



# Draft Environmental Assessment

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## U.S. Highway 79

Project Limits from Interstate Highway 35 to East of Farm-to-Market Road 1460

CSJ Number: 0204-01-063

Williamson County, Texas

April 2020

Submitted pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 303 and 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

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## List of Acronyms

A list of common acronyms used throughout this document and their definitions is provided below.

AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
AOI	Area of Influence
APE	Area of Potential Effects
BMP	Best Management Practice
CAMPO	Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CMEC	Cox   McLain Environmental Consultants, Inc.
CMP	Congestion Management Process
CO	Carbon Monoxide
dB(A)	Decibels (A-weighted)
dbh	Diameter at Breast Height
EA	Environmental Assessment
ECOS	Environmental Compliance Oversight System
EMST	Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FM	Farm-to-Market Road
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
I-	Interstate Highway
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
LOS	Level of service
LPST	Leaking Petroleum Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act

### List of Acronyms (continued)

MoRAP	Missouri Resource Assessment Partnership
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSAT	Mobile Source Air Toxics
MTP	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWP	Nationwide Permit
PA	Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Implementation of Transportation Undertakings
PCN	Pre-construction Notification
PM	Particulate Matter
PS&E	Plans, Specifications, and Estimates
RHCP	Regional Habitat Conservation Plan
ROW	Right-of-Way
RSA	Resource Study Area
RTHL	Recorded Texas Historic Landmark
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SAL	State Archeological Landmark
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SOV	Single-occupancy Vehicle
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan
SW3P	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
TBCH	Texas Baptist Children's Home
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TERP	Texas Emissions Reduction Plan
THC	Texas Historical Commission
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
TPDES	Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
TPWD	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
TSS	Total Suspended Solids
TWDB	Texas Water Development Board
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
Uniform Act	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended in the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987
U.S.	United States of America
U.S.C.	U.S. Code
US	U.S. Highway
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VCP	Voluntary Cleanup
WOUS	Waters of the U.S.

## 1.0 Introduction

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin District is proposing improvements to approximately 2.48 miles of U.S. Highway 79 (US 79) between Interstate 35 (I-35) to east of Farm-to-Market Road 1460 (FM 1460) within the City of Round Rock in Williamson County, Texas. This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] Sections 4321–4375) and implementing regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 1500) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (23 CFR Part 771). The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

This EA will be made available for public review. Following the comment period, TxDOT will consider any comments submitted. If TxDOT determines that there are no significant adverse effects, it will prepare and sign a Finding of No Significant Impact, which will be made available to the public.

## 2.0 Project Description

### 2.1 Existing Facility

Within the project limits, US 79 consists of four 12-foot-wide main lanes (two in each direction) with 10-foot-wide outside shoulders. Some locations along the corridor have a center turn lane measuring 14 feet wide. The existing US 79 right-of-way varies from 150 to 300 feet wide. See Existing Typical Sections, **Appendix D**, Sheet 1 of 6.

### 2.2 Proposed Facility

Proposed improvements include widening the existing US 79 roadway to add a third 12-foot travel lane in each direction and installing a raised median for safety. The width of the medians varies throughout the project. The project layout is shown in **Appendix A**, project area photographs are shown in **Appendix B**, schematics are shown in **Appendix C**, and the typical sections are shown in **Appendix D**. Improvements to intersections would include overpasses at US 79 / Mays Street and US 79 / FM 1460 and alteration of the US 79/I-35 Intersection. Driveways and access points would be modified to improve safety and traffic flow. The proposed improvements also include installing 10 foot shared-use paths on both sides of US 79 to improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The shared-use paths would be constructed on the outside edge of the pavement and separated from the travel lanes by a 5-foot clearance zone and a curb and gutter. The proposed project would require approximately 10 acres of new right-of-way.

Federal regulations require that federally funded transportation projects have logical termini (23 CFR 771.111(f)(1)). Simply stated, this means that a project must have rational beginning and end points. Those end points may not be created simply to avoid proper analysis of environmental impacts. The

logical termini for the project are I-35 and FM 1460. Because they are major traffic generators, these termini were chosen to meet the demands of increased traffic along this corridor.

Federal regulations require that a project have independent utility and be a reasonable expenditure even if no other transportation improvements are made in the area (23 CFR 771.111 (f)(2)). This means a project must be able to provide benefit by itself, and that the project not compel further expenditures to make the project useful. Stated another way, a project must be able to satisfy its purpose and need with no other projects being built. The proposed project has independent utility and would not preclude other foreseeable transportation improvements within the project area. The project provides congestion relief by widening and improving the existing roadway, which satisfies the project's need, and this would be true even if no other transportation improvements occur. Because the project stands alone, it cannot and does not irretrievably commit future federal funds. Federal law prohibits a project from restricting consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements (23 CFR 771.111(f)(3)). This means that a project must not dictate or restrict any future roadway alternatives. This project has independent utility and would not restrict the consideration of alternatives for other foreseeable transportation improvements.

The approved phase of the proposed project is anticipated to cost approximately \$28 million dollars, with \$22.4 million from federal funding and \$5.6 million from state funding. The proposed project is described in the TxDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) (TxDOT 2019a, CAMPO 2015, 2019). See **Appendix E—Plan and Program Excerpts**.

## **3.0 Purpose and Need**

### ***3.1 Need***

The US 79 project is needed to improve mobility along the corridor and improve safety.

### ***3.2 Supporting Facts and/or Data***

The population in the vicinity of the proposed project area has experienced rapid growth in the past two decades. According to population counts in 2010–2014, the population in Round Rock has increased by 74.97 percent since the year 2000 (USA.com 2020).

Increased population growth has led to an increase in traffic volume. Traffic analysis data was provided by TxDOT's Transportation Planning and Programming Division in December 2017. This data depicts the average daily traffic volumes (ADT) projections for 2024 and 2044 within the project limits. The ADT is expected to increase by approximately 52 percent from 2024 to 2044, from 41,600 vehicles per day to 63,200 vehicles per day (TxDOT 2017a).

The project area is influenced by a number of important traffic generators, including I-35 and numerous commercial and residential developments. A standard measure of roadway performance outlined by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials is level of service (LOS). LOS is a qualitative measure of operating conditions at a location and is directly related to vehicle

delay at intersections. LOS assignments range from “A” to “F,” with “A” defined as “Very low vehicle delays, short cycle length/exceptionally favorable signal progression,” and “F” defined as “Poor signal progression, long cycle length, cycle failures during most cycles/failing to clear queues,” and B–E falling in between.

Peak hour traffic modeling of Design Year 2044 data indicates the No Build alternative LOS is projected as E and F, with three E intersections and 13 F intersections. In contrast, the Design Year 2044 LOS data for the Build Alternative indicates LOS ranging from A–F, with only three F intersections between both the AM peak and PM peak (US 79 at Chisolm Trail and US 79 at Mays Street in the AM peak, and US 79 at I-35 northbound frontage road in the PM peak) (TxDOT 2020a).

Increased population growth in the communities surrounding the project area, along with increased traffic demand along the corridor, has resulted in safety concerns within the proposed project area. TxDOT’s Crash Record Information System was used to analyze the crash data along US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460. The three previous complete calendar years (from 2016 to 2018) were utilized. The crash rate for a roadway is defined as the number of crashes per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled. It is standardized for each type of roadway in Texas and this standard may be compared to the rate for particular roadway. **Table 1** includes the crash rates for US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460 and the statewide averages for comparable types of roadways.

**Table 1: Crash Rate Comparison**

Year	US 79	Statewide Average – Urban U.S. Highways	Statewide Average – Urban 4 or More Lanes Undivided
2016	224	185.06	290.24
2017	215	177.00	280.53
2018	245	177.84	283.09

Source: TxDOT 2020a, 2020b

The total number of crashes from 2016 to 2018 increased 9.4 percent, from 224 in 2016 to 245 in 2018. Additionally, the rate of crashes occurring on US 79 within the project area are lower than the statewide average for an urban four-lane undivided facility but higher than the statewide average for urban U.S. highways. Although no fatalities were recorded within the project area from 2016 to 2018, the crashes on US 79 within the proposed project limits indicate a need to improve operational characteristics and improve mobility.

### **3.3 Purpose**

The purpose of the proposed project is to increase mobility and safety on US 79 for the traveling public.

## 4.0 Alternatives

### 4.1 *Build Alternative*

The proposed project would entail the addition of one lane in each direction on US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460. The proposed Build Alternative meets the purpose and need because it will increase mobility and safety on the existing corridor. The Build Alternative is the Preferred Alternative. The proposed project is anticipated to cost approximately \$38,074,703, with \$28 million approved, including \$22.4 million from federal funding and \$5.6 million from state funding. Sources for the remaining funding have not been identified at this time.

### 4.2 *No-Build Alternative*

The No-Build Alternative represents the case in which the proposed project would not be constructed. Other transportation improvements may or may not be constructed, depending on project development and funding availability issues for each such improvement.

The No-Build Alternative would not improve mobility and safety in the project area. For these reasons, the No-Build Alternative would not satisfy the need and purpose of the proposed project; therefore, the Build Alternative is the Preferred Alternative. The No-Build Alternative is carried forward throughout the document as a baseline comparison to the Build Alternative.

### 4.3 *Preliminary Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration*

Two preliminary alternatives were considered but have been eliminated from further consideration. The alternatives differ in the configuration of the Mays Street / US 79 intersection.

- Alternative 1: This preliminary alternative proposed a conventional 6-lane divided intersection at Mays Street and US 79 and was presented as an option at the first public meeting. A conventional intersection design was not preferred for the proposed project due to decreased traffic flow compared to the half-cloverleaf configuration.
- Alternative 2: This preliminary alternative proposed a half-cloverleaf configuration east of Mays Street at the Mays Street and US 79 intersection and was presented as an option at the first public meeting. This design would have resulted in an adverse impact to an NHRP-eligible historic property at the northeast corner of Mays Street and US 79, the Texas Baptist Children's Home (TBCH). This alternative would have required 8.97 acres of right-of-way, including impacts to the TBCH, a Section 4(f) property, which ultimately resulted in the elimination of the alternative from consideration.

## 5.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

In support of this EA, the following technical reports were prepared:

- *Technical Report Amendment* (TxDOT 2019b)
- *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* (TxDOT 2018a)

- *Archeological Background Study (TxDOT 2018b, 2019c)*
- *Archeological Survey Report (TxDOT 2018c)*
- *Historical Resources Survey Report (TxDOT 2020c)*
- *Water Resources Technical Report (TxDOT 2018d)*
- *Geologic Assessment (TxDOT 2019d)*
- *Tier 1 Site Assessment Form (TxDOT 2019e)*
- *Biological Evaluation Form (TxDOT 2019f)*
- *Biological Assessment (TxDOT 2020d)*
- *Air Quality Technical Report (TxDOT 2019g)*
- *Hazardous Materials Initial Site Assessment (TxDOT 2018e)*
- *Traffic Noise Analysis Technical Report (TxDOT 2019i)*
- *Indirect Impacts Technical Report (TxDOT 2018f)*
- *Cumulative Impacts Technical Report (TxDOT 2020e)*
- *Public Meeting Documentation (TxDOT 2017b, 2018g)*

The technical reports may be inspected and copied upon request at the TxDOT Austin District Headquarters.

### **5.1 Right-of-Way/Displacements**

The proposed project would require the acquisition of approximately 10 acres of right-of-way. An analysis of potential displacements was conducted in the *Technical Report Amendment* (TxDOT 2019b). The proposed project would potentially require 17 commercial displacements and 2 other displacements (a place of worship and a job help center), both of which are community facilities. Refer to the *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* and the *Technical Report Amendment* for more information regarding right-of-way and displacements (TxDOT 2018a, 2019b). **Figure 1** in **Appendix F** provides a graphic depiction of potential displacements associated with the Build Alternative.

The potentially displaced commercial businesses include six retail stores (D8, D9, D11, D12, D13, D17), five restaurants (D1, D2, D6, D10, D16), one gym (D14), one laundromat (D19), one medical lab (D4), one salon (D5), one mailing service provider (D6), and one vacant commercial business (D18). Of the 17 commercial displacements, 16 are located within one shopping center and are owned by the same property owner (see **Photos 5–7** in **Appendix B**). Based on an October 2019 Loopnet.com search, there appears to be a sufficient number of commercial properties available for lease within the project area zip codes to accommodate businesses displaced by the proposed project. However, it should be noted that comparable monthly rents for these potentially displaced properties could not

be determined, as this information was not available from Williamson Central Appraisal District records.

Additionally, two community facilities would potentially be displaced by the proposed project. One of the potentially displaced community facilities, Iglesia Cristiana Bet-el (D3), is a Spanish-language church (see **Photos 2–3** in **Appendix B**). Several Christian places of worship are located in the 78664 zip code; however, the closest Christian place of worship with services in Spanish is approximately 6 miles away. The other potentially displaced community facility, the Goodwill Central Texas—Round Rock Job Help Center (D15) is an organization that provides job assistance for low-income and disadvantaged individuals (see **Photo 4** in **Appendix B**). The center provides case management, pre-employment assistance, training opportunities, client and employer follow-up, and additional supportive services as needed. Programs are available for specific populations, including veterans, homeless individuals, ex-offenders, and those who lack education. The closest facility offering similar services is the Georgetown Community Resource Center, located approximately 9 miles away.

For the purpose of this assessment, a structure that is expected to be within the proposed right-of-way (wholly or in part) was assumed to be displaced. The potential displacement information presented is based on the proposed right-of-way limits as depicted in **Figure 1** in **Appendix F**.

TxDOT provides relocation resources to all displaced persons without discrimination in a manner consistent with U.S. Department of Transportation policy as mandated by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended in the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (the Uniform Act). All property owners from whom land is needed are entitled to receive just compensation for their property. Just compensation is based upon the fair market value of the property. TxDOT also provides, through its Relocation Assistance Program, payment and services to aid in movement to a new location.

Both the United States and Texas Constitutions provide that no private land may be taken for public purposes without adequate compensation being paid for the property. The TxDOT Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation Program would be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Act, and relocation resources are available to all residential and business relocatees without discrimination. Relocation assistance is available to all individuals, families, businesses, farmers, and nonprofit organizations displaced as a result of a state highway or other transportation project. This assistance applies to tenants as well as owners occupying the property needed for the project. Replacement structures must be located in the same type of neighborhood and be equally accessible to public services and places of employment. The proposed project would proceed to construction only when all displaced persons have been provided the opportunity to be relocated to adequate replacement sites. The available structures must also be open to persons regardless of race, color, religion, or nationality and be within the financial means of those individuals affected. With respect to displacements, encroachment-alteration impacts would be driven by the relocations of the structures that would be displaced by the proposed project. Examples of encroachment-alteration impacts due to relocations and displacements include a minor reduction in the supply of affordable housing, changes in residential and commercial property values due to the proposed increase in access and mobility,

changes in the local tax base due to the potential displacements, and impacts to the residents (such as potential increased commuting time) who could be displaced by the proposed construction of US 79. Residential and commercial properties located near US 79 that are not physically impacted by the proposed project may experience a change in market value, either positive or negative.

Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing US 79 would remain as is, and normal, routine maintenance would be conducted. No right-of-way acquisition would be required, and no displacements or relocations would occur.

## **5.2 Land Use**

The proposed project is located in the City of Round Rock in south-central Williamson County. The area is composed of a mix of office, institutional, commercial, and low-to-medium-density residential land uses. A few pockets of open space / undeveloped parcels are also present. Round Rock city center is just south of the proposed project, and the Dell Diamond baseball park is approximately one mile to the east. There are many commercial businesses that offer a wide variety of goods and services along the corridor. Community resources, such as places of worship, parks, day care facilities, schools, medical facilities, bus stops, a housing authority, and a post office, are all within the proposed project area and can be accessed by US 79, I-35, or FM 1460 (generally by car). The community study area can be characterized as a suburban community surrounding a highly developed commercial corridor. The area is rapidly growing and urbanizing, and there are numerous existing and planned developments within and near the project limits. See **Figure 3** from the *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* for a detailed land use map of the proposed project area (TxDOT 2018a).

The Build Alternative would result in the change of approximately 10.04 acres of existing land uses to transportation use. The proposed project is not anticipated to substantially alter the existing land use in the area.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to land use would occur. Land use in the area would remain as is or change to other land uses as the community and economy warrant.

## **5.3 Farmlands**

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA), as detailed in Subtitle I of Title XV of the Agricultural and Food Act of 1981, provides protection to the following: (1) prime farmland, (2) unique farmland, and (3) farmland of local or statewide importance. Under the FPPA, transportation projects conducted by a federal agency or with federal agency assistance that irreversibly convert protected farmland (directly or indirectly) to non-agricultural use are required to coordinate with the National Resources Conservation Service.

The proposed project would require new right-of-way but is not located in a “non-urbanized area” as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Therefore, the FPPA does not apply.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to farmland would occur.

#### **5.4 Utilities/Emergency Services**

The proposed project would require approximately 10 acres of new right-of-way. Implementation of the proposed project would require the relocation and adjustment of utilities such as water lines, sewer lines, gas lines, fiber optic lines, overhead electrical and telephone lines, and other subterranean and aerial utilities. The need for relocation and adjustment of any utilities has been determined during the detailed design phase and coordinated with the affected utility provider to ensure that no substantial interruption of service would take place. The Williamson County emergency medical services, Williamson County Sheriff's Office, and City of Round Rock Fire and Police Departments would be notified of the construction start dates and any potential detour routes. Construction activities are not expected to cause any delays or access issues for emergency service vehicles. Construction of the proposed roadway could provide enhanced access and reduced response times for local emergency services. However, two local streets (Provident Lane and Palm Valley Cove) that currently have two-way access would no longer be able to accommodate left-hand turns due to the proposed raised median. Thus, travel time for emergency responders wanting to access properties on these streets could increase by one to three minutes.

Construction of the proposed project would be phased in a manner that would allow the existing road system to remain open to traffic during construction of the new roadway and would not require the use of detours. Construction of the project would not prevent access to any adjacent properties, except for short durations (less than one day).

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to utilities/emergency services would occur. Traffic patterns would remain unchanged and no detours would occur.

#### **5.5 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

Currently, a portion of the proposed project area has sidewalks (on the eastern section north of US 79). Portions of the sidewalk are outside of TxDOT right-of-way. No designated bicycle lanes exist along the proposed project limits. Shared-use paths are proposed as part of the project. A designated facility for bicycles and pedestrians would increase the safety of the corridor.

