

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ID #	Address	Date	Orig. Status	Current Status	Notes
22	309-315 N Austin	c.1900	C	Demo.	
23	309-315 N Austin	c.1900	C	Demo.	
24	301 N Austin	1912-16	C	C	
25	314 N River	c.1900	C	C	
26	310 N River	c.1930	N	N	
27	200 N Austin	1956	N	N	
27a	200 N Austin	c.1910	C	C	
28	111 E Mountain	1850, 1890	C	C	
29	210 N River	c.1900	N	N	
30	200-208 N River	c.1915	N	N	
31	110 E Gonzales	c.1906-12	C	C	
32	205 N River	1935	C	C	
32a	200 block N River	c.1953	N	C	Municipal building annex
33	114 W Court	1886	C	C	
34	107-109 N Camp	1896, 1930	C	C	
35	113 W Gonzales	c.1975	N	N	
36	111 W Gonzales	c.1900-1905	C	C	
37	107 W Gonzales	c.1900	N	N	
38	109 W Gonzales	c.1900	N	N	
39	114 N Austin	1905	C	C	
40	112 N Austin	c.1895	C	C	
41	110 N Austin	c.1880	C	C	
42	106-108 N Austin	c.191	N	N	
43	100-104 N Austin	c.1853, later add.	N	N	
44	104 W Court	1855, 1925	C	C	
45	106 W Court	c.1920	N	N	
46	108 W Court	1890-1900	C	C	
47	110-112 W Court	1917	C	C	
48	101-105 E Court	c.1908	C	C	
49	105-107 N Austin	c.1910	C	C	
50	109-113 N Austin	c.1900	C	C	
51	115 N Austin	c.1890	C	C	
52	107-111 E Gonzales	c.1909	C	C	
53	106-114 N River	c.1910	N	C	Restored
54	104 N River	c.1915	C	C	
55	112 E Court	1907	N	C	Restored
56	114 E Court	1907	C	C	

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ID #	Address	Date	Orig. Status	Current Status	Notes
57	106 E Court	c.1909	N	N	
58	108 E Court	c.1909	N	N	
59	110 E Court	c.1909	N	N	
60	104 E Court	c.1950	N	C	
61	101-103 N River	c.1916	N	N	
62	105-107 N River	c.1918	C	C	
63	109-113 N River	1917	C	C	
64	115 N River	c.1915	N	C	
65	212-216 E Court	c.1925	C	Demo.	
66	208-210 E Court	c.1910	C	C	
67	121 S Camp	1908	C	C	
68	115 W Court	1890	N	N	
69	113 W Court	1905	C	C	
70	111 W Court	1890-1900	C	C	
71	100 S Austin	1890	C	C	
72	102-106 S Austin	c.1895	N	N	
73	108-112 S Austin	1896	C	C	
74	108-112 S Austin	c.1896	C	C	
75	114 S Austin	1863, 1869	C	C	
76	121 S Camp	1908	C	C	
77	Square E Court	1935	C	C	
78	113-115 S River	c.1910	N	N	
79	111 S River	1853, later addns	C	C	
80	107-109 S River	c.1915	N	N	
81-82	101-105 S River	1917	C	C	
83	209-211 E Court	c.1890	N	N	
84	213-215 E Court	c.1910	C	C	
85	217 S Camp	c.1960	N	N	
86	111 W Center	c.1925	C	C	
87	105-109 W Center	c.1910	C	C	
88	200 S Austin	c.1890	N	N	
89	204 S Austin	c.1890	C	N/A	Burned 2002
90	206 S Austin	c.1890	C	C	
91	208 S Austin	c.1900	N	N	
92	210-214 S Austin	1889-90	N	N	
93	Park Square	c.1935	C	C	
94	Park Square	c.1960	N	Demo.	

