

**ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET**

CASE: C14-2019-0127 – Travis County Courthouse DISTRICT: 9

ZONING FROM: DMU (Downtown Mixed Use) TO: P (Public)

ADDRESS: 1700 Guadalupe Street, 406 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. & 405 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St.

SITE AREA: 0.82 acres (35,719 sq. ft.)

PROPERTY OWNER: Travis County (Judge Sarah Eckhardt) AGENT: Hunt Companies (Rodney Moss)

CASE MANAGER: Mark Graham (512-974-7719) [mark.graham@austintexas.gov](mailto:mark.graham@austintexas.gov)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

**The Staff recommendation is to grant Public (P) district zoning.** *For a summary of the basis of Staff's recommendation, see case manager comments.*

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION/RECOMMENDATION

**The zoning case C14-2019-0127 is scheduled for public notice for the Planning Commission Hearing on November 12, 2019.**

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

December 5, 2019.

ISSUES:

No issues were identified for this proposal.

CASE MANAGER COMMENTS:

Travis County controls all and owns most of the land bounded by W. 17<sup>th</sup> and W 18<sup>th</sup> Streets, Guadalupe and San Antonio Streets. The portion not currently owned is controlled by agreement and Travis County is acquiring it through eminent domain.

Travis County requests P (Public) District zoning on 0.82 acres of land, approximately the east half of the development site. Travis County's Civil & Family Courts Facility will occupy the property within the requested re-zoning area. Because the requested P District zoning is under an acre, the site plan does not go to Planning Commission for approval.

Excavation is underway for 3 levels of underground parking below the new 12 story, 430,000 square foot Travis County Courthouse. While the Courthouse fronts on Guadalupe Street, there is a second 12 story, 300,000 square foot office building approved for the San Antonio Street (west) side of the site. The entire site is currently zoned DMU (Downtown – Mixed Use) and received site plan approval and permits prior to applying for P District zoning.

The Courthouse project will build an enhanced streetscape meeting Great Street Standards with wide sidewalks, street trees, street furniture including benches and bike racks. There is also a plaza between the two office buildings. Guadalupe is core transit corridor and designated bike route. The streets and public transit services in downtown Austin and particularly along the Guadalupe corridor are intended to support urban development and uses like the courthouse and office building.

**Please refer to Exhibits A (Zoning Map) and A-1 (Aerial View).**

**BASIS OF RECOMMENDATION:**

*The proposed zoning should be consistent with the purpose statement of the district sought.*

The Public (P) district is for governmental, civic, public service, or public institution use. Travis County will own, and use for public purposes, the 12 story Courthouse building and property within the requested “P” district.

*The proposed zoning should allow for reasonable use of the property.*

Travis County is building their Courthouse in downtown Austin, a central and accessible location for serving Travis County residents. Austin’s downtown is an appropriate and permitted location for the large Travis County Courthouse building. The public use for courts and administrative functions are appropriate uses within the requested P (Public) zone district. The requested P zoning includes only a portion of the approved site plan. While the approved site plan includes 2 twelve story office buildings, currently only one of the buildings has a public use tenant.

*The rezoning should be consistent with the policies and principles adopted by the City Council or Planning Commission.*

The rezoning and construction project support the urban design priorities established by the Downtown Austin Plan and Imagine Austin Plan which are adopted by Council. The surface parking lots will be replaced with 2 office building towers and subsurface parking. The public plaza between the buildings as well as the enhanced Great Streets along Guadalupe provide public space and improved facilities for pedestrians and bikers. The County Courthouse provides services to the region and it is being located in a Regional Center as shown in the Imagine Austin Growth Concept Map.

*Zoning should promote a transition between adjacent and nearby zoning districts, land uses and development intensities.*

The current Downtown Mixed Use (DMU) zoning is considered a transitional zoning for land in the vicinity of the Central Business District and likely to develop at CBD scale and intensity. There are many examples of large scale (tall, bulky) buildings within a few blocks north, east and south. North across MLK Blvd. on the University of Texas Campus, is Dobie Center, the 27 story residence hall that was the tallest building in Austin when it was completed. East across Guadalupe Street are six story (bulky) apartments and in the next block are two (tall) hotel/residential buildings, one eight the other fourteen stories. Immediately south of the new Courthouse is a six story (bulky) University of Texas building/parking structure and just beyond that are two fifteen story buildings: the Moody Bank and Attorney General Building. Staff concludes that the two new buildings on the subject development site are consistent with anticipated Central Business District in scale and expected intensity of use.