Under the No-Build Alternative, pedestrians and cyclists would continue to use the existing transportation network as it is currently configured.

#### **5.6 Community Impacts**

A *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* (TxDOT 2018a) was completed in accordance with TxDOT's *Community Impacts, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency, and Title VI Compliance* guidance (TxDOT 2015). Subsequent to the approval of this report, the project area was revised, and additional assessment of community impacts was included in the *Technical Report Amendment* (TxDOT 2019b). The proposed project is located in the City of Round Rock in south-central Williamson County. As previously described in **Section 5.2**, the area is composed of a mix of office, institutional, commercial, and low-to-medium-density residential land uses. Refer to the *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* and the *Technical Report Amendment* for additional

information regarding communities and potential impacts from the Build Alternative (TxDOT 2018a, 2019b).

Overall, the proposed project is expected to result in both adverse and beneficial impacts to access and travel patterns for the immediate community in the City of Round Rock. The proposed construction of the raised medians throughout the project area would increase safety for turning traffic but would also result in changes to access and travel patterns throughout the corridor and on two local cross streets. Some properties would only be accessible by cars traveling in specific directions. Two local streets (Provident Lane and Palm Valley Cove) that currently have two-way access would no longer be able to accommodate left-hand turns due to the proposed raised median. Thus, travel time for motorists and emergency responders wanting to access properties on these streets could increase by one to three minutes. The potential changes in access and travel patterns could result in slightly longer travel times for other residents, employers, or business patrons along US 79. However, other commuters could experience shorter travel times due to the increased capacity and operational efficiency of the roadway.

Mobility and safety would be enhanced for all users of the US 79 roadway, including emergency vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, due to the increased capacity and operational efficiency of the roadway, overpasses and intersection improvements, and continuous and connected shared-use paths.

The overall impact of the US 79 improvements is expected to result in both negative and positive impacts to community cohesion. The proposed construction of a raised median throughout the project area would result in changes in access points to residences and businesses on both sides of the corridor and to and from two local streets (Provident Lane and Palm Valley Cove). The proposed improvements would affect travel patterns for the immediate community along US 79. The proposed overpasses and dedicated U-turn lanes would alleviate the danger associated with the high-speed US 79 intersections and turns. The proposed overpasses would also make it safer and easier for traffic to move between communities on either side of the highway. Additionally, the proposed continuous and connected shared-use paths would allow for increased access by bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the project area.

Concerns documented during the public meeting and other meetings with property owners included left-turn access to homes and businesses and the issue of traffic flow on US 79. The proposed design reflects the results of the alternatives analysis that has been ongoing for some time. The proposed design has been carried forward because it results in the fewest displaced structures and has the least amount of overall environmental impact. The alternative captured by the proposed design received the most public support during the public meetings. The proposed project would not affect, separate, or isolate any distinct neighborhoods, ethnic groups, or other specific groups since US 79 is an existing roadway.

The City of Round Rock recently began a public initiative to increase safety along the US 79 corridor. This public effort hinges on the proposed improvements to US 79. Although the anticipated raised

median might negatively impact the access and travel patterns of residents and businesses along US 79 and the two local cross streets (Provident Lane and Palm Valley Cove), the larger implications of mobility and safety improvements would provide a long-term benefit to the traveling public and greater community of Round Rock. Overall, community cohesion would be improved by the proposed project as a result of improved mobility and safer intersections and connections between communities on either side of the highway.

With respect to encroachment-alteration effects to socio-economic resources, indirect impacts would be driven by changes in travel patterns and access associated with the proposed project. The potential indirect impacts would include improved vehicular access to employment opportunities, markets, goods, services, residential uses, and public facilities due to increased vehicular mobility.

The No-Build Alternative would not result in any improvements to congestion, access, or mobility within the project area or provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian improvements within the project area.

### **5.6.1 Environmental Justice**

The Build Alternative is expected to improve mobility and enhance safety for existing and future residences and businesses within the project vicinity. Environmental justice populations occur in 17 of the 28 populated census blocks adjacent to the proposed project, and the largest minority population is Hispanic (see **Figure 2** in **Appendix F**). All 19 of the potential displacements are located within census blocks that contain predominantly minority populations. Iglesia Cristiana Bet-el is a Spanish-language church. Additionally, the Goodwill Central Texas—Round Rock Job Help Center is an organization that specifically caters to the low-income population. If these facilities do not relocate in the general community vicinity, environmental justice populations that reside within the community study area would have to travel approximately 6 to 9 additional miles to access similar services. Review of the census data for low-income populations at the census block group level did not indicate a presence of predominantly low-income populations along the Build Alternative corridor.

Raised medians and restricted access affiliated with the Build Alternative are not solely located within predominantly minority census geographies, and changes in access would occur throughout the project limits. No existing neighborhoods would be divided, and permanent disruptions to normal daily activities are not expected. No disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations are anticipated as a result of the proposed project. The requirements of Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, are satisfied. Refer to the *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* and the *Technical Report Amendment* for additional information regarding minority and low-income populations within the project area (TxDOT 2018a, 2019b).

The No-Build Alternative would not result in any impacts to low-income or minority populations. Beneficial impacts from improved mobility and enhanced safety would not be experienced by the entire community, including minorities and low-income individuals. Increased congestion and reduced mobility are anticipated to occur under the No-Build Alternative.

### 5.6.2 Limited English Proficiency

The project area includes people who speak English “less than very well,” or Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations. The LEP populations present within the project area range from 0.0 to 19.4 percent of the total population. Of the 16,964 people over five years of age in the project area, approximately 8.7 percent speak English “less than very well.” The largest LEP population speaks Spanish (86.8 percent of the total LEP population). The next-most-prevalent language spoken is Indo-European (11.2 percent of the total LEP population). Refer to the *Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* and the *Technical Report Amendment* for additional information regarding LEP populations within the project area (TxDOT 2018a, 2019b).

Two public meetings were held, one on September 28, 2017, and one on August 23, 2018 (see **Section 7.0**). LEP populations were afforded the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Notices for the public meetings were published in English and Spanish.

Reasonable steps will continue to be taken to ensure all persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information TxDOT provides. Any public involvement information and/or materials would continue to be made available in English and Spanish, and translation services would be provided upon request. Therefore, the requirements of EO 13166, pertaining to LEP, would be satisfied.

The No-Build Alternative would have no impacts to LEP populations. Increased congestion and reduced mobility that are anticipated as a result of not implementing the Build Alternative may result in adverse effects to the communities of the project area, including LEP populations.

### 5.7 Visual/Aesthetics Impacts

The visual quality assessment is used to determine whether the proposed project would be compatible with the visual character of the setting into which it would be introduced. The impact assessment takes into consideration the fact that existing transportation uses traverse the proposed right-of-way. Visual impacts are discussed in terms of the effects that new physical elements associated with the proposed project would have on landform quality (i.e., the existing natural or man-made landforms) and visual resources (i.e., the physical resources including native vegetation, introduced landscaping, and the built environment that make up the character of the area).

Federal and state regulations require that visual impacts be addressed for Section 106 and Section 4(f) properties. No specific federal or state visual regulatory requirements apply to parkland or to properties that are not designated historic or are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Generally, the existing visual and aesthetic qualities of the study area include commercial, single-family, and multi-family resources.

Characteristics of the Build Alternative that could have a visual/aesthetic impact on the resource include elevated structures/bridges and other vertical elements such as signs and light standards. Visual impacts along the Build Alternative would vary by location. Views, both from and of, the facility would be greatest at grade-separated locations where US 79 intersects Mays Street and A.W. Grimes

Boulevard. Other than the grade-separated locations, potential views of the proposed facility would be limited due to the topography of the project area.

Where reasonable and feasible, mitigation measures could include creating naturally vegetated medians, completing a minimum of right-of-way clearing, incorporating design specifications to blend the project into the landscape, and promoting roadside native wildflower planting programs. For roadside revegetation, landscape planting, and revegetation of natural areas impacted by construction, the use of native plants would be considered to improve the visual aesthetics and to control the introduction of invasive species.

Under the No-Build Alternative, the viewshed would not be altered by the introduction of a new transportation facility.

## **5.8 Cultural Resources**

### **5.8.1 Archeology**

The current archeological area of potential effects (APE) consists of the entire 89.53-acre proposed project footprint. Typical roadway construction would reach depths of 2 feet or 0.6 meters below ground surface, with deeper impacts for construction of bridge, overpass, and drainage elements.

Archeological studies were conducted in several stages using preliminary versions of the project footprint, starting with the first of two archeological background studies meeting TxDOT requirements; the first background study was approved by TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division on April 30, 2018 (TxDOT 2018b). The background study recommended survey of all areas of proposed new right-of-way at the time, this included 9.78 acres of the project area. Following TxDOT's approval, an intensive archeological survey was completed to inventory and evaluate archeological resources within the proposed project's APE (TxDOT 2018c). Fieldwork was conducted in July 2018 under Texas Antiquities Permit 8459. A vast majority of the APE was found to have been previously disturbed by construction and maintenance of the existing US 79 roadway and associated driveways, utilities, and water management features. Three shovel test units and five backhoe trenches were excavated within the APE. None of these excavations uncovered archeological materials of any age; no new archeological sites were identified, and no artifacts were collected during this project. No unambiguously cultural materials or features were found anywhere in the APE, including in shovel tests or trenches. Thus, Cox|McLain Environmental Consultants, Inc. (CMEC) recommended that no further archeological investigations were warranted prior to construction and that the proposed project should be allowed to continue as planned. Following submittal of an archeological survey report, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) concurred with this recommendation and the findings of the report on August 28, 2018.

Design changes resulted in potential additional deep impacts as part of the construction of a grade-separation northwest of the intersection of US 79 and Mays Street. The portions of proposed new right-of-way that were added during recent schematic changes are located entirely within areas containing roadway improvements, drainage improvements, commercial developments, and/or overhead and

buried utility corridors that have disturbed any archeologically relevant soils within these areas of the APE. Thus, CMEC recommended that no further archeological investigations were warranted prior to construction, and that the proposed project should be allowed to continue as planned. TxDOT approved the contents and recommendations of the second archeological background study on December 19, 2019 (**Appendix G**) (TxDOT 2019c).

Under the Build Alternative, no impacts to significant or potentially NRHP/State Archeological Landmark (SAL)-eligible archeological resources would occur. Thus, no further coordination would be required with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to significant or potentially NRHP/SAL-eligible archeological resources would occur. Thus, no coordination would be required with the SHPO.

If any unanticipated cultural materials or deposits are found at any stage of clearing, preparation, or construction, the work should cease in that area and TxDOT personnel should be notified immediately. During evaluation of any unanticipated finds and coordination between TxDOT and THC, clearing, preparation, and/or construction could continue in any other areas along the corridor where no such deposits or materials are observed.

### 5.8.2 Historic Properties

A reconnaissance survey of the APE for historic resources was conducted in 2019–2020 (TxDOT 2020c). The APE was defined in accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Implementation of Transportation Undertakings* (the PA) (**Figure 3a–3b in Appendix F**). The APE for the proposed project was defined as existing right-of-way in locations where no new right-of-way would be acquired and 150 feet from the edge of proposed new right-of-way where new right-of-way or new grade separations are proposed. A review of the NRHP, the list of SALs, and the list of Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs) indicated that two previously identified resources are within the APE: the Captain Nelson Merrell House (an RTHL and NRHP-listed property) and an NRHP-eligible Texas Centennial highway marker for “The Pioneer Builders.” In all, the survey documented 29 historic-age properties within the APE (built prior to 1978) (**Figure 4a–4e in Appendix F**). TxDOT historians determined that the NRHP-listed Merrell House retains its eligibility and that the Centennial marker, the Henna House, and the TBCH campus are eligible for NRHP listing. Right-of-way would be required from the Henna House, the Merrell House, and the TBCH properties; the highway marker would not be directly affected. Pursuant to Stipulation VI “Undertakings with Potential to Cause Effects” of the PA, TxDOT historians determined that the proposed project would have no adverse effect to the NRHP-eligible properties. TxDOT intends to pursue *de minimis* 4(f) determinations for the permanent incorporation of land into a transportation facility at the Henna House, Merrell House, and TBCH. Coordination with the THC is on-going.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no effects to historic resources would occur, and no coordination with THC would be required.

### **5.9 Department of Transportation Act Section 4(f), Land and Water Conservation Fund Act Section 6(f), and Texas Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 26**

The proposed project would not require the use of nor substantially impair the purposes of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreational area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge lands. The proposed project would require minor right-of-way acquisitions from three properties that are eligible for the NRHP and protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966. Although the project would have no adverse effect on the properties under Section 106, the proposed project constitutes a *de minimis* Section 4(f) impact to the historic sites. The proposed project would not require the acquisition of any land within park areas subject to Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. Chapter 26 of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code protects public land designated and used as a park, recreation area, scientific area, wildlife refuge, or historic site. No such properties would be impacted by the proposed project (the identified historic properties are not publicly owned).

Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no impacts to properties protected by Section 4(f), Section 6(f), or Chapter 26.

### **5.10 Water Resources**

A waters of the U.S. (WOUS) determination was conducted for the proposed project in March 2018 (TxDOT 2018d). The project area is located within the Brazos River Basin. One potentially jurisdictional WOUS at two crossings was identified within the project area. The potential WOUS consisted of a linear WOUS (Onion Branch). One manmade ditch in an upland was investigated and was determined to be a non-jurisdictional feature. All proposed roadway and drainage improvements should be designed in a manner to avoid or minimize impacts to jurisdictional crossings. **Table 2** contains a summary of potential WOUS identified within the project area.

Encroachment-alteration effects to water quality occur primarily due to an increase in impervious surface area that could result in increased runoff and decreased water quality downstream. Construction of the proposed improvements would directly contribute to increases in impervious cover. Effects would also occur in areas where vegetation in the proposed project area is cleared during construction, which could accelerate off-site erosion due to runoff. Use of best management practices (BMPs) within the proposed project area would minimize water quality effects downstream.

Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing drainage structures along and adjacent to the existing roadways would remain in their current forms and locations, and normal maintenance would be required. No impacts to WOUS would occur.

**Table 2: Summary of Potential Waters of the U.S. Within the US 79 Right-of-Way**

Single and Complete Crossing #	Name of Water Body	Latitude (decimal degrees)	Longitude (decimal degrees)	Linear Feet/Acres of Potential Waters of the U.S. Within the Existing Right-of-Way	Type of Aquatic Resource	Existing Structure	Regulatory Authority to Which the Aquatic Resource "May Be" Subject
1	Onion Branch	30.518923	- 97.673973	164 In ft/ 0.064 acres	Intermittent Stream	Bridge	Section 404
2	Manmade Ditch	30.518497	- 97.650332	13 In ft/ 0.001 acres	Manmade Ditch	Culvert	None
Total Water of the U.S. Linear Feet/Acreage:				164 In ft/ 0.064 acres			
Total Manmade Ditch Linear Feet/Acreage:				13 In ft/ 0.001 acres			
Total Wetland Acreage:				0.0 acres			

**5.10.1 Clean Water Act Section 404**

For single and complete crossings within public transportation projects, the maximum limit of impacts to non-tidal jurisdictional WOUS that would be covered under the Nationwide Permit (NWP) #14 is 0.5 acres. A Pre-construction Notification (PCN) would be required if the impacts are greater than 0.1 acres or if there is any proposed discharge within special aquatic sites, including wetlands. The PCN must include a compensatory mitigation proposal to offset permanent losses of WOUS to ensure that those losses result in only minimal adverse effects to the aquatic environment. The PCN must also include a statement describing how temporary losses of WOUS would be minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

Because TxDOT is the lead federal agency, a PCN would not be required under General Condition 18 to comply with the Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). TxDOT will retain documentation that shows ESA Section 7 compliance for impacts to federally listed species.

It is anticipated that impacts to WOUS will be authorized through NWP #14 without PCN. Impacts to WOUS would be minimized to the extent practicable under the Build Alternative.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to WOUS would occur and no permitting would be required with the USACE.

**5.10.2 Clean Water Act Section 401**

In order to comply with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s (TCEQ’s) Section 401 Water Quality Certification Program for Tier I projects, authorized by certain NWPs, at least one BMP from each of the following three categories of onsite water quality management practices would be used on the proposed project: erosion control, post-construction total suspended solids (TSS) control, and

sedimentation control. The Section 401 certification requirements for Tier I projects would be met by implementing approved BMPs for erosion, sediment, and post-construction TSS controls from the list of TCEQ's Section 401 Water Quality Certification Conditions for NWP.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to WOUS would occur and no Section 401 certification would be required.

### **5.10.3 Executive Order 11990 Wetlands**

EO 11990 Protection of Wetlands (issued in 1977) requires that federal agencies minimize the destruction or modification of wetlands. Based on field investigation, no impacts to wetlands are anticipated; therefore, EO 11990 would not apply.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to wetlands would occur; therefore, EO 11990 would not apply.

### **5.10.4 Rivers and Harbors Act**

No navigable waters occur within the project corridor, and neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category.

### **5.10.5 Clean Water Act Section 303(d)**

The project area is located within the Turkey Creek–Brushy Creek watershed (HUC# 12040101). Stormwater runoff from the project area flows into Brushy Creek, which is identified as assessment Segment 1244 by the TCEQ. This stream segment is listed as impaired due to elevated bacteria levels. Stormwater BMPs would be designed to treat roadway runoff prior to discharging into nearby streams. The TCEQ 2018 303(d) list, approved on December 23, 2019, was utilized in this assessment.

To date, TCEQ has not identified (through either a total maximum daily load limit approved by the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] or the review of the projects under the TCEQ MOU) a need to implement control measures beyond those required by the construction general permit (CGP) for road construction projects for either impaired segment. The proposed project is not anticipated to contribute to the constituent of concern for this impaired water. BMPs would be utilized to ensure water quality protection standards are met for the proposed project. Coordination under the TCEQ MOU with TXDOT will be conducted prior to finalizing this EA.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to impaired water segments would occur, and coordination with the TCEQ would not be required.

### **5.10.6 Clean Water Act Section 402**

The proposed project would include five or more acres of earth disturbance. TxDOT would comply with the TCEQ's Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) CGP.

Efforts would be made to avoid and minimize impacts to the aquatic ecosystem during roadway design. Minimization would be achieved by preparing and implementing a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SW3P) and by implementing BMPs, including temporary erosion, sedimentation, and TSS water pollution controls. All temporary erosion controls would comply with TxDOT standard specifications and

would be in place, according to the construction plans, prior to commencement of construction-related activities. The contractor would take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of fuels, lubricants, and hazardous materials in the construction staging area. A construction site notice would be posted. A Notice of Intent (NOI) and Notice of Termination would be required.