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ID #	Address	Date	Orig. Status	Current Status	Notes
95	213-221 S River	1915	C	C	
96	209 S River	c.1925	C	C	
97	201-203 S River	c.1925	C	C	
98	200 S Crockett	c.1950	N	C	Masonic Lodge, 1949
99	206 S Crockett	1945-50	N	C	
100	212-214 S Crockett	c.1950	N	N	
101	201-223 S Crockett	1838-45, 1847	C	C	
102	115 W Nolte	c.1900	C	C	
103	115 W Nolte	1887	C	C	
104	300-306 S Austin	1915	C	C	
105	308-312 S Austin	1938	C	C	
106	314 S Austin	1947	N	C	Moderne style Palace Theater - remodeled 1947
107-108	101 E Nolte	1898, later add.	C	C	bank - with 2 additions
109	308 S River	1902-03	C	C	Women's Clubs Building (Recorded Texas Historic Landmark). Moved to 400 block N. River
110	112 E Washington	c.1900	N	Demo.	
111	101 E Nolte	1980	N	N	
112 (new)	300 blk N Austin	c.1995	-	N	Car dealership with canopy
113 (new)	100 blk E Washington	c.1995	-	N	Drive-in bank facility
114	200 blk S Camp	c.	-	C	First Baptist Church
115	202 N Camp	1934	-	C	Post office
116	200 blk N Camp	c.1915	-	C	Commercial building
117	202 E Walnut	1851	-	C	Baxter-Fennell-Tips House
118	204 E Walnut	c.1930	-	C	"Tips Courts" cottage
119	206 E Walnut	c.1930	-	C	"Tips Courts" cottage
120	208 E Walnut	c.1930	-	C	"Tips Courts" cottage
121	210 E Walnut	c.1930	-	C	"Tips Courts" cottage
122	409 N River	c.1930	-	C	1-story commercial building

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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### APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

**CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS:** N/A

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** c.1845-1953 (not specified in original nomination)

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:**

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:** Supervising Architect Louis A. Simon (U.S. Treasury Office)

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-13 through 8-15).

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## 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheets 9-16).

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS):** N/A

- 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 # Tex-347
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

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

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Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
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The Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase) encompasses the city's central business district dating from the 1850s to the early 1950s. The district captures the building forms and development as a regional trade center from the late 19<sup>th</sup> through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most of the buildings are 1- and 2-part commercial, government, and institutional buildings typical in material and form to other Texas communities of the period. The district was listed in the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The boundary increase adds nine properties on three separate blocks, all of which are immediately adjacent to the original district boundaries. These properties represent all of the eligible commercial or institutional properties on the periphery of the original district.

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Seguin, Texas, located off of U. S. Interstate 10 at the intersection of State Highway 123, was originally part of a Spanish land grant of 1831 to Humphries Branch, a settler from Missouri brought by Empresario Green DeWitt to Gonzales. Branch sold his tract to Joseph S. Martin and Thomas R. Miller in 1834. The land began to be settled but later had to be abandoned upon the approach of Santa Anna's army in 1834. Miller, subsequently, died at the Alamo. Two years later Martin, along with Arthur Swift, James Campbell and Matthew Caldwell split the site into 44 shares which were sold off with the provision that the buyers would move onto his share and build a house within a certain time frame.

Formed when Texas was just a Republic, in 1836, it is one of Texas' oldest towns and is now the largest town in the county of Guadalupe. Originally, it was called Walnut Springs after the area it was located in. Finally, in 1839, after much debate between the names of Seguin or Tuscumbia, the founding fathers chose the name Seguin, after Juan Nepomuceno Seguin, hero of the Texas Revolution. In 1845, Seguin, Texas became part of the United States after President Polk signed the Texas Admissions Act.

By 1846, the Texas State Legislature formed a new county out of Gonzales and Bexar counties, named Guadalupe County. The City of Seguin was designated and remains to this day, the county seat. In May of 1846, Seguin received a United States Post Office. By the end of 1848, the courthouse was built because prior to that time, county business had to be conducted under the live oak trees and in private homes.