*Zoning changes should promote a balance of intensities and densities.*

There are smaller scale buildings near the new Travis County Courthouse. One story auto oriented buildings, including convenience stores, fast food drive-thru and gas station uses line the south side of West Martin Luther King Blvd. Between those buildings and the subject site there is a 3 story office building and a one story warehouse building. West of the requested P zoning are residences converted to office use. The zoning for those properties includes General Commercial Services(CS), CS-1 that permits liquor sales, Downtown Mixed Use (DMU) and General Office(GO). Mixed in with the commercial and office buildings are many one to three story residential buildings. The nearby office and commercial service businesses may benefit from their proximity to the courthouse.

EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USES:

	ZONING	LAND USES
<i>Site</i>	DMU	Travis County Courts Facility (under construction)
<i>North</i>	DMU	retail, office, warehouse
<i>South</i>	CBD	UT offices, structured parking
<i>East</i>	DMU-CURE; DMU	apartments, retail
<i>West</i>	DMU-CO;GO	office, personal services, apartments

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREA: Downtown-does not need plan amendment

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek –Urban

DISTRICT: Uptown/Capital

TIA: Is not required, public use

CAPITOL VIEW CORRIDOR: No

SCENIC ROADWAY: No

SCHOOLS: Lee Elementary School    Kealing Middle School    McCallum High School

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:

Austin Independent School District  
 Austin Lost and Found Pets  
 Austin Neighborhoods Council  
 Bike Austin  
 Central Austin Community Development Corporation  
 Downtown Austin Alliance  
 Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association  
 Friends of Austin Neighborhoods  
 Homeless Neighborhood Organization  
 Neighborhood Empowerment Foundation  
 Preservation Austin  
 SEL Texas  
 Shoal Creek Conservancy  
 Sierra Club Austin Regional Group  
 West Downtown Alliance, Inc.

AREA CASE HISTORIES:

NUMBER	REQUEST	COMMISSION	CITY COUNCIL
C14-2007-0223 L.P., 509 West 18 <sup>th</sup> Street	GO to DMU-CO (<2000 trips/day)	To Grant	Apvd (Jan 10, 2008)
C14-2008-0038 1705 & 1715 Guadalupe Street	DMU to DMU-CURE (Great Streets)	To Grant	Apvd (June 5, 2008)
C14-2008-0047 Grant Foster 507 West 18 <sup>th</sup> Street	GO to DMU	To Grant	Apvd (April 24, 2008)
C14-2010-0035 1800 Nueces	GO to DMU-CO (prohibited uses: auto related; bail, pawn, warehouse, maintenance & lounge. Cond: 60' max height, rear and interior side setbacks of 5')	To Grant	Apvd (Oct 28, 2010)
C14H-2013-0005 Old Judges Hill Local Historic District West 18th Street to the north, West Avenue to the east, West 15th Street to the south, and San Gabriel Street to the west	Add Historic District to existing zoning	Withdrawn	Withdrawn

RELATED CASES:

SP-2018-0448C.F1 – Travis County – New Civil & Family Courts Facility Site Plan  
Approved

EXISTING STREET CHARACTERISTICS:

Name	ROW	Pavement	Classification	Sidewalks	Bicycle Route	Capital Metro (within ¼ mile)
Guadalupe St.	74'	40'	ASMP Level 3	Yes	yes	yes
W 18 <sup>th</sup> St.	60'	36'	ASMP Level 1	yes	yes	yes
W 17 <sup>th</sup> St.	60'	38'	ASMP Level 1	yes	no	yes

NOTE: A traffic impact analysis was not required for this case because the building is a public facility.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

**Downtown Austin Plan**

The property is located in the Uptown/Capitol District of the Downtown Austin Plan (DAP). The property is proposed to be rezoned as “P” and will be used for the Travis County Courthouse and associated offices. The DAP proposes that this area of downtown should have a greater mix of uses, beyond offices, as well as the redevelopment of underutilized properties. While this use does not contribute to the greater mix of uses described in the DAP, it will revitalize an underutilized block as well as provide public space and improved pedestrian and bicycle space that are important goals of the plan. The project supports the implementation of the urban design priorities established by the DAP.