Since TPDES CGP authorization and compliance (and the associated documentation) occur outside of the environmental clearance process, compliance is ensured by the policies and procedures that govern the design and construction phases of the project. The *Project Development Process Manual* and the *Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) Preparation Manual* require a SW3P be included in the plans of all projects that disturb one or more acres. The *Construction Contract Administration Manual* requires that the appropriate CGP authorization documents (NOI or site notice) be completed, posted, and submitted, when required by the CGP, to TCEQ and the municipal separate storm sewer system operator. It also requires that projects be inspected to ensure compliance with the CGP.

The PS&E Preparation Manual requires that all projects include Standard Specification Item 506 (Temporary Erosion, Sedimentation, and Environmental Controls), and the “Required Specification Checklists” require Special Provision 506-003 on all projects that need authorization under the CGP. These documents require the project contractor to comply with the CGP and SW3P, and to complete the appropriate authorization documents.

Under the No-Build Alternative, there would be no earth disturbance, and compliance with the TPDES CGP would not be required.

#### **5.10.7 Floodplains**

EO 11988, Floodplain Management, requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of floodplains and to avoid direct and indirect support of floodplain development wherever there is a practicable alternative. The project area crosses the mapped 100-year Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplains associated with Onion Branch (**Figure 5** in **Appendix F**) (Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 48491C0495E; FEMA 2018). The hydraulic design for this project would be in accordance with current FHWA and TxDOT design policies. The facility would permit the conveyance of the 100-year flood, inundation of the roadway being acceptable, without causing significant damage to the facility, stream, or other property. The proposed project would not increase the base flood elevation to a level that would violate applicable floodplain regulations and ordinances.

This project is subject to and will comply with federal EO 11988 on Floodplain Management. The department implements this EO on a programmatic basis through its Hydraulic Design Manual. Design of this project will be conducted in accordance with the department’s *Hydraulic Design Manual*. Adherence to the TxDOT *Hydraulic Design Manual* ensures that this project will not result in a “significant encroachment” as defined by FHWA’s rules implementing EO 11988 at 23 CFR 650.105(q).

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to floodplains would occur.

### 5.10.8 Wild and Scenic Rivers

No wild or scenic rivers occur within the project corridor, and neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category.

Based on a project scoping analysis, it was determined that neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category or subject matter.

### 5.10.9 Coastal Barrier Resources

Based on a project scoping analysis, it was determined that neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category or subject matter.

### 5.10.10 Coastal Zone Management

Based on a project scoping analysis, it was determined that neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category or subject matter.

### 5.10.11 Edwards Aquifer

The Edwards Aquifer is a karst aquifer that underlies 3,600 square miles across 10 counties in South-central and Central Texas. The Edwards Aquifer is the primary source of water for Central Texas and the surrounding areas. The Edwards Aquifer includes three primary zones: the Contributing Zone, the Recharge Zone, and the Transition Zone. Springs and streams originating in the Contributing Zone eventually flow across the Recharge Zone where surface water can infiltrate into the aquifer. See the *Water Resources Technical Report* for more detailed information about the Edwards Aquifer (TxDOT 2018d).

The western portion of the project area overlays the Edwards Aquifer Recharge and Transition Zones. A TCEQ Water Pollution Abatement Plan is required to be prepared and approved for the portion of the project located in the Recharge Zone before construction can commence. Permanent BMPs, including water quality ponds, are required and included in the project design to achieve an 80 percent reduction of increase in TSS attributed to the proposed project within the Recharge Zone.

A Geologic Assessment was conducted within the proposed project area to identify potential recharge features within the proposed project area (TxDOT 2019d). Two recharge features were identified within the project area: Brushy Creek Spring and Chandler Fault. They are described below. No karst features were identified.

- Brushy Creek Spring is located within a stormwater culvert (H-E-B culvert) that runs beneath US 79 within the project area. The concrete culvert includes three diversion pipes that fed into Brushy Creek Spring. During the site visit, it appeared water was emerging from several cracks within the concrete culvert. Because the spring is hydrogeologically connected to the Edward Aquifer, and the potential for rapid infiltration exists when the spring is not flowing, the feature is ranked as sensitive. Although the H-E-B culvert and this spring would not be directly impacted by the construction of the proposed project, water

quality impacts and the potential to intersect wet voids during construction in the vicinity of this culvert may occur.

- Chandler Fault intersects the proposed project area to the west of Egger Avenue. Due to fine infilling at the surface throughout the project area, the probability of rapid infiltration is low. If ground disturbing activities occur in the vicinity of this feature, then impacts may occur. However, the likelihood of direct impacts to this feature is low due to the existing impervious cover and current fine infill.

The No-Build Alternative would not result in project-related impacts to the Edwards Aquifer because the proposed US 79 improvements would not be constructed under this alternative.

#### **5.10.12 International Boundary and Water Commission**

Based on a project scoping analysis, it was determined that neither the Build nor the No-Build Alternative would have an impact on this resource category or subject matter.

#### **5.10.13 Drinking Water Systems**

Based on the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB's) Groundwater Database and the Submitted Drillers Report Database, six water supply wells occur within one-quarter mile of the project area (**Figure 5 in Appendix F**) (TWDB 2020). None of the wells are located within the proposed project limits. The proposed project would have no impact on drinking water systems.

In accordance with TxDOT's *Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Highways, Streets, and Bridges* (Item 103, Disposal of Wells), any drinking water wells would need to be properly removed and disposed of during construction of the project.

The No-Build Alternative would have no impact on drinking water systems.

### ***5.11 Biological Resources***

#### **5.11.1 Texas Parks and Wildlife Coordination**

A Tier 1 Site Assessment was completed for the proposed project to determine whether coordination with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) would be required (TxDOT 2019e). Potential impacts to the Riparian MOU habitat type would exceed the threshold for coordination with TPWD, though impacts to vegetation proposed by the Build Alternative would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable. The proposed project is within range of and with suitable habitat present for several species of greatest conservation need (SGCNs) that do not have designated BMPs (see **Section 5.11.11**). Coordination with TPWD was completed February 18, 2020 (**Appendix G**).

Under the No-Build Alternative, no coordination with TPWD would be required.

#### **5.11.2 Impacts to Vegetation**

The project area is located within the Edwards Plateau and Blackland Prairie Ecoregions of Texas, as mapped by the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (EMST) (Missouri Resource Assessment Partnership [MoRAP] 2013). The EMST identified several vegetation types within the project area;

vegetation in the project area was field verified by qualified biologists in 2017. Vegetation observed within the proposed project area is consistent with that of the Central Texas environment. Five general categories of vegetation were observed within the project area during field investigations (**Table 3**). These habitat types identified in the 2013 TxDOT–TPWD MOU and Threshold Programmatic Agreement have been assigned acreage thresholds which, if exceeded, would require coordination under the TxDOT–TPWD MOU.

The proposed project area is composed of the following habitat types: Edwards Plateau Savanna, Woodland, and Shrubland; Disturbed Prairie; Tallgrass Prairie, Grassland; Riparian; and Urban (**Table 3** and **Figure 6a–6c** in **Appendix F**) (MoRAP 2013). These habitat types are not considered rare or important remnant vegetation as mapped by the Texas Conservation Action Plan. The project area was investigated for the presence of unusual vegetation features as identified by the TxDOT–TPWD MOU. Unusual vegetation features identified within the project area include unmaintained vegetation, riparian vegetation, and fenceline vegetation. No remnant vegetation occurs in the project area. TPWD recommended vegetation BMPs would be implemented where practicable (**Section 8.1**), and many of the riparian corridors would be bridged. The project area was also investigated for the presence of special habitat features as identified by the TxDOT–TPWD MOU, and Brushy Creek Spring was identified. For more information, see the *Tier 1 Site Assessment*, the *Biological Evaluation Form*, and the *Biological Assessment* (TxDOT 2019e, 2019f, 2020c) available in TxDOT’s project files and located in TxDOT’s Environmental Compliance Oversight System (ECOS).

**Table 3: Observed Vegetation Within the US 79 Project Area**

MOU Habitat Type	EMST Vegetation Type	Acres of Vegetation	Threshold Value*	Threshold Exceeded?
Edwards Plateau Savanna, Woodland, and Shrubland	Edwards Plateau: Live Oak Motte and Woodland	1.29	2.0	No
Disturbed Prairie	Native Invasive: Deciduous Woodland	1.08	2.5	No
Tallgrass Prairie, Grassland	Blackland Prairie: Disturbance or Tame Grassland	0.34	1.05	No
Riparian	Edwards Plateau: Floodplain Hardwood Forest	0.63	0.1	Yes
Urban	Urban Low Intensity	34.66	N/A	No
<b>Total Acreage:</b>		<b>38.00</b>		

\*Note: The proposed project area crosses multiple ecoregions with differing threshold values. According to guidance from the Programmatic Agreement, the average of the ecoregion thresholds has been used for this analysis.

Under the No-Build alternative, the existing vegetation would remain as it is presently. The No-Build Alternative would not require any conversion of vegetation to a transportation facility, nor would it impact unusual vegetation or special habitat features.

### 5.11.3 Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species

This project is subject to and will comply with federal EO 13112 on Invasive Species. The department implements this EO on a programmatic basis through its *Roadside Vegetation Management Manual* and *Landscape and Aesthetics Design Manual*.

The No-Build Alternative would not be subject to EO 13112 on Invasive Species.

### 5.11.4 Executive Memorandum on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscaping

This project is subject to and will comply with the federal Executive Memorandum on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscaping, effective April 26, 1994. The department implements this Executive Memorandum on a programmatic basis through its *Roadside Vegetation Management Manual* and *Landscape and Aesthetics Design Manual*.

The No-Build Alternative would not be subject to the Executive Memorandum on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscaping.

### 5.11.5 Impacts to Wildlife

The vegetation of the Edwards Plateau and Blackland Prairie Ecosystems provide habitat for a wide range of invertebrate, fish, reptilian, amphibian, avian, and mammalian species that are common to the Central Texas environment. Some wildlife species could occur within undeveloped portions of the existing and proposed right-of-way. Required clearing or other construction-related activities may directly or indirectly affect species that reside on or adjacent to the project area right-of-way. Heavy machinery could kill small, low-mobility animals or could cause soil compaction, impacting animals that live underground. Larger, more-mobile species will typically avoid construction activities and move into adjacent areas.

With regard to encroachment-alteration effects under the Build Alternative, the effects of removing important wildlife habitat areas would be limited to the unmaintained vegetation and the water features present within the project construction area. Accordingly, impacts to habitat would be limited to the area of direct impacts, and no encroachment-alteration impacts are expected. Wildlife and vegetation BMPs are included in **Section 8.0**.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to wildlife species or their habitats would occur.

### 5.11.6 Migratory Bird Protections

This project will comply with applicable provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Code Title 5, Subtitle B, Chapter 64, Birds. It is the department's policy to avoid removal and destruction of active bird nests except through federally or state-approved options. In addition, it is the department's policy to, where appropriate and practicable:

- use measures to prevent or discourage birds from building nests on man-made structures within portions of the project area planned for construction, and
- schedule construction activities outside the typical nesting season.

The No-Build Alternative would not require any removal or disturbance of migratory birds, their nests, or their young and would have no impact on migratory birds.

#### **5.11.7 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act**

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act does not apply to this project.

#### **5.11.8 Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**

The project is not within 660 feet of an active or inactive Bald or Golden Eagle nest. Therefore, no coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required.

The No-Build Alternative would have no impact on Bald or Golden Eagles.

#### **5.11.9 Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act**

The Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)/Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) does not apply.

#### **5.11.10 Marine Mammal Protection Act**

The project area does not contain suitable habitat for marine mammals.

The No-Build Alternative would have no impact on marine mammals.

#### **5.11.11 Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species**

USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) and TPWD lists of endangered and threatened species were used for this analysis (USFWS 2019, TPWD 2018, TPWD 2019). In April 2019, TPWD revised the Williamson County species list to include additional protected species. Environmental scoping for the proposed project was already complete at this time. Per the TxDOT and TPWD MOU, changes to TPWD county lists are not required to be considered in cases in which environmental scoping has already occurred prior to the revision of the lists. In addition, SGCNs are not afforded regulatory protection under state or federal law; therefore, potential impacts to recently added SGCN species are not evaluated in the analysis below. The additional state-listed threatened or endangered species have been assessed.

TxDOT has determined that the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the federally endangered Bone Cave harvestman (*Texella reyesi*). The proposed project is located over Karst Zone 1 (areas known to contain endangered cave fauna); however, no suitable habitat was identified within the project area as verified by a qualified karst geologist (**Figure 7** in **Appendix F**) (TxDOT 2019d). Voids encountered during construction could provide suitable habitat for the species. Communications with the USFWS did not result in the identification of occupied features within a reasonable distance of the project area (TxDOT 2020d). Voluntary conservation measures described in **Section 8.0** are designed to protect listed species and any voids that may be encountered during construction.

TxDOT has determined that the proposed project may affect and is likely to adversely affect the federally threatened Jollyville Plateau salamander (*Eurycea tonkawae*). The project intersects a known,

occupied Critical Habitat Unit (CHU 2) for this species (**Figure 7** in **Appendix F**). Recent surveys have confirmed the presence of this species within a concrete culvert (H-E-B culvert) beneath the existing US 79 roadway. Although the H-E-B culvert would not be directly impacted by the construction of the proposed project, water quality impacts and the potential to intersect wet voids during construction in the vicinity of this culvert may occur (TxDOT 2020d). Voluntary conservation measures in **Section 8.0** provide protection to the known Jollyville Plateau salamander location and water quality within the action area during and after construction.

Formal consultation with the USFWS under Section 7 of the ESA will be completed prior to environmental clearance for this project for the above listed species. Correspondence with USFWS is included in **Appendix G**. No other federally listed species would be affected.

Because TxDOT is the lead federal agency, a PCN would not be required under General Condition 18 of the NWP program to comply with the Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). TxDOT will retain documentation that shows ESA Section 7 compliance for impacts to federally listed species.

The proposed project is within range of, with potentially suitable habitat for one state-listed threatened species, the Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*). (TxDOT 2019e). No other state-listed species would be impacted.

The proposed project is within range of, with potentially suitable habitat for, the following SGCNs: gravelbar brickellbush (*Brickellia dentata*), Texas almond (*Prunus minutiflora*), a mayfly (*Pseudocentropiloides morihari*), Bandit Cave spider (*Cicurina bandida*), Bone Cave harvestman (*Texella reyesi*) (also federally listed as endangered), an amphipod (*Stygobromus russelli*), Ezell's Cave amphipod (*Stygobromus flagellatus*), bifurcated cave amphipod (*Stygobromus bifurcatus*), Jollyville Plateau salamander (*Eurycea tonkawae*), Texas garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis annectens*), Western Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*), cave myotis bat (*Myotis velifer*), and plains spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius interrupta*). (TxDOT 2019e). No other SGCNs would be impacted.

Although the proposed project may result in the removal of potentially suitable habitat or the temporary disturbance of individuals of these species, the project is not anticipated to cause a substantial impact to any state-listed species or SGCNs. BMPs for the Texas garter snake, wood stork, western burrowing owl, cave myotis bat, and plains spotted skunk are included in **Section 8.1**.

With regard to indirect impacts under the Build Alternative, other than potential impacts to the species listed above, the proposed project would have no effect on any of the remaining listed species that may occur in Williamson County, their habitats, or designated critical habitats. The proposed project would not alter the hydric regime or reduce diversity within the ecosystem.

Under the No-build Alternative, there would be no effect on any federally listed species, and no impact to any state-listed species or SGCN, and no coordination would be required with the USFWS or TPWD.

### 5.12 Air Quality

An *Air Quality Technical Report* was completed for the proposed project in accordance with TxDOT's *Environmental Handbook—Air Quality and Guidance for Preparing Air Quality Statements* (TxDOT 2017c, 2019g, 2019h). The report is maintained in the project file at the TxDOT Austin District Office.

The project is located in an area in attainment or unclassifiable for all national ambient air quality standards; therefore, the transportation conformity rules do not apply.

A Carbon Monoxide (CO) Traffic Air Quality Analysis was not required for the proposed project because the average annual daily traffic (AADT) does not exceed 140,000 vehicles per day. Traffic data for the design year 2044 has an AADT of 56,000 vehicles per day. A prior TxDOT modeling study and previous analyses of similar projects demonstrated that it is unlikely that the CO standard would ever be exceeded as a result of any project with an AADT below 140,000. The AADT projections for the project do not exceed 140,000 vehicles per day; therefore, a CO Traffic Air Quality Analysis was not required.

A qualitative Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) analysis was completed for the proposed project and found that the Build Alternative may result in increased exposure to MSAT emissions in certain locations, although the concentrations and durations of exposures are uncertain and, because of this uncertainty, the health effects from these emissions cannot be estimated. The localized increases in MSAT concentrations would likely be most pronounced along the expanded roadway sections that would be built at I-35, Mays Street, and FM 1460/A.W. Grimes Boulevard. However, on a regional basis, EPA's vehicle and fuel regulations, coupled with fleet turnover, will over time cause substantial reductions that, in almost all cases, will cause region-wide MSAT levels to be significantly lower than today. Further discussion of the qualitative MSAT analysis is provided in the *Air Quality Technical Report* (TxDOT 2019g).

The proposed project is located within an attainment or unclassifiable area for ozone and CO; therefore, a project level Congestion Management Process (CMP) analysis is not required.

During the construction phase of this project, temporary increases in particulate matter (PM) and MSAT emissions may occur from construction activities. The primary construction-related emissions of PM are fugitive dust from site preparation, and the primary construction-related emissions of MSAT are diesel PM from diesel-powered construction equipment and vehicles.

The potential impacts of PM emissions would be minimized by using fugitive dust-control measures contained in standard specifications, as appropriate. The Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) provides financial incentives to reduce emissions from vehicles and equipment. TxDOT encourages construction contractors to use this and other local and federal incentive programs to the fullest extent possible to minimize diesel emissions. Information about the TERP program can be found at: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/terp>.

Considering the temporary and transient nature of construction-related emissions, the use of fugitive dust-control measures, the encouragement of the use of TERP, and compliance with applicable regulatory requirements, it is not anticipated that emissions from construction of this project will have

any significant impact on air quality in the area. Air quality construction-emissions reduction strategies are further discussed in **Section 5.17**.

Due to federal fuel- and vehicle-control programs, air quality would be expected to improve regardless of the Build or No-Build Alternative.