The first commercial construction boom began in the late 1840s and continued into the 1850s. This was a significant period in the Seguin construction business because Seguin became known as "Concrete City" due to the widespread use of cast concrete as a building material. It is during that time that as many as 100 buildings of all kinds were constructed, including homes (Sebastopol), hotels (Magnolia Hotel), and stores (Ezra Keyser Store, 111 S. River), some of which still survive.

The 1850 census showed a population of 1176 people, a total of 216 families. Within three years, on September 24, 1853, Seguin published its first newspaper, *The Seguin Mercury*, under the leadership of Mr. H.T. Burke. In December, 1853, the *Seguin Mercury* published a social and business census as follows:

Seguin has seven stores, three bakeries, and beer establishments, two groceries and two tailors. It has one carriage factory, one saddle and harness maker, a Masonic Lodge, a flourishing division of the Sons of Temperance, and a division of the Order of the Good Samaritan and Daughters of Samantha. There are three hotels, one newspaper, good schools, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches.

The period 1845 to 1860 can be judged as perhaps one of the most industrious and enterprising periods in Seguin's

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

history. The settlers did not watch the world go by. They made things happen - self-rule, county government, organized education, and sent six representatives to the State Legislature (Arthur Swift, Ben McCulloch, Henry McCulloch, Andrew Neill, Isham V. Harris, and T. H. Duggan). Roads were laid out, stagecoach routes came, the city had mail services, recreation activities, clubs and organizations, technological innovations in construction, newspapers, and agricultural enterprises; all of these made Seguin a bustling community by the eve of the Civil War.

Growth in Seguin ceased during the Civil War and Reconstruction as it did elsewhere in Texas during the same period. By this time most of the platted area of Seguin had been filled. During Reconstruction, the only business that thrived and aided an otherwise failing economy was the cattle business. Eventually, prosperity returned as the railroad arrived in Seguin in 1877, thus bringing additional population and a new building boom in the 1880s and 1890s. New large, private homes were built, many of Victorian style. The new construction boom brought commercial buildings of brick, primarily due to the new Brickyards (five total including Dietz, Sonka and Blumberg brickyards) that started production in the 1880s.

Development was concentrated along Austin Street which was the first street car route and around the two public squares. Eventually, it extended north to the railroad station. Initially, 2-story commercial buildings were constructed of the local brick. Active building continued into the 1920s, including the Aumont Hotel and Plaza Hotel, which became local landmarks. The effects of the Great Depression advanced slowly in Seguin, but by the mid-1930s, Seguin could not escape the difficult economic days. Eventually, even many professional found themselves unemployed. New construction ceased. Thanks to the efforts of Senator Rudolph Weinert and his political clout, Seguin became the beneficiary of the New Deal. The New Deal and its second phase known as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) came to Seguin and performed many long term services for Seguin. Several accomplishments included the construction of the present-day courthouse and city hall, a U.S. Post Office building and various street projects. Three projects in Seguin built during the New Deal which are reflective of the architectural revival style are the Seguin Post Office, Starcke Park and the Guadalupe County Courthouse.

In the immediate postwar years, the Seguin commercial district continued to function much as it did in previous decades. Representative examples of postwar architectural design is reflected in several buildings in the district, most notably the moderne Palace Theater, featuring a large vertical neon sign and horizontal marquee (314 S. Austin), and the 1949 Masonic Lodge, a 2-story buff brick symmetrical modern building featuring paired metal sash windows and ornament limited to raised brick banding on the upper portion (200 S. Crockett). These buildings represent continued change within the district after World War II, and exemplify popular postwar design without detracting from the qualities which made the district eligible when it was listed in 1983. The Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase) is nominated for listing under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The district, as revised and with boundary increase, incorporates the entire commercial district of Seguin developed through the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The nine buildings included in the boundary increase contribute to the district's architectural and historical significance, and illustrate keys points in Seguin's development. The Tips House is an important local example of antebellum Greek Revival architecture and was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey in the 1930s. The Tips Cottages and related small commercial building represent the evolution of the property from strictly residential use to mixed commercial/residential use by the 1930s. The addition of tourist cabins to large residential lots near commercial centers was not uncommon in the 1920s and 1930s, as "autotouring" became a popular form of middle-class recreation, and these