**Imagine Austin Plan**

The proposed use will serve the region and is located within a Regional Center as defined in the Imagine Austin Growth Concept Map. A Regional Center is the most urban and dense of the activity center types and is intended to be a retail, cultural, recreation, and entertainment destination in central Texas. These are also the places where the greatest density of people and jobs and the tallest buildings in the region will be located. The site is adjacent to a major transit corridor and MetroRapid bus route and thus will be highly accessible to people across the region. Additionally, because this project received a density bonus, the proposed project will implement many urban design goals in the plan.

The following Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (IACP) policies are applicable to this case:

**LUT P3:** Promote development in compact centers, communities or along corridors that are connected by roads and transit, are designed to encourage walking and bicycling, and reduce healthcare, housing and transportation costs.

**LUT P29:** Develop accessible community gathering places such as plazas, parks, farmers' markets, sidewalks, and streets in all parts of Austin, especially within activity centers and along activity corridors including downtown and other redevelopment areas that encourage interaction and provide places for people of all ages to visit and relax.

**LUT P31:** Define the community's goals for new public and private developments using principles and design guidelines that capture the distinctive, diverse local character of Austin.

Based on the information above, Staff believes that the proposed zoning change is supported by the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL

1. The site is not located over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. The site is located in the Shoal Creek Watershed of the Colorado River Basin, which is classified as an Urban Watershed by Chapter 25-8 of the City's Land Development Code. It is in the Desired Development Zone.
2. Zoning district impervious cover limits apply in the Urban Watershed classification.
3. According to floodplain maps there is no floodplain within or adjacent to the project location.
4. Standard landscaping and tree protection will be required in accordance with LDC 25-2 and 25-8 for all development and/or redevelopment.
5. At this time, site specific information is unavailable regarding vegetation, areas of steep slope, or other environmental features such as bluffs, springs, canyon rimrock, caves, sinkholes, and wetlands.
6. This site is required to provide on-site water quality controls (or payment in lieu of) for all development and/or redevelopment when 8,000 s.f. cumulative is exceeded, and on site control for the two-year storm.

#### **Impermeable Coverage**

The Site Plan Permit contains the following information:

*The construction of a 12-story courthouse and 12-story professional office building, with parking, drives, utilities, and drainage, for a total of 70,550 square feet of impervious cover (approximately 92%), as shown and described on the approved site plan.*

### Site Plan and Compatibility Standards

Because this site is under one acre, it did not need to go to Commission under 25-2-625(D) for site plan approval.