### **5.13 Hazardous Materials**

A *Hazardous Materials Initial Site Assessment (ISA) Report* was completed in October 2018 (TxDOT 2018e). The purpose of the ISA is to adequately investigate the project area for known or possibly unknown hazardous material contamination. In order to identify any sites of concern, a Regulatory Database Report was completed by Banks Environmental on November 9, 2017 and September 27, 2019 and an assessment of potentially hazardous material contamination was conducted. Field identification of sites detected in the database report along with archival research was conducted to determine the extent of contamination. An overview of identified sites of concern is provided in **Figure 8** in **Appendix F**.

Several leaking petroleum storage tanks (LPSTs) and one Voluntary Cleanup Site (VCP) were identified as possible sources of contamination for the project area. The LPST sites are Chevron Gas Station (LPST ID No. 119423, 103115, 118883; Map ID 4) located at 409 W. Taylor Avenue, Wag-a-Bag Gas Station (LPST ID No. 111985; Map ID 5) located at 1250 E. Palm Valley Boulevard, Exxon Gas Station (LPST ID No. 117408; Map ID 8) located at 1300 E. Palm Valley Boulevard, and Texaco Gas Station (LPST ID No. 116806, 105610; Map ID 9) located at 209 W. Palm Valley Boulevard. All LPST sites are located adjacent to or within the project area. More research is needed to determine if contamination is hazardous to the health of workers in the project area.

The Round Rock East Shopping Center located at 200 W Palm Valley Boulevard, Round Rock, Texas, is a VCP (VCP 409). Records from TCEQ show most of the contaminated media is concentrated near the building on the property. The site is a former dry cleaner that entered the VCP program in 1996 for chlorinated solvent contamination. Records indicate that the VCP status is complete. State institutional controls associated with another area of this site (Map ID 24) located along Taylor Avenue indicate that the site should not be used for residential or groundwater uses. Further research is needed to determine the extent of contamination of this site.

Buildings or structures being acquired through the acquisition process need to be assessed and mitigated for asbestos, as needed, within the right-of-way process according to the TxDOT *ROW Acquisition Manual* (TxDOT 2019j). Bridge structures being demolished or renovated would need to be assessed and mitigated for asbestos and lead-containing paint, as needed, as part of the construction process according to the TxDOT guidance document, *Guidance for Handling Asbestos in Construction Projects* (TxDOT 2014).

Multiple natural gas lines cross the project area. Contamination could be encountered during utility adjustments. Coordination with utility companies concerning any such contamination would be

addressed during the right-of-way stage of project development. It is anticipated that all utility adjustments or relocation would be completed prior to construction.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no impacts to pipelines or disturbance to any potentially contaminated sites would occur. The No-Build Alternative would not require any actions with regard to hazardous materials.

#### 5.14 Traffic Noise

A traffic noise analysis was conducted in accordance with TxDOT's (FHWA approved) *Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise* (TxDOT 2011). The proposed project would result in nine traffic noise impacts to representative receivers; therefore, the construction of noise barriers was considered. Refer to the *Traffic Noise Analysis Technical Report* (TxDOT 2019i) for a detailed discussion of the traffic noise analysis.

When a traffic noise impact occurs, noise abatement measures must be considered. A noise abatement measure is any positive action taken to reduce the impact of traffic noise on an activity area. The FHWA traffic noise modelling software was used to calculate existing and predicted traffic noise levels. The model primarily considers the number, type, and speed of vehicles; highway alignment and grade; cuts, fills, and natural berms; surrounding terrain features; and the locations of activity areas likely to be impacted by the associated traffic noise. Existing and predicted traffic noise levels were modelled using FHWA noise abatement criteria (NAC) at receiver locations that represent the land use activity areas adjacent to the proposed project that might be impacted by traffic noise and potentially benefit from feasible and reasonable noise abatement (**Table 4** and **Figure 9**).

**Table 4: Traffic Noise Levels dB(A) Leq**

Representative Receiver	NAC Category	FHWA NAC	Existing 2024	Predicted 2038	Change (+/-)	Noise Impact
R1. Restaurant (outdoor seating)	E	72	71	72	+1	Yes
R2. Restaurant (outdoor seating)	E	72	71	71	0	Yes
R3. School	C	67	66	65	-1	No
R4. Church	D	52	44	46	+2	No
R5. Residence	B	67	64	65	+1	No
R6. Residence	B	67	64	67	+3	Yes
R7. Apartments	B	67	71	74	+3	Yes
R8. Residence	B	67	67	69	+2	Yes
R9. Residence	B	67	70	72	+2	Yes
R10. Apartments	B	67	68	70	+2	Yes
R11. Church	D	52	45	47	+2	No

Representative Receiver	NAC Category	FHWA NAC	Existing 2024	Predicted 2038	Change (+/-)	Noise Impact
R12. Apartments	B	67	71	72	+1	Yes
R13. Apartments	B	67	67	69	+2	Yes
R14. Restaurant (outdoor seating)	E	72	67	68	+1	No
R15. Church	D	52	41	41	0	No

Source: TxDOT 2019i; FHWA Traffic Noise Model v2.5.  
dB(A) Leq = Decibels (A-weighted) of equivalent continuous sound levels.

As indicated in **Table 4**, the proposed project would result in traffic noise impacts to nine representative receivers; therefore, the construction of noise barriers was considered.

Before any noise abatement measure can be proposed for incorporation into the project, it must be both feasible and reasonable. In order to be “feasible,” the abatement measure must be able to reduce the noise level at greater than 50 percent of impacted, first-row receivers by at least 5 dBA; and to be “reasonable,” it must not exceed the cost-effectiveness criterion of \$25,000 for each receiver that would benefit by a reduction of at least 5 dBA and the abatement measure must be able to reduce the noise level for at least one impacted, first-row receiver by at least 7 dBA.

Noise barriers are the most commonly used noise abatement measure and were evaluated for each of the impacted receiver locations. Noise barriers would not be feasible and reasonable for any of the following impacted receivers and, therefore, are not proposed for incorporation into the project:

**R1:** Starbucks. This receiver has driveways facing the roadway. A continuous noise barrier would restrict access to this receiver. Gaps in a noise barrier would satisfy access requirements, but the resulting non-continuous barrier segments would not be sufficient to achieve the minimum, feasible reduction of 5 dBA or the noise reduction design goal of 7 dBA.

**R2:** Pacific Star. This receiver has driveways facing the roadway. A continuous noise barrier would restrict access to this receiver. Gaps in a noise barrier would satisfy access requirements, but the resulting non-continuous barrier segments would not be sufficient to achieve the minimum, feasible reduction of 5 dBA or the noise reduction design goal of 7 dBA.

**R6:** TBCH. This receiver represents a total of five residences. A noise barrier 1,053 feet in length and 12 feet in height would reduce noise levels by at least 5 dBA for four benefitted receivers and achieve a 7 dBA noise reduction design goal at a total cost of \$227,448, or \$56,862 for each benefitted receiver. The cost of this barrier would exceed the reasonable, cost-effectiveness criteria of \$25,000.

**R8 and R9.** These receivers represent a total of 10 residences with driveways facing the roadway. A continuous noise barrier would restrict access to these residences. Gaps in a noise barrier would satisfy access requirements, but the resulting non-continuous barrier segments would not be sufficient to achieve the minimum, feasible reduction of 5 dBA or the noise reduction design goal of 7 dBA.

Noise barriers would be acoustically feasible and reasonable and cost effective for four impacted receivers (**Table 5**) and, therefore, are proposed for incorporation into the project. A noise workshop will be held prior to construction.

**Table 5: Noise Barrier Proposal—Preliminary**

Barrier	Representative Receiver(s)	Total # Benefitted	Length (ft)	Height (ft)	Total Cost (\$)	\$/Benefitted Receiver
1	R7 – Steeplechase Apartments	16	583	18	188,982	11,811
2	R10 – Somerset Apartments	10	319	18	103,356	10,336
3	R12 and R13 – Rocking Horse Apartments	42	1,178	18	381,672	9,087

**R7:** Steeplechase Apartments. This receiver represents a total of 20 residences. Based on preliminary calculations, noise barriers 289 feet and 294 feet in length and 18 feet in height would reduce noise levels by at least 5 dBA for 16 benefitted receivers and by 7 dBA for one or more benefitted receivers at a total cost of \$188,982, or \$11,811 for each benefitted receiver.

**R10:** Somerset Apartments. This receiver represents a total of 16 residences. Based on preliminary calculations, a noise barrier 319 feet in length and 18 feet in height would reduce noise levels by at least 5 dBA for 10 benefitted receivers and by 7 dBA for one or more benefitted receivers at a total cost of \$103,356, or \$10,336 for each benefitted receiver.

**R12 and R13:** Rocking Horse Apartments. These receivers represent a total of 56 residences. Based on preliminary calculations, noise barriers 619 feet and 559 feet in length and 18 feet in height would reduce noise levels by at least 5 dBA for 42 benefitted receivers and by 7 dBA for one or more benefitted receivers at a total cost of \$381,672, or \$9,087 for each benefitted receiver.

Any subsequent project design changes may require a reevaluation of this preliminary noise barrier proposal. The final decision to construct the proposed noise barrier will not be made until completion of the project design, utility evaluation, and polling of adjacent property owners.

Land-use activity areas on the south side of the proposed project between Provident Lane and Lance Lane and from 800 feet east of Palm Valley Cove to the east end of the project are currently undeveloped land (NAC Category G), which is not permitted for development. To avoid noise impacts that may result from future development of properties adjacent to the proposed project build alternative, local officials responsible for land use control programs must ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that no new activities are planned or constructed along or within the predicted (2038) noise impact contours identified in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: Predicted Noise Impact Contours**

	Undeveloped Area Location	Land Use	Impact Contour	Distance from Right-of-Way (ft)
	South side of US 79 from Provident Lane to Lance Lane	NAC Category B&C	66 dBA	250
		NAC Category E	71 dBA	110
	From 600 feet east of Palm Valley Cove to east end of project	NAC Category B&C	66 dBA	180
		NAC Category E	71 dBA	50

\* Impact contours are one dB(A) lower than the NAC per category to reflect impacts that would occur as a result of approaching the NAC for the respective contours.

A copy of this traffic noise analysis will be made available to local officials. On the date of approval of this document (Date of Public Knowledge), FHWA and TxDOT are no longer responsible for providing noise abatement for new development adjacent to the project. For more information about how traffic noise is evaluated for TxDOT projects, refer to the *Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise* (TxDOT 2011), which has been approved by FHWA.

The analysis of traffic noise is by its nature an examination of encroachment-alteration indirect impacts. That is, traffic noise models predict the noise levels that would be perceived by people located away from newly constructed transportation facilities. No attempt has been made to describe noise levels that may exist directly within the transportation facility by motorists, as noise is generally accepted as a necessary element that accompanies the use of roadways. Because the proposed project would not result in traffic noise impacts, there are no encroachment-alteration effects.

Under the No-Build Alternative, traffic noise levels would be expected to increase with an associated increase in traffic volumes over time.

### **5.15 Induced Growth**

An *Indirect Impacts Technical Report* (TxDOT 2018f) was prepared for the proposed project in accordance with TxDOT's *Indirect Impacts Analysis Guidance* (TxDOT 2016).

The analysis presented in the technical report determined that the proposed project is anticipated to generate induced development based on the amount of developable land available in the Area of Influence (AOI), the pace of development being documented in Williamson County, and the responses of local planning experts. However, the local planning experts maintained that development would continue to occur in the area regardless of whether the proposed project is constructed.

#### **5.15.1 Area of Influence and Study Timeframe**

The AOI or study area encompasses approximately 3,152 acres. Input obtained from the interviews with local City officials resulted in the AOI boundary. The AOI is generally defined (in a clockwise direction) as Bowman Road, Tiger Trail, Agarita Trail, Chandler Branch Creek, Brushy Creek, Lake Creek, and I-35.

A temporal frame of reference is necessary in addressing the range of impacts that may be caused by the proposed project in the future. Indirect induced growth impacts that may occur between the present time (2018) and 2040, the planning horizon for the CAMPO RTP, are considered in this analysis.

### **5.15.2 Potential for Induced Development**

Undeveloped land and potential sites for redevelopment are present within the AOI. Based on interviews with City of Round Rock representatives, approximately 518 acres of undeveloped land and approximately 82 acres of currently developed land within the AOI could be subject to development and redevelopment in the foreseeable future (see **Figure 10** in **Appendix F**). The City staff concluded that development would happen, regardless of whether the US 79 project proceeds, due to the increasing growth of the region; however, the proposed improvements to US 79 could spur some of the development and redevelopment in the area.

### **5.15.3 Resources Analyzed for Induced Growth Impacts**

Although the type, form, and density of future development within the approximately 600 acres subject to development and redevelopment in the AOI is unknown at this time, the indirect impacts associated with this induced development could have potential substantial indirect impacts on federally listed threatened/endangered species, historic-age properties, and archeological resources.

#### Federally Listed Species

Habitat for two federally listed endangered species—the Jollyville Plateau salamander and the Bone Cave harvestman—is present within the AOI. Some induced development that would impact habitat for listed species is anticipated; however, all current and future projects would be subject to regulation under the ESA if it is anticipated that they would impact either federally listed species or their habitat. Additionally, all development within the Edwards Aquifer in the AOI is subject to the State's Edwards Aquifer Rules, the goal of which is non-degradation of existing groundwater quality. These existing protections will help to mitigate future effects to the federally listed species.

#### Historic-Age Properties

One NRHP-listed property, one NRHP-eligible Texas Centennial highway marker, and two properties that are potentially eligible to be listed in the NRHP are on parcels adjacent to the proposed project. One of these potentially eligible properties is the Henna House, which was identified as an area for potential redevelopment in the future. However, while City staff have identified the Henna tract for its redevelopment potential, measures and policies are in place to preserve this historic-age property.

#### Archeological Resources

While no formal archeological surveys have been conducted throughout the areas of potential development and redevelopment at the time of this report preparation for archeological resources, preliminary consultation with TxDOT-developed Potential Archeological Liability Maps data indicates varying potential for archeological impacts within the areas of potential development and redevelopment. Overall, there is a moderate to high potential for impacts to unknown archeological

deposits in areas of potential development and redevelopment, particularly in the areas nearest to Brushy Creek and the areas that have undergone the least disturbance from nearby development.

#### **5.15.4 Identify Mitigation, If Applicable**

In summary, the overall consensus is that the proposed project would influence future land use within the AOI by accelerating the rate of development. However, such project-induced land-use change is not only accounted for in the City of Round Rock's future planning documents and corresponding objectives but is also considered positive for the future of Round Rock.

Ultimately, because the proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with the City of Round Rock's development goals or cause substantial negative indirect induced growth impacts, the requirement for mitigation of environmental impacts would be limited to mitigating only the direct impacts associated with this proposed project. Any mitigation for project-induced land development impacts that may arise after construction of the proposed project would be overseen by the City of Round Rock and would be the responsibility of the land developer. Mitigation for indirect induced growth impacts would not be required of the proposed project sponsors based on the analysis presented here.

Under the No-Build Alternative, current development rates and patterns would remain constant, and no induced growth would occur.

#### **5.16 Cumulative Impacts**

A *Cumulative Impacts Technical Report* (TxDOT 2020e) was prepared for the proposed project in accordance with TxDOT's *Cumulative Impacts Analysis Guidelines* (TxDOT 2019k). Based on the results of TxDOT's cumulative impacts risk assessment, supported by the information presented in the *Cumulative Impacts Technical Report* and in the technical reports prepared for the proposed project, a cumulative impacts analysis is required for the proposed project. The proposed project may potentially have cumulative impacts on the federally listed threatened/endangered species, Jollyville Plateau salamander and Bone Cave harvestman. Additionally, because water quality is a major component for survival of federally listed aquifer species, additional discussion of water quality is included with the discussion of federally listed species.

##### **5.16.1 Resource Study Area**

A Resource Study Area (RSA) was chosen based on characteristics of the resources and the context and scale of the proposed project. The timeframe in which effects to resources were considered for this analysis is 1988 to 2040. Geographically, the RSA was chosen to allow for meaningful data collection and analysis of the current health and historic context of the resources. The geographic RSA for cumulative impacts is a combination of physical boundaries on the landscape, such as Chandler Branch to the north, Lake Creek to the south, the confluence of Chandler Branch and Lake Creek to the east, and Onion Branch, which serve as natural barriers to shallow groundwater flow to/from the project area due to their lower elevations. The RSA also incorporates resource-specific boundaries such as the cricket foraging area buffer at I-35, where Karst Zone 1 occurs. This geography provides

a large enough area to account for any impacts from potential project effects. **Figure 11** in **Appendix F** illustrates the RSA boundary.

### **5.16.2 Other Actions—Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable—and Their Effect on Each Resource**

Since 1988, several actions have occurred or are planned within the RSA that could contribute to cumulative impacts. These actions include residential and commercial development, along with transportation and other capital improvements. The City of Round Rock Planning and Development Services and Geographic Information Systems Departments track site development permits and large developments in the City and the extra-territorial jurisdiction. In all, 42 site development permits have been submitted within the RSA, with 13 still under review, 9 issued, and 20 under construction. Additionally, 2 future transportation Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, 6 other CIP projects, and 19 large developments exist within the RSA. Representatives from the City of Round Rock also provided the following notable (reasonably foreseeable) projects: the Kalahari planned development, redevelopment of the Henna tract, redevelopment of the commercial tract between I-35 and Mays Street, redevelopment of the Egger Acres single-family neighborhood, and redevelopment of the southern tract of offices near Heritage Center Circle.

### **5.16.3 Overall Effects of the Proposed Project Combined with Other Actions**

#### Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

The project may affect one federally listed endangered species and one federally listed threatened species. Some induced development that would impact habitat for listed species is anticipated; however, all current and future projects would be subject to regulation under the ESA if it is anticipated that they would impact either federally listed species or their habitat. In addition, the Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (RHCP) was designed to set aside land to protect karst habitat, as well as protect groundwater quality in the Northern Segment of the Edwards Aquifer, which indirectly benefits federally listed aquifer species. These existing protections will help to mitigate for future effects to the federally listed species.