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

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backyard businesses provided extra income for families during the Great Depression. The former First Baptist Church is one of the few 19<sup>th</sup> century concrete buildings remaining within the National Register district, and is significant as a rare example of this building technology and as a good example of a Mission Revival Style church. The former US Post Office is significant as a depression-era government building displaying elements of the Mission Revival Style, and its location on the periphery of the business district is in keeping with the location of post offices throughout Texas and the south-central United States. The 1-part commercial block north of the post office features the characteristics (storefront configuration and decorative parapet) typical of many commercial buildings within the original district. All of these properties merit listing in the National Register as important components of the Seguin Commercial Historic District.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 16

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

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- Baxter-Tips-Fennell House*, Historic Preservation Certification Application, 2002. On file with the Texas Historical Commission
- Bracken, Dorothy Kendall, and Maurine Whorton Redway. *Early Texas Homes*. (Dallas, Southern Methodist University Press), 1956.
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- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Seguin, Texas (1885, 1891, 1896, 1902, 1902, 1912, 1916, 1924, 1930, 1930-45)
- Seguin Post Office*, Historic Preservation Certification Application, 2001. On file with the Texas Historical Commission.
- Willie Mae Weinert, *An Authentic History of Guadalupe County* (Seguin, Texas: Seguin Enterprise), 1951.

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** Boundary increase area only: approximately 6 acres  
Area 1: 2 acres  
Area 2: 3 acres  
Area 3: 1 acre  
Revised district total: approximately 40 acres

**UTM REFERENCES****Revised boundary**

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	14	600200	3271640
2.	14	600560	3271640
3.	14	600200	3271020
4.	14	600560	3271020

**Areas added to district**

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
Area 1.	14	600220	3271360
Area 2.	14	600480	3271540
Area 3.	14	600220	3271140

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** (see continuation sheet 10-17)

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:** (see continuation sheet 10-17)

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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

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**NAME/TITLE:** Gregory W. Smith, with David Achterberg and Donna Raetsch

**ORGANIZATION:** Texas Historical Commission

**DATE:** March 18, 2003

**STREET & NUMBER:** PO Box 12276

**TELEPHONE:** (512) 463-6013

**CITY OR TOWN:** Seguin

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:** 78711

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**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

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**CONTINUATION SHEETS**

**MAPS** (see continuation sheets Map-18 and Map-19)

**PHOTOGRAPHS** (see continuation sheet Photo-20)

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

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**PROPERTY OWNER**

---

**NAME:** (On file with Texas Historical Commission)

**STREET & NUMBER:**

**TELEPHONE:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 17

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

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**Boundary Description:** The boundary increase area includes 3 distinct components. Area 1 includes all properties fronting the west side of the 200 block of North Camp Street, and is bounded to the north by Mountain Street and to the south by Gonzales street. The west boundary follows the legal property lines for the buildings on the eastern half of the block. Area 2 includes all properties associated with the Baxter-Fennell-Tips complex and is bounded on the west by River Street and on the south by Walnut Street. The north and east boundaries follow legal property lines and is further delineated on the sketch map on page Map-19. Area 3 includes all property associated with the former First Baptist Church building at the southwest corner of the intersection of Camp and Donegan streets, as described in the legal boundary description on file with the Guadalupe County Appraisal District.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary increase area includes all eligible historically commercial or institutional buildings on the periphery of the original Seguin Commercial Historic District, as identified through a survey conducted by Texas Historical Commission staff in 2003. Excluded from the boundary increase area are commercial or institutional properties less than 50 years old or lacking integrity.