Site Plan Permit No. SP-2018-0448C.f 2

Project Name; Travis County – New Civil & Family Courts Facility

Approved per City of Austin Code 25-5-112 on 08/01/2019

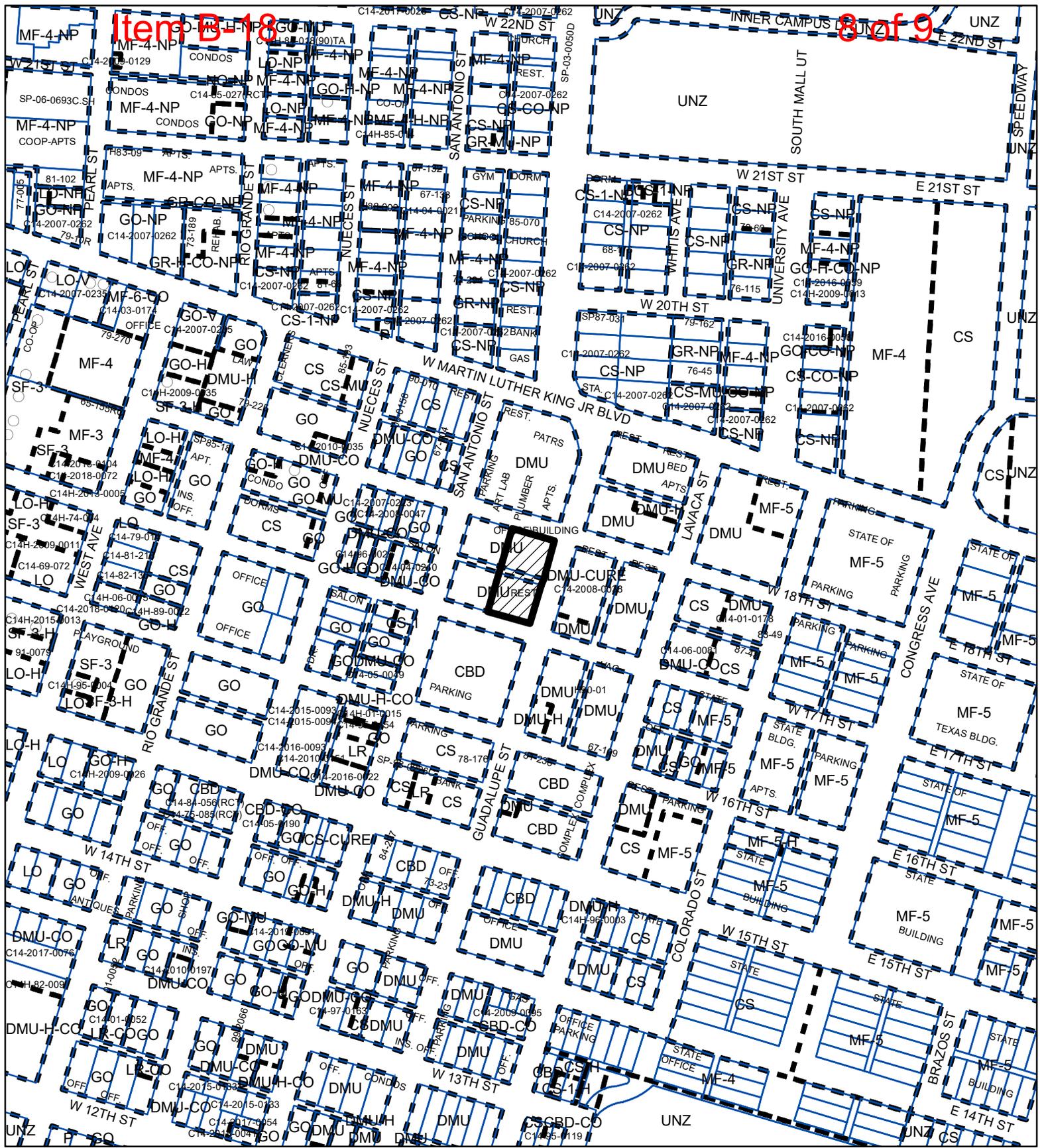
### Austin Water Utility

FYI: The landowner intends to serve the site with City of Austin water and wastewater utilities. The landowner, at own expense, will be responsible for providing any water and wastewater utility improvements, offsite main extensions, water or wastewater easements, utility relocations and or abandonments required by the proposed land use. Depending on the development plans submitted, water and or wastewater service extension requests may be required. Water and wastewater utility plans must be reviewed and approved by Austin Water for compliance with City criteria and suitability for operation and maintenance. All water and wastewater construction must be inspected by the City of Austin. The landowner must pay the City inspection fee with the utility construction. The landowner must pay the tap and impact fees once the landowner makes an application for Austin Water utility tap permits.