Suitable habitat for the Jollyville Plateau salamander and Bone Cave harvestman occur within the RSA. However, while the Jollyville Plateau salamander species has a known occurrence in the project area and the RSA (i.e., Brushy Creek Spring at the H-E-B culvert), the known location closest to the project area for the Bone Cave harvestman is over a mile away from the project area. Cumulative effects resulting from previous development, the reconstruction of US 79, and reasonably foreseeable development may occur; however, due to the federal regulations, local plans, and the proposed BMPs to protect adjacent land from increased erosion and habitat loss, any effects to these species are presumed to be insignificant and discountable. Therefore, even though some individuals of an existing population may be impacted by the proposed US 79 improvements in addition to the recently completed and reasonably foreseeable development, the cumulative loss of habitat for threatened and endangered species associated with possible indirect effects is not anticipated to be substantial.

### Water Quality—Groundwater

Stormwater runoff and streams crossing the Recharge Zone are the main sources of recharge to the Edwards Aquifer. Consequently, the quality of these waters is directly related to the quality of water entering the aquifer. As development in the RSA continues, the potential for degradation of stormwater increases with an increase in impervious surface and additional point source pollutant sources (e.g., septic systems, industrial facilities, accidental spills, and underground storage tanks). As a result, the potential for degradation of the Edwards Aquifer exists as well.

Potential consequences of the proposed project may include the potential for runoff from the project site to affect the Northern Segment of the Edwards Aquifer through surface water drainage and groundwater recharge. Potential effects to groundwater resources include short-term potential for pollutants in stormwater runoff from the construction site to reach the aquifer through surface drainage and groundwater recharge; long-term potential for pollutants in stormwater runoff from the completed roadway, including from spills, to reach the Edwards Aquifer through surface drainage and groundwater recharge; and potential for reductions in recharge to the Edwards Aquifer resulting from increases in impervious cover. Induced growth could have some effect on water resources because induced development would result in increased impervious cover, which could in turn have an effect on water quality. However, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on water quality because of the high percentage of already developed land in the area and the implementation of regulations and BMPs. Additionally, with current regulatory measures and future planning efforts to protect water quality, future development would be less likely to adversely affect surface and groundwater quality when compared to the past.

#### **5.16.4 Mitigation of Cumulative Effects**

##### Federally Listed Threatened/Endangered Species

Federally listed threatened or endangered species and their habitats are protected by the ESA. Any developers undertaking actions that could affect federally listed species would be responsible for coordinating with the USFWS to determine appropriate mitigation measures. Formal consultation with the USFWS for effects to the federally listed species within the US 79 project area is ongoing. The resulting Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS will identify the federal requirements for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for the applicable species. Additionally, land set aside for the Williamson County RHCP protects karst habitat and groundwater quality in the Northern Segment of the Edwards Aquifer, which directly and indirectly benefits both federally listed species. These existing protections will help mitigate future effects to the federally listed species.

##### Groundwater Resources

The impacts of the proposed project and other transportation projects on groundwater quality would be regulated and protected by the TCEQ. TCEQ regulations to protect the Edwards Aquifer are contained in the Edwards Aquifer Rules, which require developers who are planning to construct on the Recharge Zone or portions of the Contributing Zone of the Edwards Aquifer to prepare and submit an aquifer protection plan to the TCEQ for review and approval. The rules require the use of permanent

stormwater BMPs that remove 80 percent of the incremental increase of TSS in runoff from the site. The rules do not require the use of permanent BMPs for single-family residential development that has 20 percent or less impervious cover.

The impacts of induced development and reasonably foreseeable private development to groundwater quality would be avoided, minimized, and mitigated through enforcement of applicable municipal zoning and land use regulations. Additionally, TCEQ regulations would apply to those actions that are subject to federal and state jurisdiction. Based on the appropriate implementation of BMPs and regulations for groundwater quality impacts, the proposed project would not contribute to substantial cumulative impacts to the area's groundwater quality, and mitigation would not be necessary.

Under the No-Build Alternative, no cumulative impacts would be anticipated.

### ***5.17 Construction-Phase Impacts***

During the construction phase of this project, temporary increases in noise may result from construction activities. Noise associated with the construction of the project is difficult to predict. Heavy machinery, the major source of noise in construction, is constantly moving in unpredictable patterns. However, construction normally occurs during daylight hours when occasional loud noises are tolerable. None of the receivers are expected to be exposed to construction noise for a long duration; therefore, any extended disruption of normal activities is not expected. Provisions would be included in the construction plans and specifications that require the contractor to make every reasonable effort to minimize construction noise through abatement measures such as work-hour controls and proper maintenance of muffler systems.

Access to parcels in the project vicinity would be maintained during all phases of construction. All practicable steps would be taken to minimize the inconvenience to drivers using the intersecting roadways during the construction phase. People living and working in the immediate area of the proposed project may experience an increase in noise and dust due to the construction activities. Temporary detours would also be required in the project area to assist with diverting traffic through surrounding areas while certain areas are under construction. See **Section 5.12** for the discussion of construction-related air emissions. Construction-phase BMPs would be utilized as described in **Section 8.0**.

Under the No-Build Alternative, construction activities would not occur; therefore, temporary construction impacts would not occur.

## **6.0 Agency Coordination**

TxDOT coordinated with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Osage Nation, Absentee Shawnee Tribe, Delaware Nation, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, and the THC regarding cultural, archeological, and historic resources (see **Appendix G—Agency Coordination**). Coordination with TPWD was completed for potential impacts to SGCNs and vegetation. USFWS coordination is pending. Coordination with

TCEQ will be initiated at the completion of this draft EA. See **Table 7** below for a summary of agency coordination.

**Table 7: Agency Coordination Summary**

	Agency	Date Initiated	Date Closed	Status
	TCEQ	Pending	---	Pending
	THC- Archeological Resources	August, 2018	August 23, 2018	Complete
	THC- Historic Resources	February 25, 2020	April 1, 2020	Complete
	TPWD	November 20, 2019	February 18, 2020	Complete
	Tribal Entities	December 18, 2019	January 17, 2020	Complete
	USFWS	Pending	---	Pending

## 7.0 Public Involvement

Two public meetings have been held to discuss the US 79 project design alternatives and receive input on the proposed project. Meeting attendees included neighborhood residents and business owners, TxDOT staff, and consultants.

The first public meeting was held on September 28, 2017, at the Robert P. Hernandez Middle School in Round Rock. Approximately 91 people attended the meeting, including members of the public and 25 TxDOT and project consultant representatives. An open house format with exhibit boards and schematics was used to present the proposed project. Two alternatives were presented for the intersection at Mays Street and US 79, neither of which is the Build Alternative. In total, 44 comments were submitted as a result of this meeting. Comments involved extending the project area further east, suggestions for additional or alternate configurations of turn lanes at intersections, and preference for a particular alternative, among others (TxDOT 2017b).

A second public meeting was held on August 23, 2018, at the Robert P. Hernandez Middle School in Round Rock. Approximately 102 people attended, including 81 members of the public, 1 elected official, and 20 TxDOT and project consultant representatives. An open house format with exhibit boards and schematics was used to present the proposed project. In total, 26 comments were submitted as a result of this meeting. Comments involved suggestions for additional or alternate configurations of turn lanes at intersections and concerns about impacts to the TBCH, among others (TxDOT 2018g).

No changes were made to the project as result of these meetings. The public meeting documentation reports (TxDOT 2017b, 2018f) may be inspected and copied upon request at the TxDOT Austin District Office and are also located in TxDOT's Environmental Compliance Oversight System.

In addition to the two public meetings, TxDOT held meetings with affected property owners, including representatives of three historic properties in the APE, to discuss the findings of the draft historic resources survey report and the impacts to each historic property. On May 28, 2019, TxDOT met with representatives of the TBCH. TxDOT historians explained that TxDOT would be redesigning the project to minimize impacts to the TBCH lawn, which had been recommended as historically significant and subject to the protection of Section 4(f). On May 30, 2019, and June 5, 2019, TxDOT met with representatives of the Merrell House and Henna House, respectively. Consulting historian Emily Reed provided an overview of the findings of the draft historic resources survey report, including the proposed NRHP boundary for the properties and the recommendation that the project would not result in an adverse effect to the properties. On August 5, 2019, TxDOT held a follow-up meeting with the owners of the Henna property to review design changes related to the requested addition of a shoulder in front of the property. At each meeting, property representatives posed additional questions and concerns unrelated to the historic significance of their properties (TxDOT 2020c).

Additional meetings are being conducted with affected property owners who would have right-of-way acquired from their properties. The meetings will be held in the Georgetown Area Office and are planned for March or April 2020. The meetings will be held over a three-day period. One hour will be offered to each property owner between the hours of 8:00 am and noon and 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm.

A public hearing will be held in 2020, following approval for further processing of this EA document.

## **8.0 Post-Environmental Clearance Activities and Contractor Communications**

All project-specific commitments and conditions of approval, including resource agency permitting compliance and monitoring requirements, would be incorporated in the project plan for the proposed project. These commitments and conditions of approval may vary depending on the project's final design and construction. Mitigation monitoring would be conducted by TxDOT and other federal, state, and local agencies to ensure compliance.

### ***8.1 Post-Environmental Clearance Activities***

1. Preserve trees in front of the historic Merrell House to the greatest extent practicable (timeframe: prior to, during, and after construction).
  - a. Tree preservation measures will be depicted in the PS&E drawings and construction general notes and communicated to the contractor at pre-construction meetings.
2. Historic driveway pillars in front of the Henna House will be moved and relocated south of the proposed roadway widening (timeframe: prior to and during construction).
  - a. TxDOT will start coordinating the relocation of the four historic driveway pillars during PS&E, after the right-of-way acquisition process is finished.
  - b. In coordination with the property owner and THC, TxDOT will develop a relocation plan and scope of work, which will be submitted to the THC prior to relocation activities.

- c. The PS&E drawings and construction general notes will have specific instructions on the relocation of the pillars. The relocation plan and scope of work will also be communicated to the contractor at the pre-construction meetings.
    - d. The relocation of the driveway pillars is included in the plans for the construction phase of the project.
  3. Historic walls on the TBCH property will be relocated away from the proposed roadway widening (timeframe: prior to and during construction).
    - a. TxDOT will start coordinating the relocation of the stone landscaping walls during PS&E, after the right-of-way acquisition process is finished.
    - b. In coordination with the property owner and THC, TxDOT will develop a relocation plan and scope of work, which will be submitted to the THC prior to relocation activities.
    - c. The PS&E drawings and construction general notes will have specific instructions on the relocation of the stone landscaping walls. The relocation plan and scope of work will also be communicated to the contractor at the pre-construction meetings.
    - d. The relocation of the driveway pillars is included in the plans for the construction phase of the project.
  4. USACE NWP #14 (timeframe: prior to construction).
  5. TPDES (timeframe: during and after construction).
    - a. CGP
    - b. SW3P
    - c. Site Notice
    - d. NOI
    - e. Implementation of erosion control, sedimentation control, and post-construction TSS control BMPs for the TCEQ's 401 Water Quality Certification Conditions for NWPs to prevent water quality impacts from occurring during and after construction.
  6. Water Quality Protection Plan (prior to, during, and after construction)
  7. Implementation of BMPs for state-listed species and SGCNs will be implemented (timeframe: prior to and during construction). The following BMPs would be implemented in an effort to avoid impacts to the state-listed and SGCN species:
    - Terrestrial reptile BMPs (Texas garter snake):
      - Apply hydromulching and/or hydroseeding in areas for soil stabilization and/or revegetation of disturbed areas where feasible. If hydromulching and/or hydroseeding are not feasible due to site conditions, utilize erosion control blankets or mats that contain no netting or contain loosely woven, natural fiber netting is preferred. Plastic netting should be avoided to the extent practicable.

- For open trenches and excavated pits, install escape ramps at an angle of less than 45 degrees (1:1) in areas left uncovered. Visually inspect excavation areas for trapped wildlife prior to backfilling.
- Inform contractors that if reptiles are found on project site allow species to safely leave the project area.
- Avoid or minimize disturbing or removing downed trees, rotting stumps, and leaf litter where feasible.
- Contractors will be advised of potential occurrence in the project area, and to avoid harming the species if encountered.
- Bat BMPs (cave myotis bat):
  - To determine the appropriate BMP to avoid or minimize impacts to bats, review the habitat description for the species of interest on the TPWD Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species of Texas by County List or other trusted resources. All bat surveys and other activities that include direct contact with bats shall comply with TPWD-recommended white-nose syndrome protocols located on the TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program website under “Project Design and Construction”. The following survey and exclusion protocols should be followed prior to commencement of construction activities. For the purposes of this document, structures are defined as bridges, culverts (concrete or metal), wells, and buildings.
    - a) For activities that have the potential to impact structures, cliffs or caves, or trees; a qualified biologist will perform a habitat assessment and occupancy survey of the feature(s) with roost potential as early in the planning process as possible or within one year before project letting.
    - b) For roosts where occupancy is strongly suspected but unconfirmed during the initial survey, revisit feature(s) at most four weeks prior to scheduled disturbance to confirm absence of bats.
    - c) If bats are present or recent signs of occupation (i.e., piles of guano, distinct musky odor, or staining and rub marks at potential entry points) are observed, take appropriate measures to ensure that bats are not harmed, such as implementing non-lethal exclusion activities or timing or phasing of construction.
    - d) Exclusion devices can be installed by a qualified individual between September 1 and March 31. Exclusion devices should be used for a minimum of seven days when minimum nighttime temperatures are above 50°F AND minimum daytime temperatures are above 70°F. Prior to exclusion, ensure that alternate roosting habitat is available in the immediate area. If no suitable roosting habitat is available, installation of alternate roosts is recommended to replace the loss of an occupied roost. If alternate roost sites are not provided, bats may seek shelter in

- other inappropriate sites, such as buildings, in the surrounding area. See Section 2: Standard Recommendations for recommended acceptable methods for excluding bats from structures.
- e) If feature(s) used by bats are removed as a result of construction, replacement structures should incorporate bat-friendly design or artificial roosts should be constructed to replace these features, as practicable.
  - f) Conversion of property containing cave or cliff features to transportation purposes should be avoided where feasible.
  - g) Large hollow trees, snags (dead standing trees), and trees with shaggy bark should be surveyed for colonies and, if found, should not be disturbed until the bats are no longer occupying these features. Post-occupancy surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to tree removal from the landscape.
  - h) Retain mature, large diameter hardwood forest species and native/ornamental palm trees where feasible.
  - i) In all instances, avoid harm or death to bats. Bats should only be handled as a last resort and after communication with TPWD.
- Bird BMPs—In addition to complying with the MBTA, perform the following BMPs (Western Burrowing Owl and Wood Stork):
    - Prior to construction, perform daytime surveys for nests including under bridges and in culverts to determine if they are active before removal. Nests that are active should not be disturbed.
    - Do not disturb, destroy, or remove active nests, including ground nesting birds, during the nesting season.
    - Avoid the removal of unoccupied, inactive nests, as practicable.
    - Prevent the establishment of active nests during the nesting season on TxDOT owned and operated facilities and structures proposed for replacement or repair.
    - Do not collect, capture, relocate, or transport birds, eggs, young, or active nests without a permit.
  - Plains spotted skunk—Contractors will be advised of potential occurrence in the project area, and to avoid harming the species if encountered, and to avoid unnecessary impacts to dens.
8. EO 13112 on Invasive Species (timeframe: post-construction).
  9. Executive Memorandum on Beneficial Landscaping (timeframe: post-construction).
  10. MBTA (timeframe: prior to and during construction).

11. The traffic noise analysis and qualitative air quality analysis will be made available to local officials. A noise workshop will be conducted for the proposed project (timeframe: prior to construction).
12. Standard TxDOT Vegetation BMPs (timeframe: during construction):
  - a. Minimize the amount of vegetation cleared. Removal of native vegetation, particularly mature native trees and shrubs, should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable.
  - b. The use of any non-native vegetation in landscaping and revegetation is discouraged. Locally adapted native species should be used.
13. Standard TxDOT Water Quality BMPs:
  - a. Once construction is complete and disturbed areas have been revegetated, remove silt fence and accumulated sediment to reduce wildlife barriers and hazards.
14. Additional BMPs will be included for the protection of water quality and federally listed species once USFWS consultation is complete.
15. Vegetation BMPs (recommended by TPWD) (timeframe: prior to, during, and after construction).
  - a. Minimize the amount of vegetation cleared. Removal of native vegetation, particularly mature native trees and shrubs should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. Wherever practicable, impacted vegetation should be replaced with in-kind on-site replacement/restoration of native vegetation.
  - b. To minimize adverse effects, activities should be planned to preserve mature trees, particularly acorn, nut or berry producing varieties. These types of vegetation have high value to wildlife as food and cover.
  - c. It is strongly recommended that trees greater than 12 inches in dbh that are removed be replaced. TPWD's experience indicates that for ecologically effective replacement, a ratio of three trees for every one (3:1) lost should be provided to the extent practicable either on-site or off-site. Trees less than 12 inches dbh should be replaced at a 1:1 ratio.
  - d. Replacement trees should be of equal or better wildlife quality than those removed and be regionally adapted native species.
  - e. When trees are planted, a maintenance plan that ensures at least an 85 percent survival rate after three years should be developed for the replacement trees.
  - f. The use of any non-native vegetation in landscaping and revegetation is discouraged. Locally adapted native species should be used.
  - g. The use of seed mix that contains seeds from only locally adapted native species is recommended.

- h. Avoid vegetation clearing activities during the general bird nesting season, March through August, to minimize adverse impacts to birds.

## **8.2 Contractor Communications**

1. Comply with the MBTA.
2. Comply with BMPs for water quality, state-listed species and SGCNs, and vegetation (5, 6, and 11 in **Section 8.1**).
3. In the event that unanticipated archeological deposits are encountered during construction, work in the immediate area will cease, and TxDOT archeological staff will be contacted to initiate post-review discovery procedures.
4. Implement fugitive dust control measures.
5. Any unanticipated hazardous materials and/or petroleum contamination encountered during construction would be handled according to applicable federal and state regulations per TxDOT Standard Specifications.
6. Implement voluntary conservation measures for the Jollyville Plateau salamander and Bone Cave harvestman (pending concurrence from the USFWS).

## **9.0 Conclusion**

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant impact on the human or natural environment. Therefore, a finding of no significant impact is recommended.