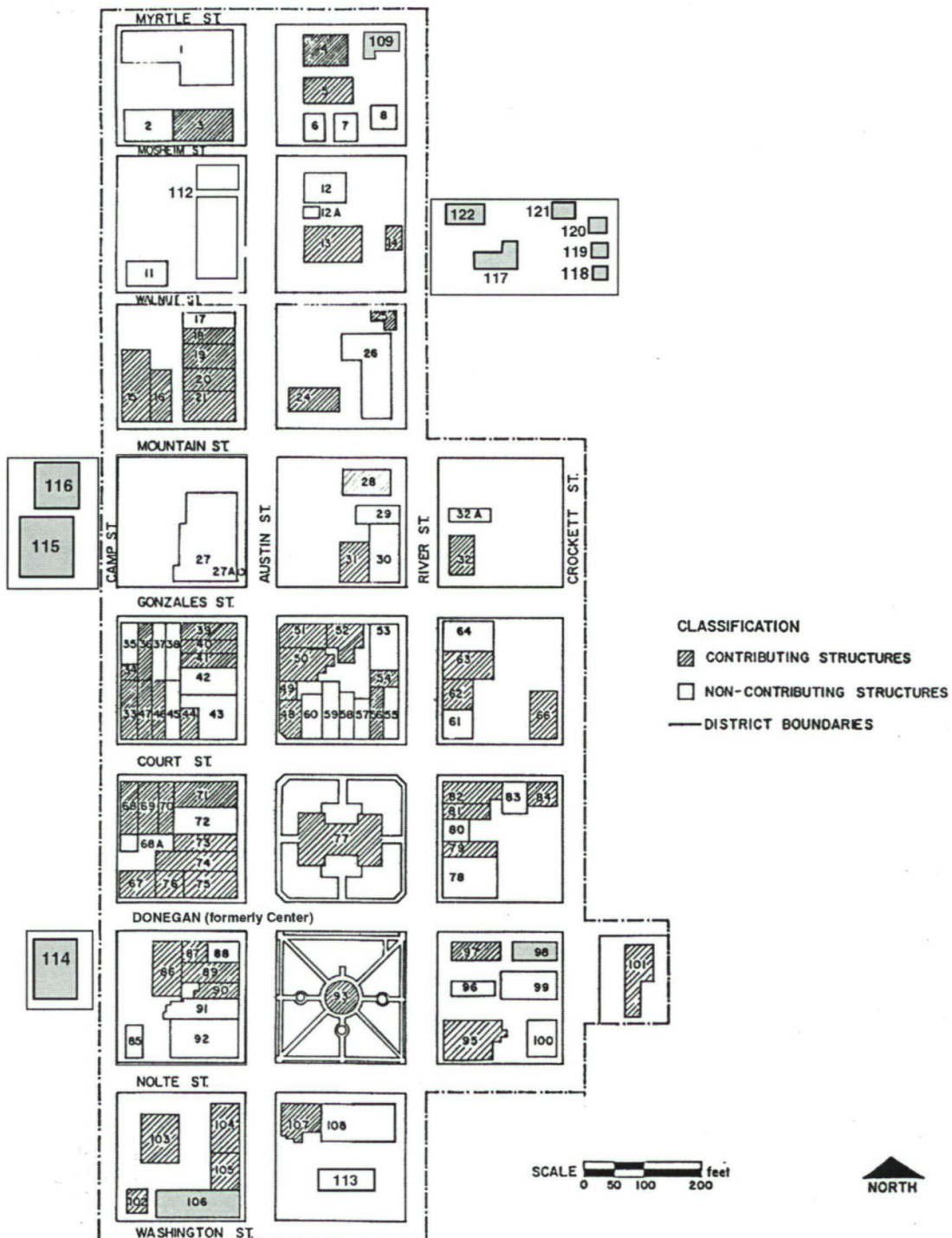
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 18

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

District Map (revised 2003, based on original district map). Not to scale.



