



MEMORANDUM

TO: Rebekah Dobrasko – TxDOT Environmental Affairs, History

FROM: Sandy Shannon – Cox|McLain Environmental Consulting, Inc.

DATE: November 22, 2019

RE: Historic Resources Analysis for Additional Post-Record-of-Decision Design Modifications for the Oak Hill Parkway Project (CSJs 0113-08-060 and 0700-03-077)

In December 2018, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) approved a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for mobility improvements to U.S. Highway (US) 290/State Highway (SH) 71 West from State Loop 1 (MoPac) to west of Ranch-to-Market Road (RM) 1826 and from US 290 to Silvermine Drive. The proposed project, known as the Oak Hill Parkway (OHP) Project is in Travis County, Texas (see **Figure 1**). The project has been subject to reevaluations as a result of design changes.

November 2019 Reevaluation

Subsequent to the most recent reevaluation in April 2019, there have been additional design changes to the proposed project. As a result, TxDOT is conducting a documented reevaluation to determine whether the previous environmental decision remains valid under circumstances listed in 43 TAC 2.85 and 23 CFR 771.129.

Proposed new design changes include widening of the Shared Use Path (SUP), adjustments to accommodate utility conflicts and drainage increases, and changes to the profile of the corridor. The proposed project footprint has changed as a result of the redesign (see **Figure 2**). Specific design revisions are described below.

- The SUP was revised from sidewalk width to SUP width in order to maximize the area between back of curb and right of way (ROW) at:
 - the north side westbound frontage road from Circle Drive to Scenic Brook Drive;
 - the south side from Scenic Brook Drive to RM 1826; and
 - the south side of the eastbound frontage road from Convict Hill to William Cannon Drive.
- The following adjustments were made due to utility conflicts and Atlas 14 (NOAA 2018) drainage increases:
 - reconfigured SUP from Oak Meadow to William Cannon Drive;
 - lengthened the westbound and eastbound main lane bridge (shifted west abutment) adjacent to Williamson Creek to accommodate the realignment of SUP;

- reconfigured SUP from Williamson Creek west of William Cannon to south of eastbound frontage road;
 - eliminated bus pullout and realigned SUP along westbound SH 71/single-point urban interchange;
 - lowered the berms of four ponds near Williamson Creek to below the 100-year water surface elevation in order to avoid adverse impacts to meet current TCEQ requirements; and
 - removed the upstream detention pond along SH 71 to avoid flooding due to current, increased rainfall values.
- The profile of the corridor has been redesigned as follows:
 - raised westbound main lane ~5' at Williamson Creek (362+00 to 411+73);
 - raised eastbound main lane ~13' at Williamson Creek (381+37 to 417+25);
 - raised westbound frontage road ~12' at Williamson Creek (1356+80 to 1412+75);
 - raised eastbound frontage road ~11' at Williamson Creek (3378+88 to 3414+00);
 - reconfigured, extended, and raised the westbound exit ramp to William Cannon Drive (WBEX3) (11+50 to 16+50);
 - reconfigured and raised the eastbound entrance ramp at William Cannon Drive (EBEN3) (12+80 to 15+80);
 - raised William Cannon ~7' at Williamson Creek (10+83 to 25+60);
 - extended limits of construction on Old Bee Caves Road further north and added profile (10+70 to 14+50);
 - raised westbound frontage road at 2096+50 to 2109+86 and lowered it at 2109+86 to 2124+00 SH 71.
- Other changes to the April 2019 design include:
 - removed trailhead parking pavement north of US 290 and east of William Cannon Drive;
 - changed eastbound main lane retaining wall/embankment west of Williamson Creek to an elevated/bridge structure;
 - lengthened westbound frontage road bridge over Williamson Creek on both the east (40') and west (80') sides;
 - lengthened westbound main lane bridge over Williamson Creek 120' farther east;
 - lengthened eastbound main lane bridge over Williamson Creek 120' farther northeast;
 - modified westbound exit ramp to William Cannon Drive (WBEX3) (east of Pizza Garden), and shifted both main lane and frontage road gores;
 - reconfigured driveways along westbound frontage road from Shell Gas Station to Pizza Garden;
 - lengthened inside pavement turn bay along the eastbound frontage road and westbound frontage road at Scenic Brook Drive, per traffic analysis;
 - lengthened inside and outside pavement turn bays along the westbound frontage road at RM 1826, per traffic analysis;
 - reconfigured the westbound frontage road on US 290 to westbound SH 71 to accommodate a right turn and a right-in/right-out driveway;
 - removed the driveway along the westbound frontage road to the former HEB (1357+25);
 - added a driveway license along the north side of US 290 (199+50);
 - added one driveway along the east side of William Cannon Drive (27+25) and one along the west side of Patton Ranch access;