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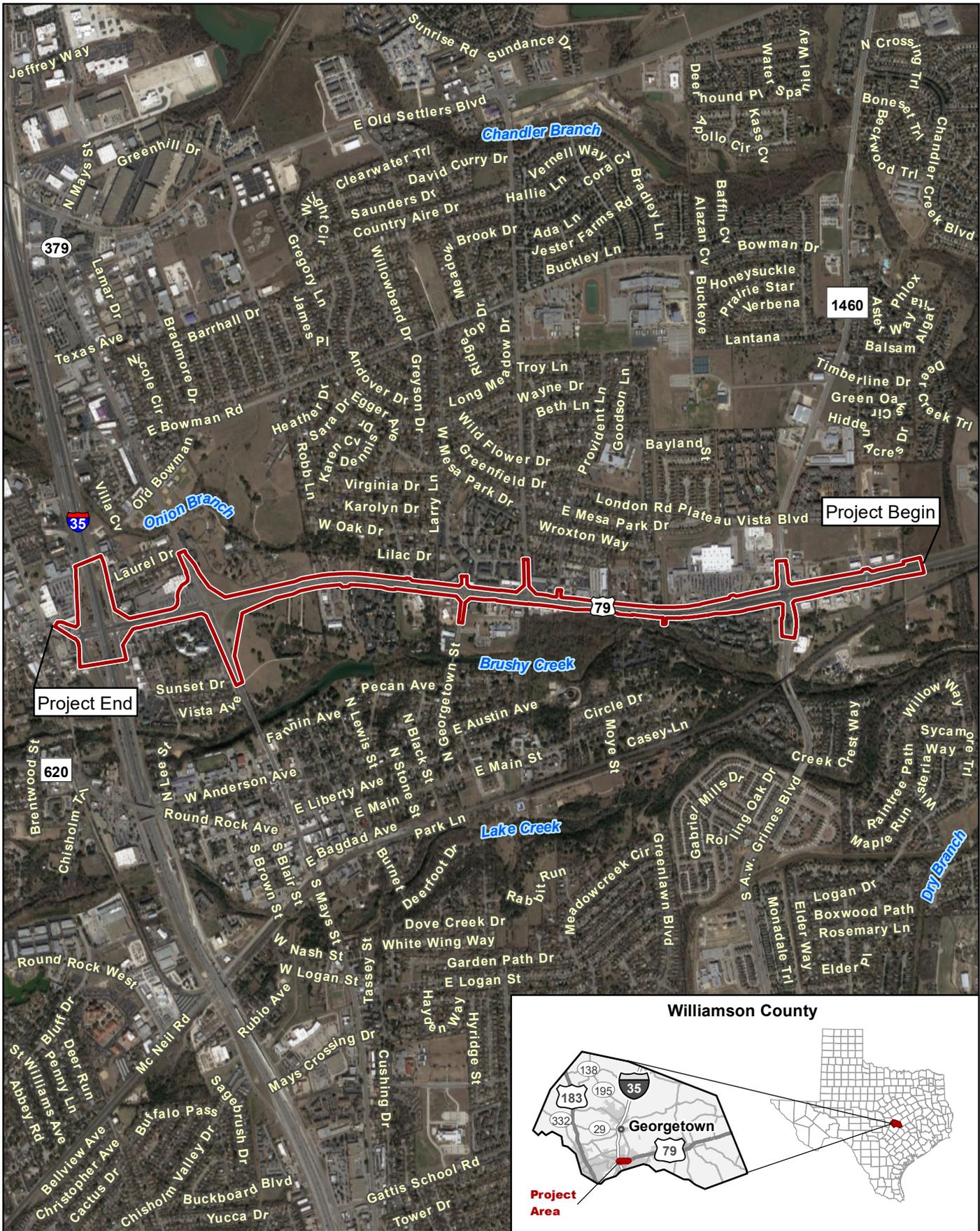
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## Appendix A—Project Location Map



Project End

Project Begin

**Williamson County**

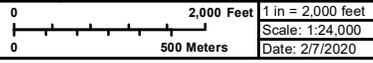


**Project Area**

 Project Location



CSJ: 0204-01-063



Basemap Source: Google (2018)

**Appendix A  
Project Location (Aerial Base)**

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

## Appendix B—Project Photos



Photo 1: Western project terminus; facing southeast.



Photo 2: General view of potential displacements D3 and D4, facing west.



Photo 3: Detailed view of potential displacement D3.



Photo 4: Detailed view of potential displacement D15.



**Photo 5:** General view of the Round Rock East Shopping Center, which contains potential displacements D2 - D19, facing west. Location of VCP 409 site (Map ID 24).



**Photo 6:** Alternate view of the Round Rock East Shopping Center, facing east. Location of VCP 409 site (Map ID 24).



**Photo 7:** Alternate view of the Round Rock East Shopping Center, facing west. Location of VCP 409 site (Map ID 24).



**Photo 8:** Banks Map ID 4 (LPST) site of major concern, facing north.



**Photo 9:** Banks Map ID 5 (LPST) site of major concern, facing southwest.



**Photo 10:** Banks Map ID 8 (LPST) site of major concern, facing west.



**Photo 11:** Banks Map ID 9 (LPST) site of major concern, facing south.



**Photo 12:** Buildings on the NRHP-eligible Texas Baptist Children's Home property (Resource 9), facing southeast.



**Photo 13:** NRHP-eligible Texas Centennial Marker (Resource 10), facing east.



**Photo 14:** NRHP-eligible Henna House (Resource 11A), facing south.



**Photo 15:** NRHP-listed Merrell House (Resource 25A), facing northwest.



**Photo 16:** Crossing 1 - Onion Branch, north of US 79; viewing north.



**Photo17:** Crossing 3 - View downstream along the manmade ditch; viewing south.



**Photo 18:** Brushy Creek Spring, within H-E-B culvert; view of the location of the majority of salamander occurrences; eastern culvert pipe outlet where east sidewalls meet the floor; viewing north.



**Photo 19:** Edwards Plateau: Live Oak Motte and Woodland observed throughout the US 79 corridor; facing west.



**Photo 20:** Native Invasive: Deciduous Woodland observed throughout the US 79 corridor; facing southwest.



**Photo 21:** Blackland Prairie: Disturbance or Tame Grassland observed near the eastern terminus of the project area; facing north.



**Photo 22:** Edwards Plateau: Floodplain Hardwood Forest observed along water features of the project area. The dry channel of Onion Branch is visible at the bottom of the photo; facing northwest.

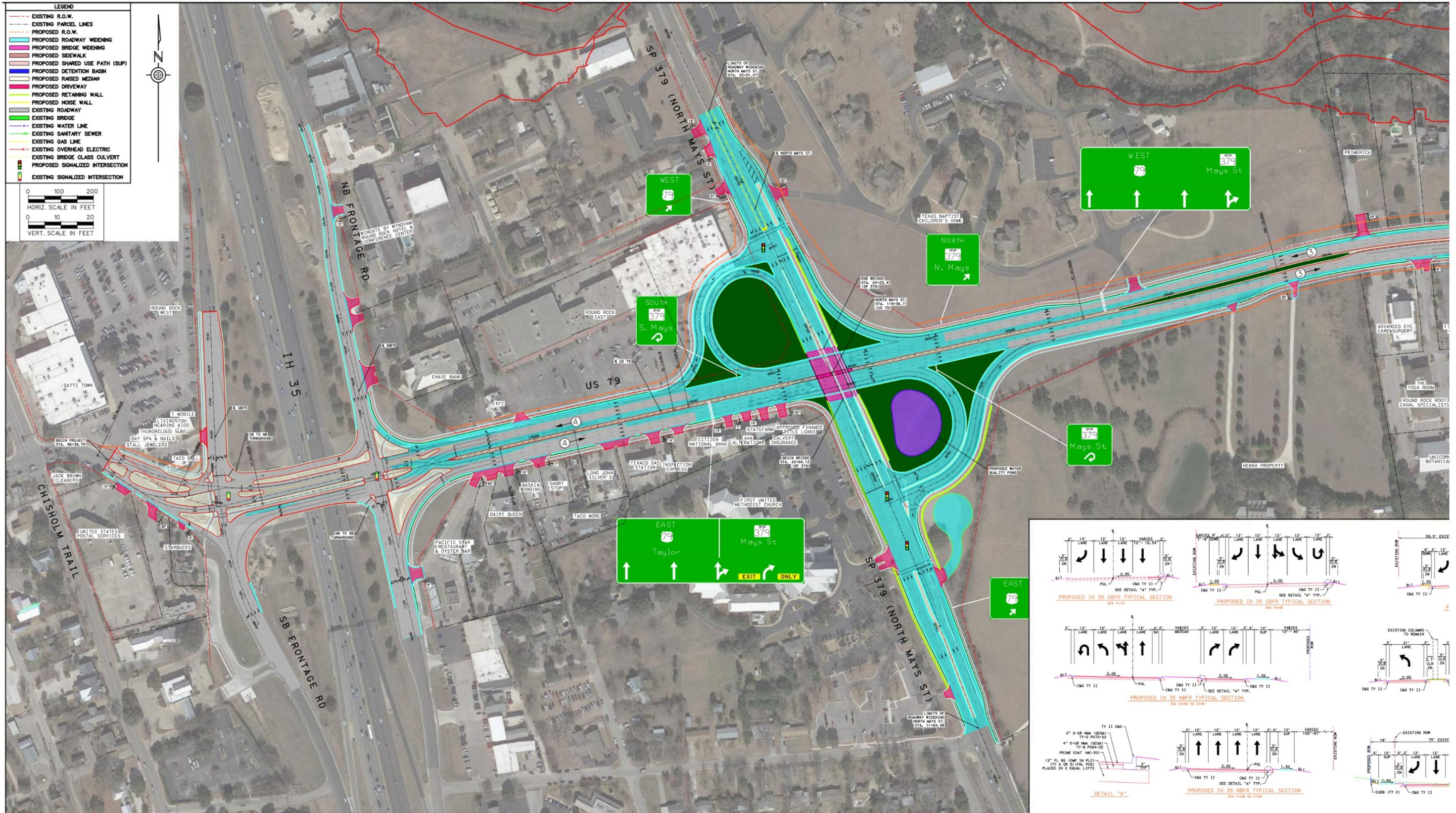


**Photo 23:** Urban Low Intensity vegetation observed throughout the US 79 project area; facing southeast.

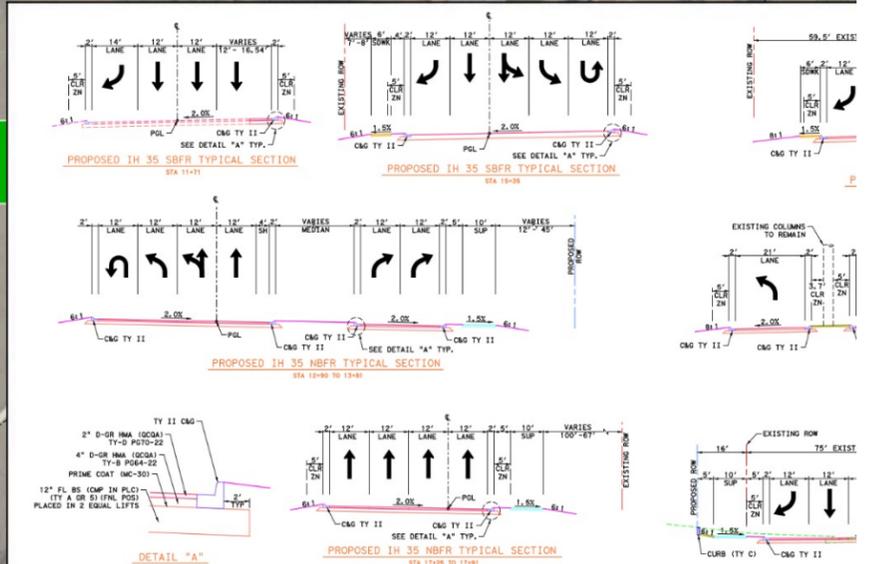


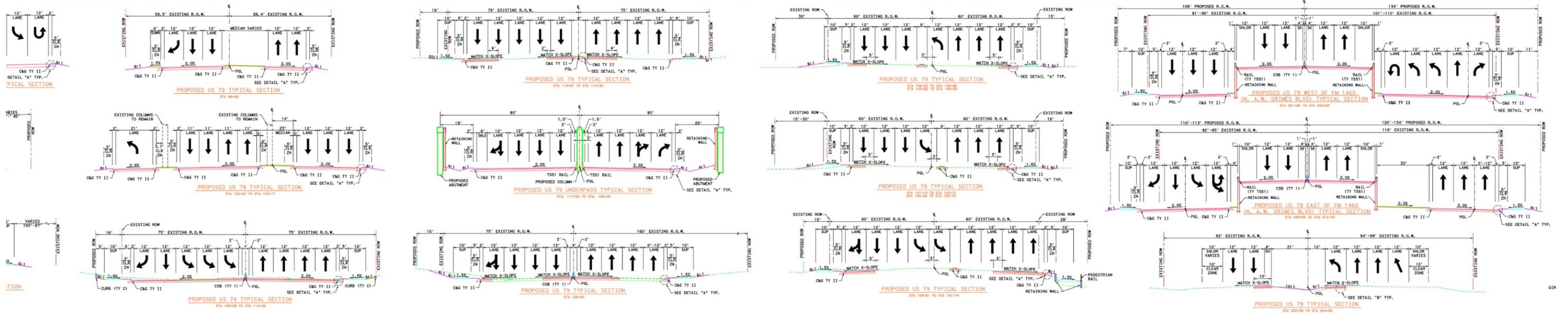
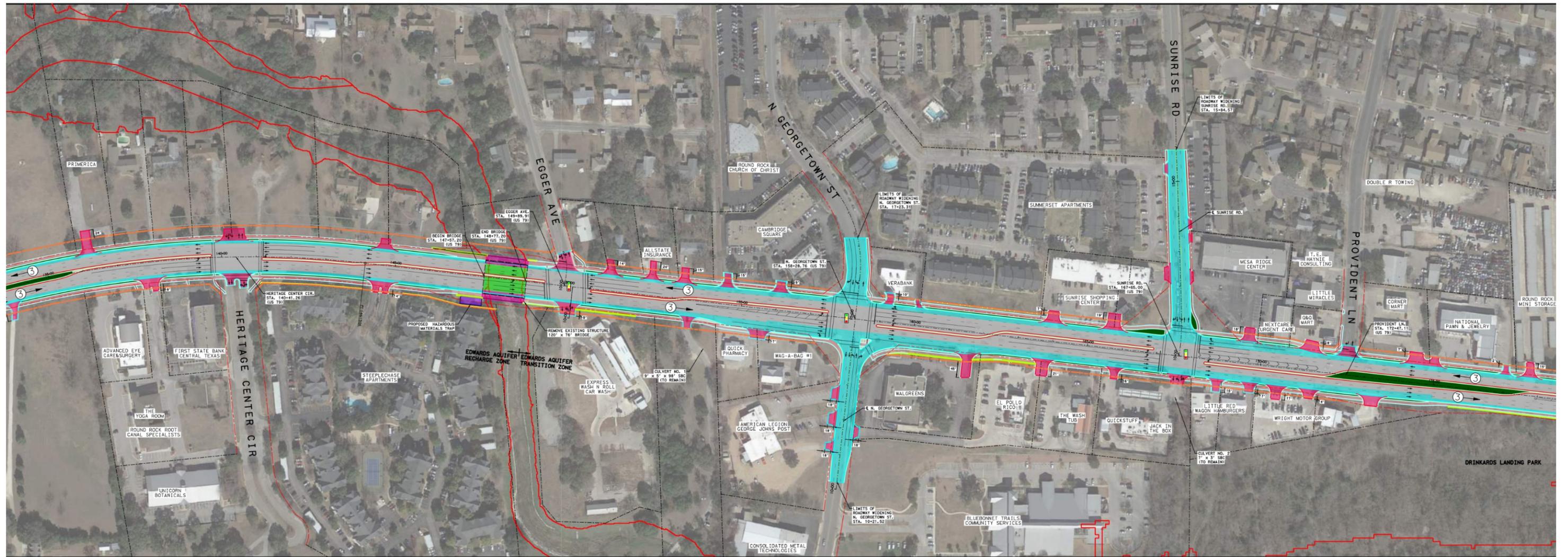
**Photo 24:** Eastern project terminus; facing west.