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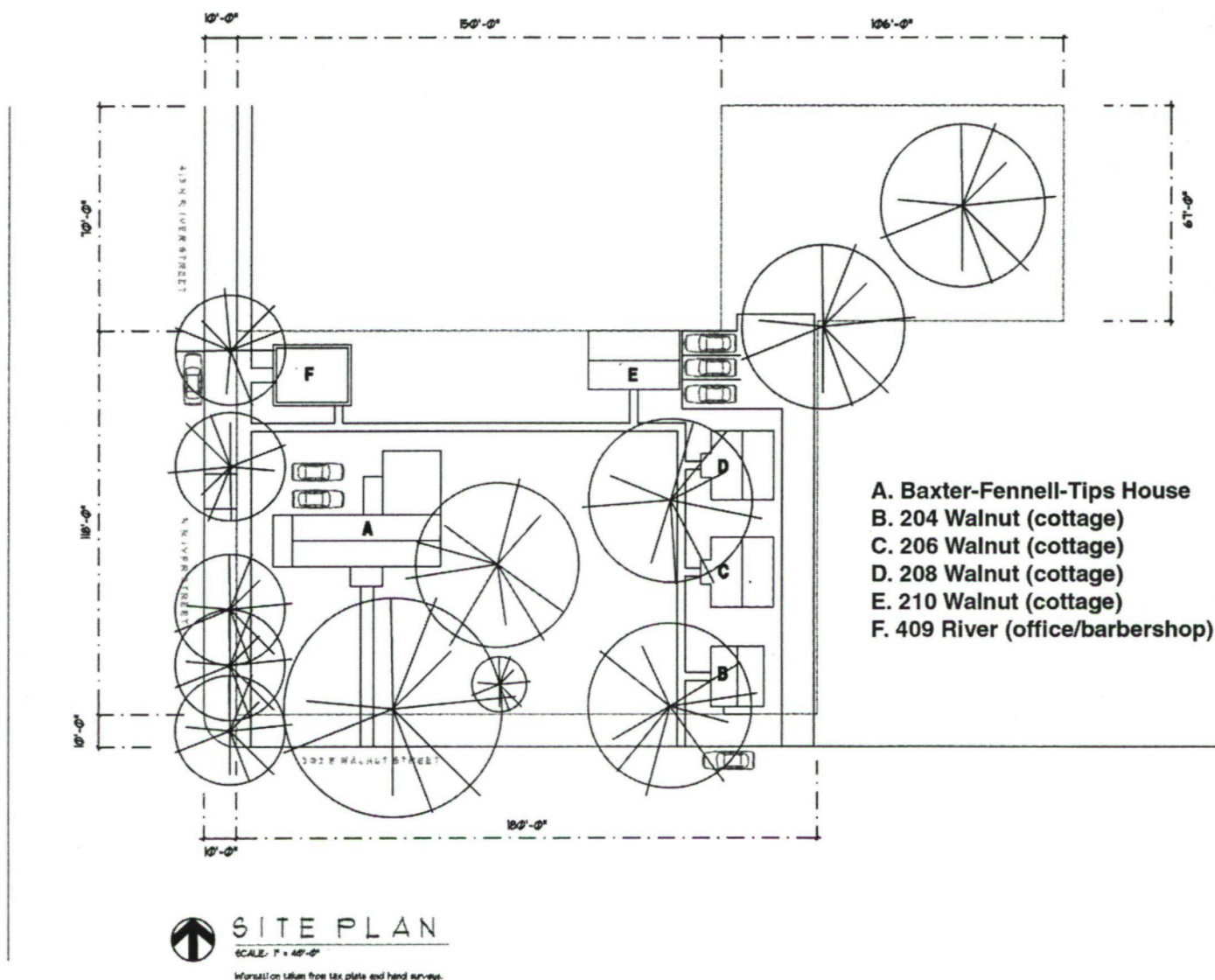
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 19

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

Baxter-Fennell-Tips Complex map.