### INDEX OF EXHIBITS TO FOLLOW

A: Zoning Map

A-1: Aerial Map



ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14-2019-0127



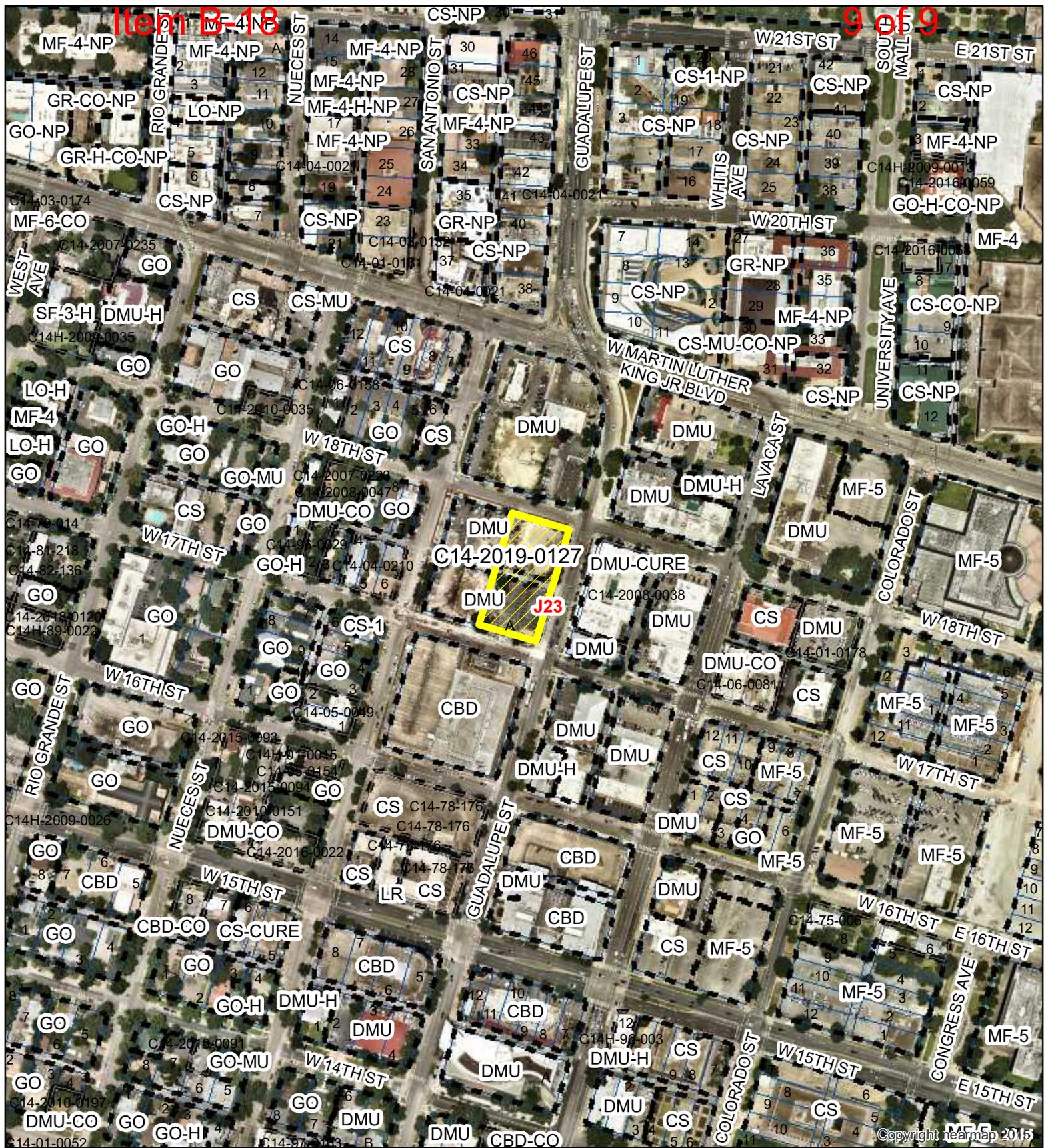
-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 400'

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-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  ZONING BOUNDARY
-  PENDING CASE
-  CREEK BUFFER

1" = 300'

TRAVIS COUNTY

ZONING CASE#: C14-2019-0127  
 LOCATION: 406 W. 17th ST., 1708 GUADALUPE ST.  
 405 W. 18th ST.  
 SUBJECT AREA: 0.82 ACRES  
 GRID: J23  
 MANAGER: MARK GRAHAM



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