## Appendix C—Schematics

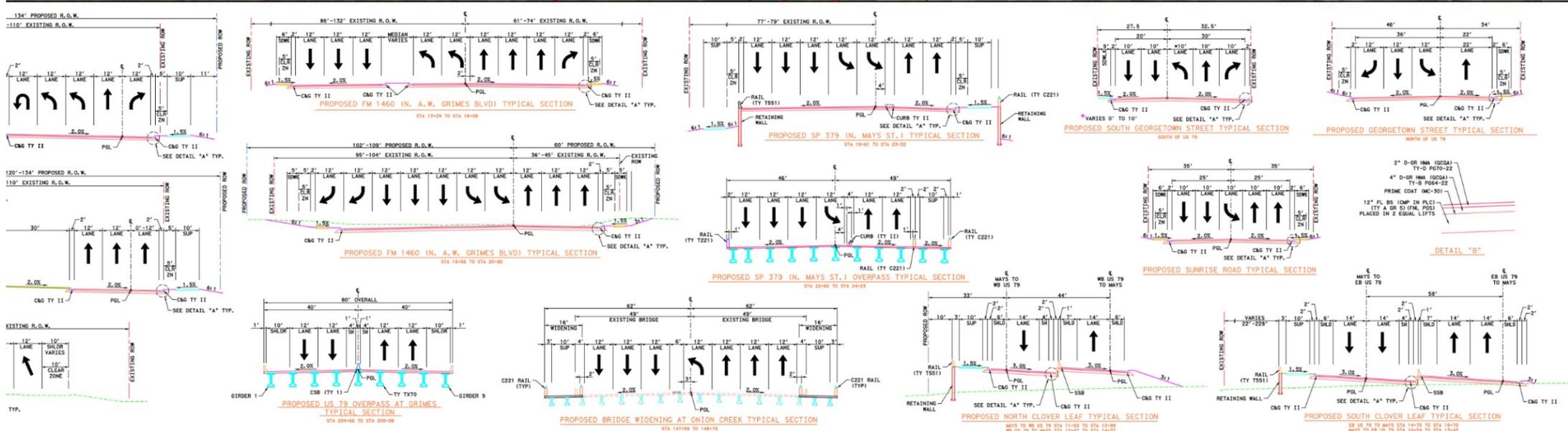
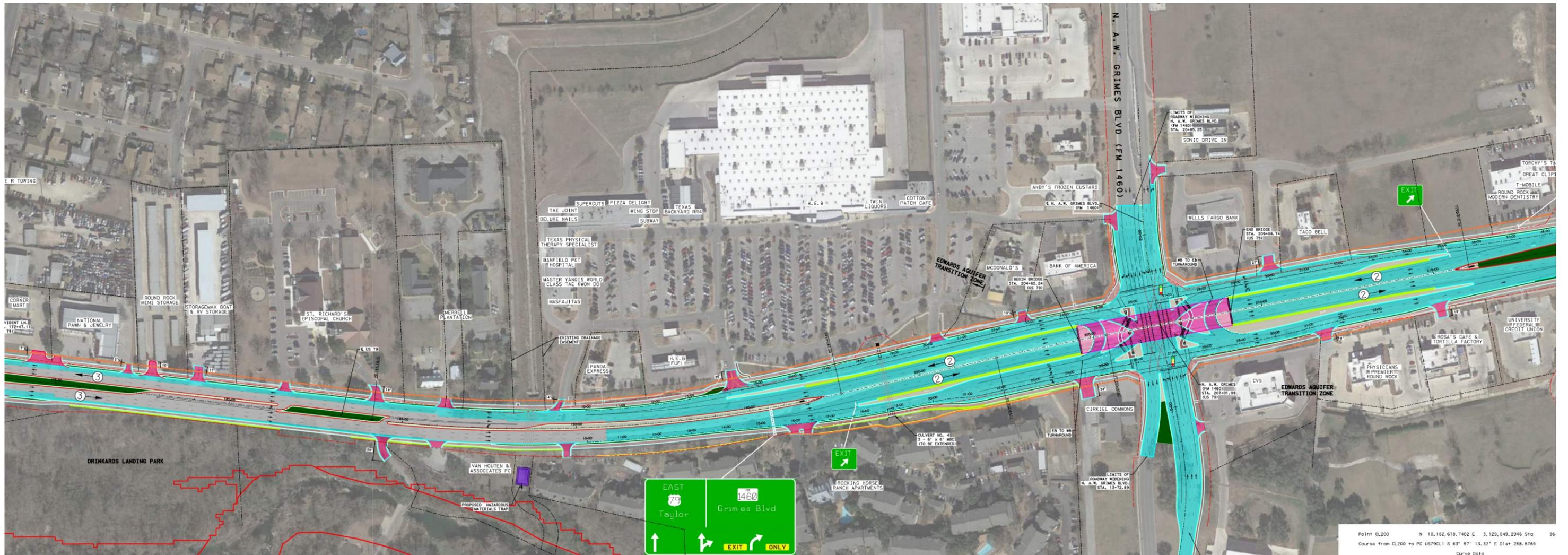


**Appendix C. Sheet 1 of 4**  
**Project Schematic**  
 US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460  
 CSJ: 0204-01-063

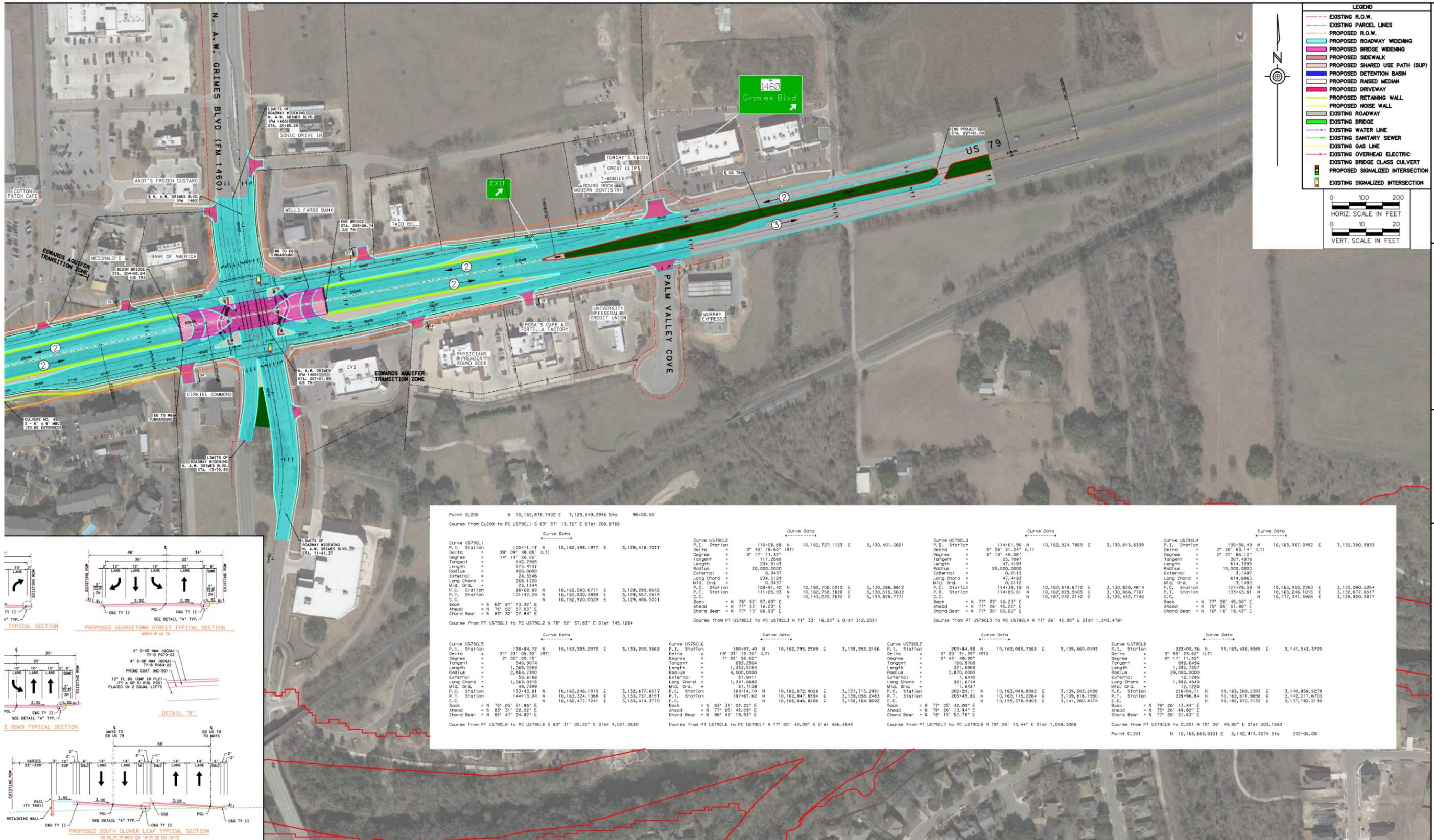




**Appendix C. Sheet 2 of 4**  
**Project Schematic**  
 US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460  
 CSJ: 0204-01-063



Point	CL200	N	10,162,678.1402 E	3,129,049.2946 S	96
Course from CL200 to PC U579CL1 S 63° 57' 13.32" E Dist 268.8769					
Curve Data					
Curve U579CL1	P.I. Station	100+11.17 N	10,162,498.1977 E	3,129.1	
	Delta	39° 09' 49.05" (LT)			
	Degree	14° 19' 28.20"			
	Tangent	142.2505			
	Length	273.4137			
	Radius	400.0000			
	External	24.5546			
	Long Chord	288.1220			
	Mfd. Ord.	23.1344			
	P.C. Station	98+68.88 N	10,162,560.6771 E	3,129.1	
	P.T. Station	101+42.29 N	10,162,520.4889 E	3,129.1	
	C.C. Station	101+42.29 N	10,162,520.4889 E	3,129.1	
	Back	S 63° 57' 13.32" E			
	Ahead	N 78° 22' 57.83" E			
	Chord Bear	S 83° 32' 07.84" E			
Course from PT U579CL1 to PC U579CL2 N 78° 52' 57.63" E Dist 749.1264					
Curve Data					
Curve U579CL2	P.I. Station	138+84.72 N	10,163,385.2072 E	3,133.1	
	Delta	21° 23' 05.92" (RT)			
	Degree	2° 02' 05.15"			
	Tangent	540.9074			
	Length	1,059.2269			
	Radius	2,964.7300			
	External	50.6188			
	Long Chord	1,063.0215			
	Mfd. Ord.	49.7399			
	P.C. Station	133+45.81 N	10,163,246.1015 E	3,133.1	
	P.T. Station	144+13.04 N	10,163,324.1368 E	3,133.1	
	C.C. Station	133+45.81 N	10,163,324.1368 E	3,133.1	
	Back	N 78° 05' 51.86" E			
	Ahead	S 83° 21' 02.22" E			
	Chord Bear	N 85° 47' 24.92" E			
Course from PT U579CL2 to PC U579CL6 S 83° 31' 02.22" E Dist 4,001.0630					

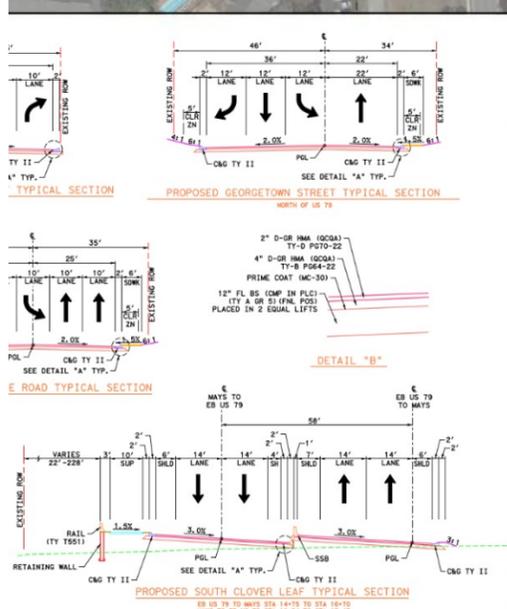


Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc.  
 10101 Reunion  
 Suite 200  
 TEL: 214,491,5082  
 TBE: F-2614

US 79  
 FROM: IH 35  
 TO: FM 1460

SHEET 1 OF 2  
 2/4/2020

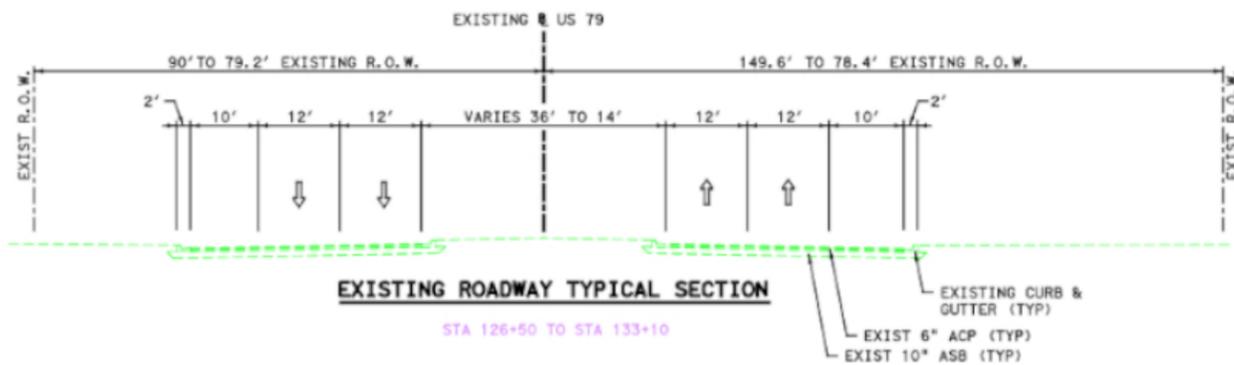
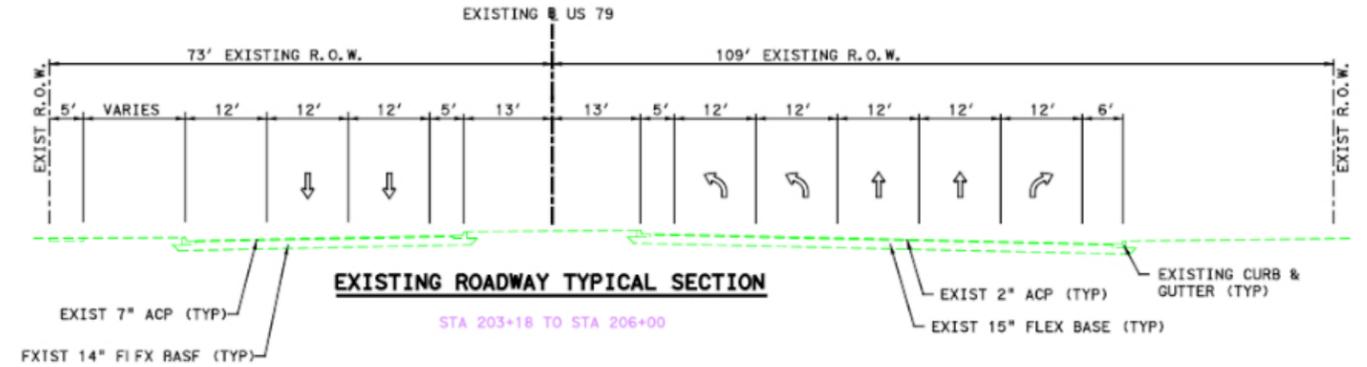
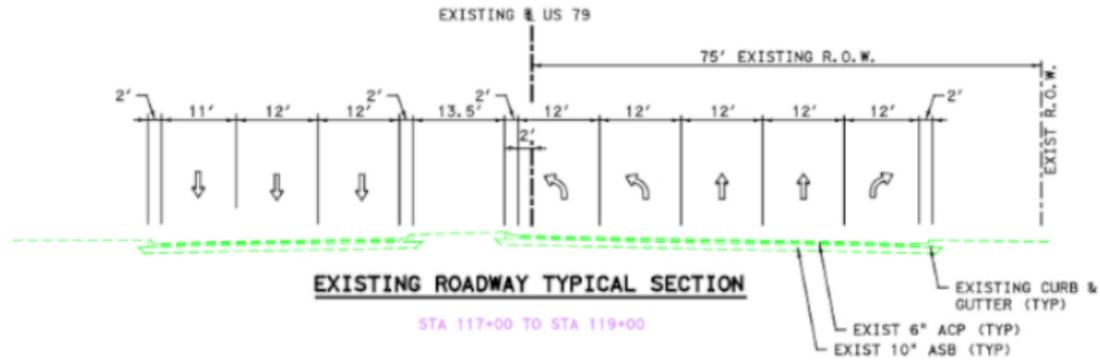
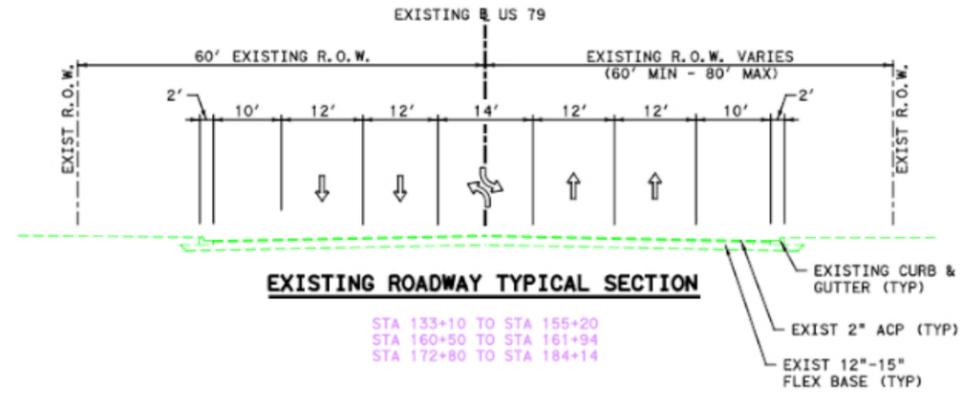
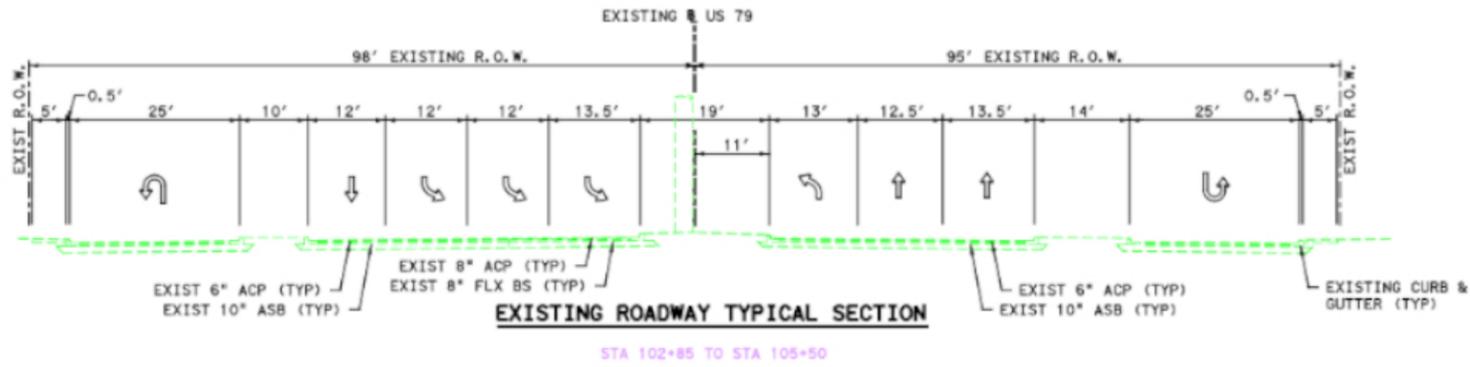
579 GEOMETRIC DESIGN SCHEMATIC  
 WILLIAMSON COUNTY  
 CSJ 0204-01-063