Source: *Baxter-Tips-Fennell House*, Historic Preservation Certification Application, 2002. On file with the Texas Historical Commission



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section PHOTO Page 20

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas

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Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance Increase)  
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas  
Photographed by Gregory Smith  
February 2003

First Baptist Church  
201 West Center  
Northeast oblique  
Camera facing southwest  
Photo 1

200 block North Camp  
East façade, old printshop building  
Camera facing west  
Photo 2

Old Seguin Post Office  
200 block North Camp  
Southeast elevation  
Camera facing northwest  
Photo 3

Baxter-Fennell-Tips House and Cabins  
Northwest corner River and Walnut streets  
Southwest oblique  
Camera facing northeast  
Photo 4

Tips Cabins  
Northwest corner River and Walnut streets  
West elevation  
Camera facing northeast  
Photo 5

Masonic Lodge  
200 South Crockett  
Northeast oblique  
Camera facing west  
Photo 6

Palace Theater  
300 block South Austin  
Southeast oblique  
Camera facing northwest  
Photo 7

Starke Building and Palace Theater  
300 block South Austin  
Northeast oblique  
Camera facing southwest  
Photo 8

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary Increase)

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Guadalupe

DATE RECEIVED: 6/30/03 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/23/03  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/08/03 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/14/03  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03000768

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

\_\_\_ACCEPT \_\_\_RETURN \_\_\_REJECT \_\_\_\_\_DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Well-documented increase of boundaries,  
update to contributing and non-  
contributing resources, and clari-  
fication of period of significance*

RECOM./CRITERIA Sept 97C

REVIEWER J McClellan DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 8/14/03

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



TEXAS IMPRESSIONS  
PRINTING & COPIES & DESIGN  
363-8565 Fax 372-0985

ONE WAY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)

SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 8



218

William G. Brown, C.F.A., P.C.  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT  
Alvin B. Duffey  
INSURANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

200 BLOCK NORTH CAMP  
SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)

SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 8



202 NORTH CAMP

202  
NORTH CAMP  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

202  
NORTH CAMP  
A. ROBERT R. FITZSCH,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
WILLIAM L. KNOBLES,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
FIRST AMERICAN TITLE  
INSURANCE CO.  
CHRISTOPHER H. MOORE,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW  
DAVID J. EVELL,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW

OLD SEQUIN POST OFFICE  
SEQUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
( BOUNDARY INCREASE )  
SEQUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 8



W RIVER  
E WALNUT

817-3670

BAXTER-FENNELL-TIPS HOUSE & CABINS

SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.

(BOUNDARY INCREASE)

SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 8



TIPS CABINS

SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)

SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 8



POLICE  
101 EAST WINDSOR

2HR  
PARKING  
\$15 FINE  
IF OVER

MASONIC LODGE  
SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 8



P  
A  
L  
A  
C  
E

SEGUIN ART CENTER PRESENTS  
DADDY'S DYIN WHO'S GOT HE WILL  
FEB 14 15 21 22

Furniture

PALACE THEATER  
SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS  
PHOTOGRAPH 7 of 8



NOLTE

PROTECTED  
LEFT ON  
GREEN ARROW

STARCKE  
Furniture

STARCKE

SERVING SOUTH TEXAS SINCE 1910

PALACE



STARKE BUILDING & PALACE THEATER  
SEGUIN COMMERCIAL H.D.  
(BOUNDARY INCREASE)  
SEGUIN, GUADALUPE CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 8 of 8





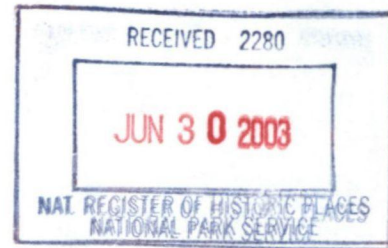
**TEXAS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION**

*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*

RICK PERRY, GOVERNOR

JOHN L. NAU, III, CHAIRMAN

F. LAWRENCE OAKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



TO: Carol Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Gregory W. Smith, National Register Coordinator  
Texas Historical Commission

RE: National Register Nomination

DATE: June 26, 2003

The following materials are submitted for the nomination of the

Seguin Commercial Historic District (Boundary and Period of Significance (narrative))  
to the National Register of Historic Places:

- Original National Register of Historic Places form
- Resubmitted nomination
- Multiple Property nomination form
- Photographs
- USGS map
- Correspondence
- Other AMENDED NOMINATION (ORIG LISTED 12-15-93)

COMMENTS:

- Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other \_\_\_\_\_