- increased the driveway license area along the east side of Old Bee Caves Road (12+25);
- widened Old Bee Caves Road Bridge over Williamson Creek;
- extended limits of construction for Old Bee Caves Road 150' farther north;
- widened William Cannon Bridge over Williamson Creek;
- restriped the lane configurations along the westbound frontage road at Old Fredericksburg Road to achieve lane balance;
- realigned William Cannon Drive by shifting it 0'-10' to the east to provide greater separation from the Niece Oaks, avoiding the 1/2 critical root zone;
- reduced the eastbound ramp to one lane along the eastbound frontage road between Wolf Creek Pass and Hill Oaks Drive.

Historic Resources Analysis

Previous Documentation

TxDOT historians reviewed, coordinated, and ultimately completed Section 106 on this project in December 2017 and concluded that there was no adverse effect to historic properties. Resources 33A, 35A, 36A, and 37A were recommended eligible for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listing, along with a historic district encompassing the resources associated with Oak Hill's early development period. Design changes were proposed in 2018, including additional ROW, permanent drainage easements, and an additional sound barrier. The 2017 Area of Potential Effects (APE) was expanded to add a buffer 150 feet from the areas of additional ROW and driveway licenses proposed in 2018. TxDOT historians confirmed that the 2018 proposed project activities (for Alternative A and Alternative C) would have no adverse effects to historic properties in September 2018. Though there would be no adverse effects to historic properties, one historical marker, the Oak Hill subject marker, would need to be relocated as a result of the proposed project. TxDOT historians coordinated a new location with the Travis County Historical Commission (see **Figure 3b** for the current location and previously coordinated location).

Post-ROD Design Changes

April 2019

Design changes proposed subsequent to the ROD were considered for their potential effects to historic properties. In May 2019, TxDOT historians confirmed that the April 2019 proposed project activities would have no adverse effects to historic properties.

November 2019

The November 2019 design changes were considered for their potential effects to historic properties. An APE of 150 feet was applied to each of the areas where ROW was newly proposed (see **Figure 3**). The parcels intersected by this APE were compared to the parcels intersected by the previous (April 2019) APE (see **Figure 2**). The design revisions did not add any new properties into the APE. The proposed design revisions would result in the following changes with regard to historic resources.

- One previously documented property (Resource 14A-C, a c. 1970 shed and a non-historic-age house and shed) that had been recommended not eligible for NRHP listing is no longer in the APE.
- The Oak Hill marker would still need to be relocated; however, the previously coordinated location is no longer available. Project engineers have proposed two potential new locations near the current marker location and along the SUP (see **Figure 3b**, "Proposed Oak Hill Marker Location #1 and #2").
- The profile of an elevated road segment in front of the Austin Pizza Garden building (Resource 35A, historically the J.A. Patton Store and Old Rock Store) was raised from the highest previously

coordinated height, which was Alternative C at 824.0 feet, to 825.8 feet. (The Alternative A height was 806.7 feet.)

- Driveway licenses at the NRHP-eligible properties/district (Resources 33A, 35A, 36A, and 37A) would be reduced in size.

The post-ROD proposed design changes would not result in ROW acquisition at any of the historic properties and would therefore not result in any direct effect to these properties. The post-ROD design changes would also not change the potential for indirect or cumulative effects to the eligible properties. Though the elevated road segment is higher than the previously approved height, the change is negligible. Therefore, it is recommended that the proposed changes would not result in adverse effects to historic properties.