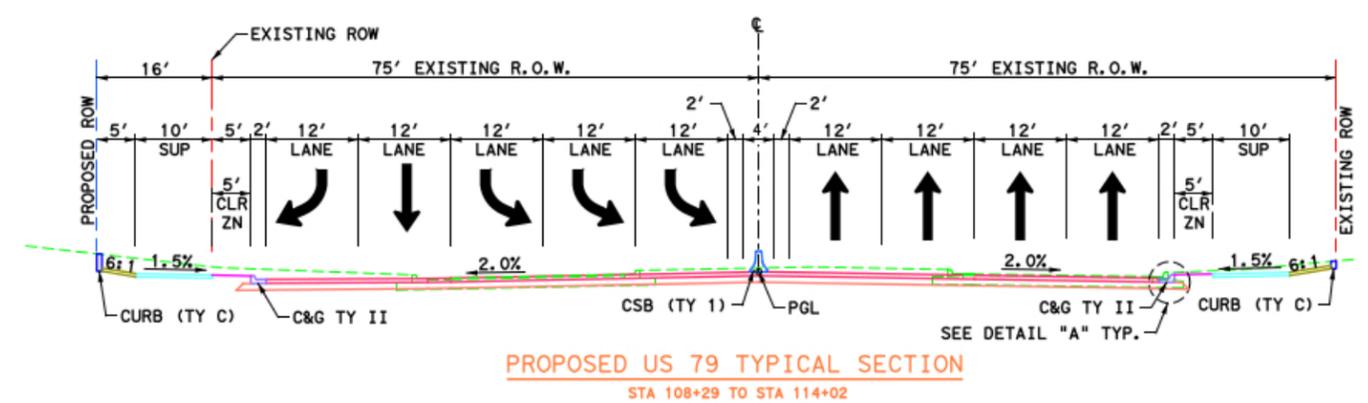
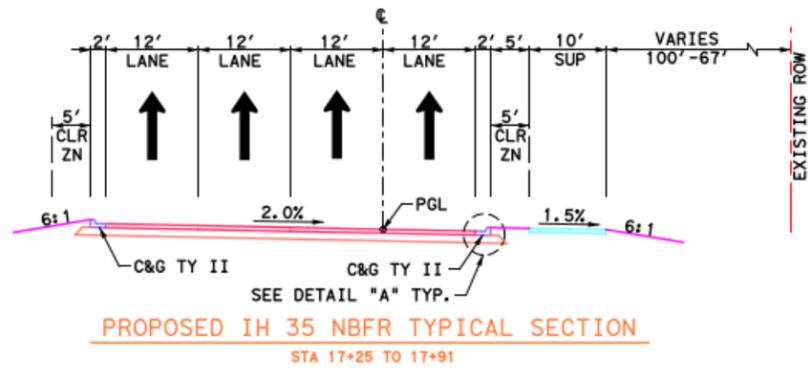
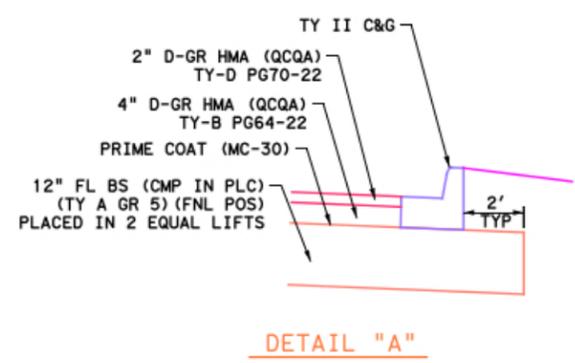
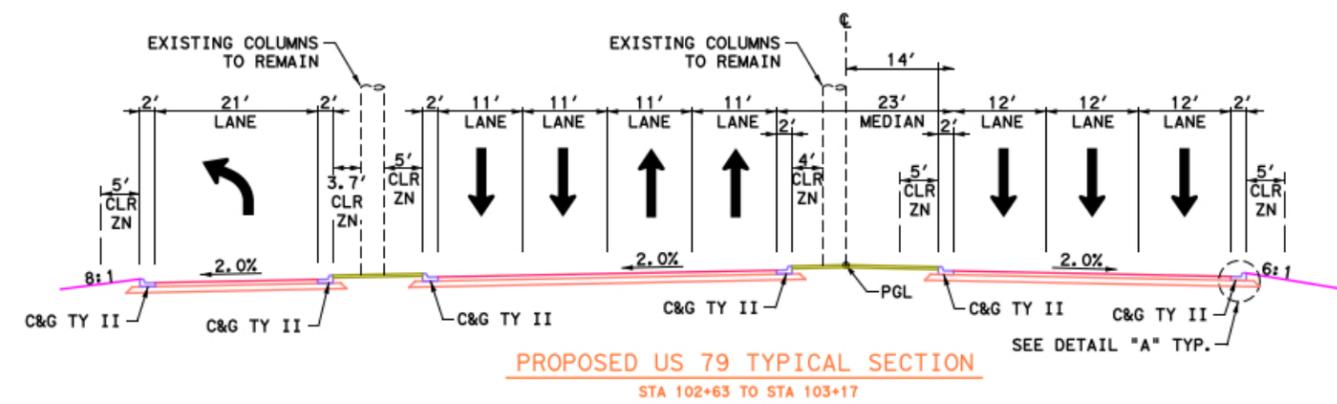
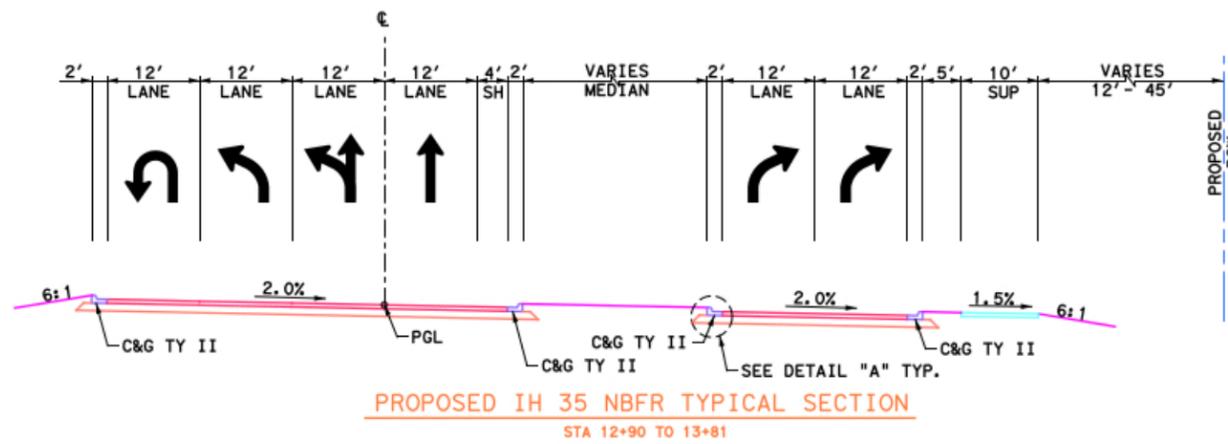
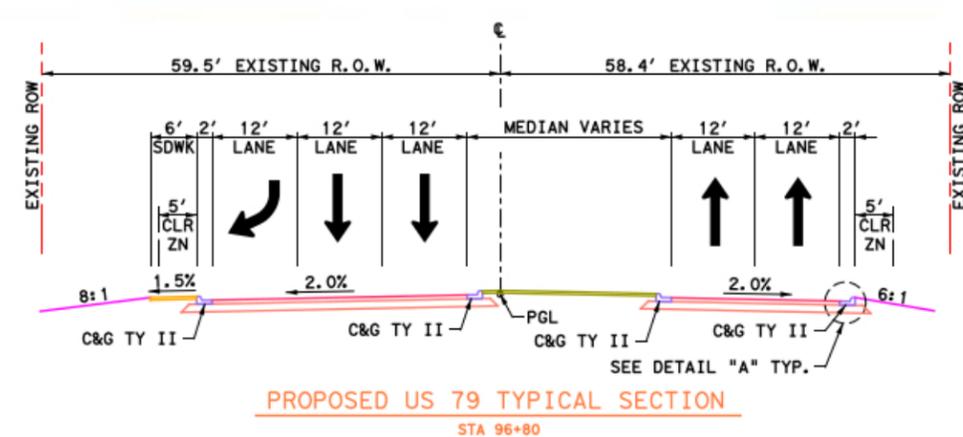
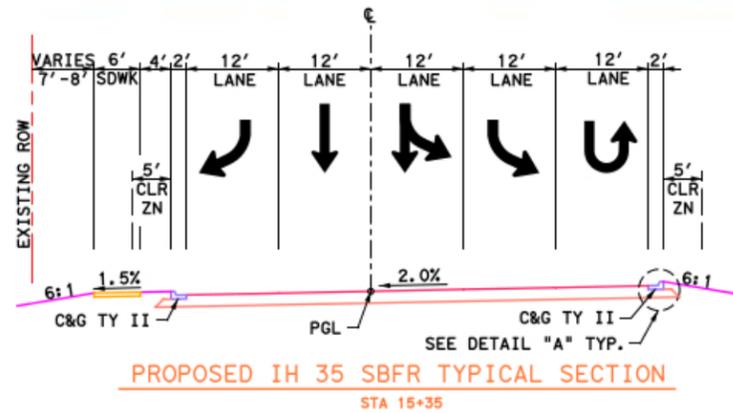
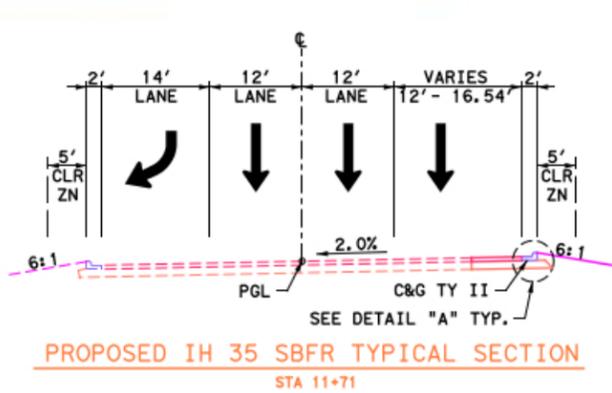


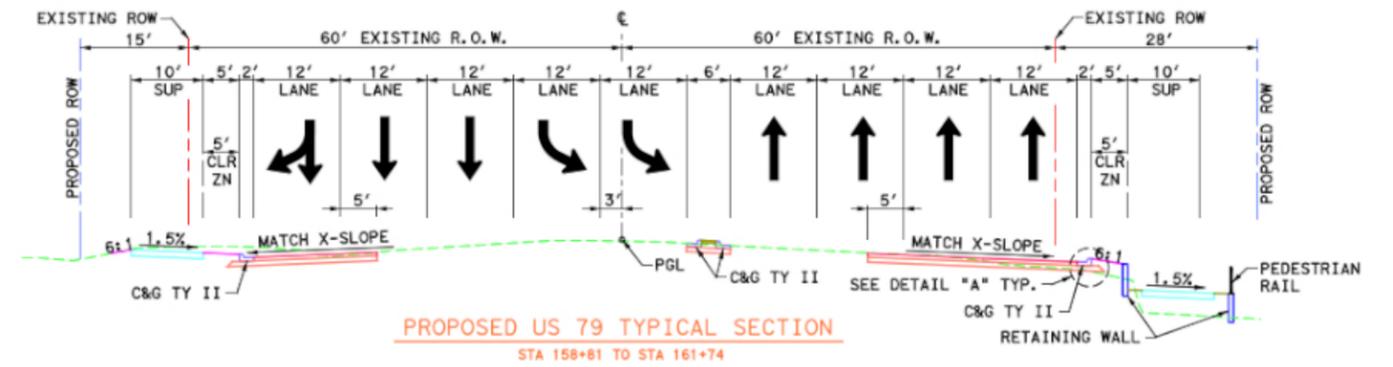
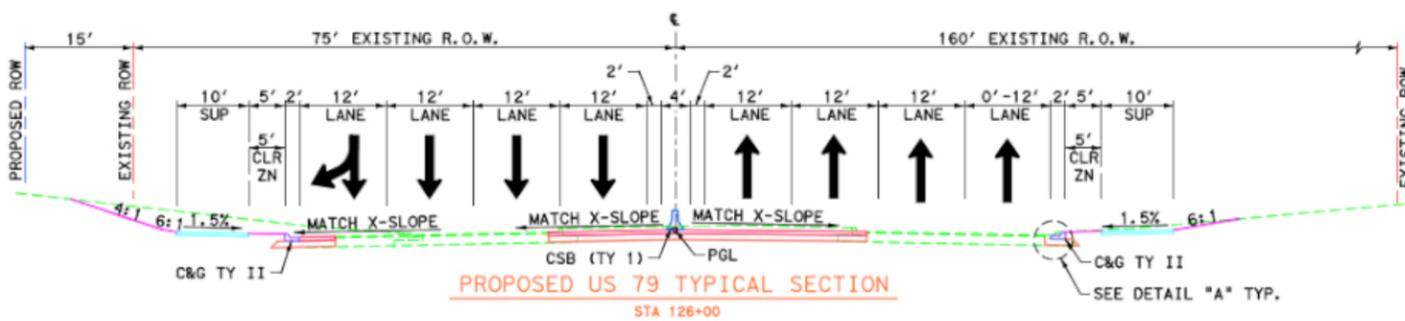
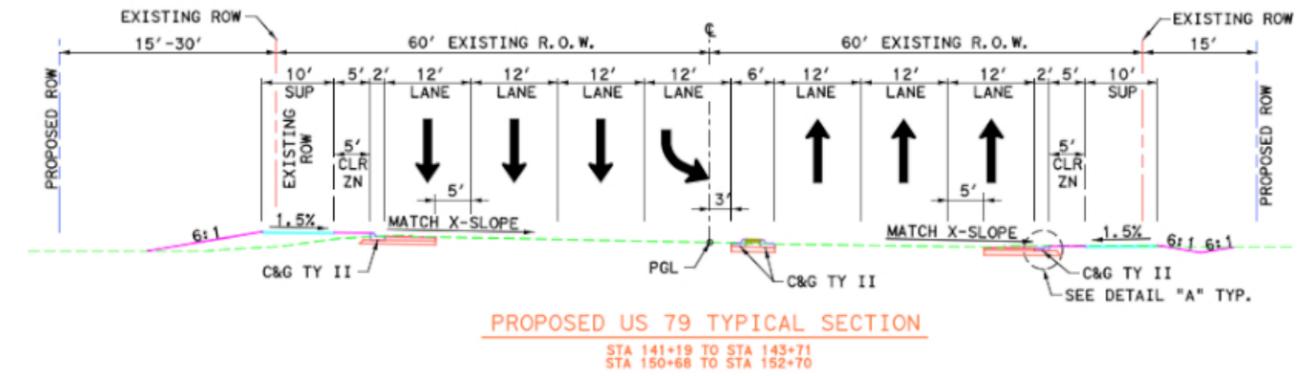
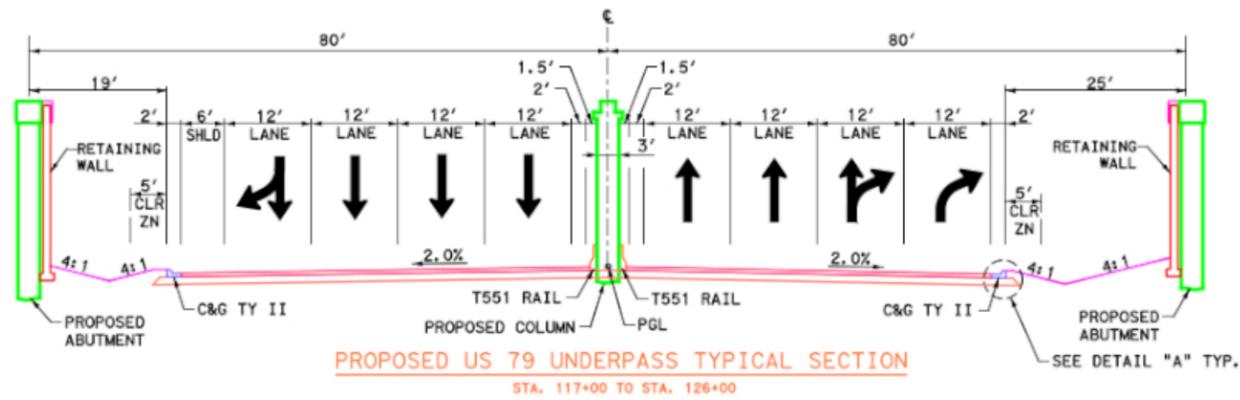
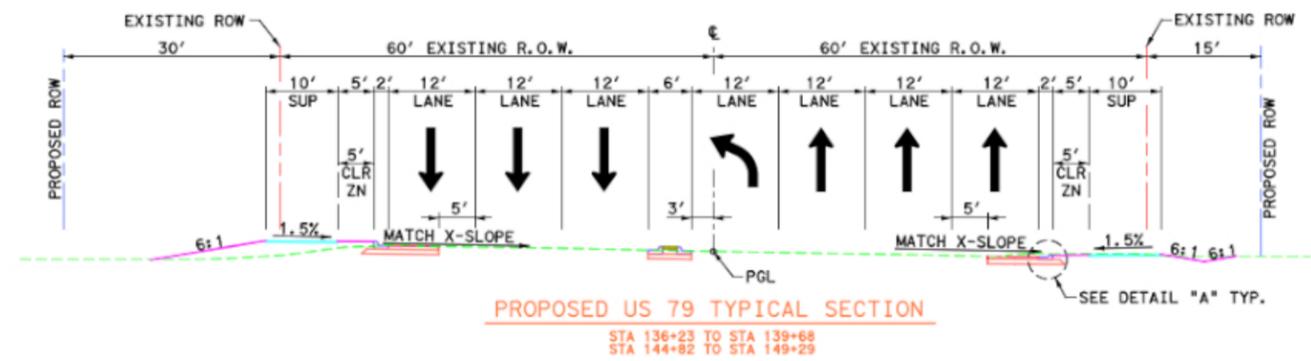
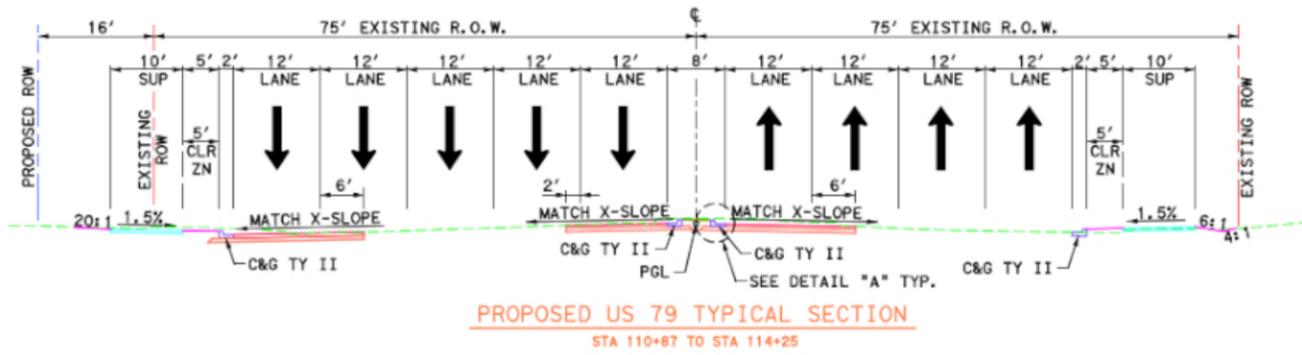
Curve Data	Curve Data	Curve Data	Curve Data
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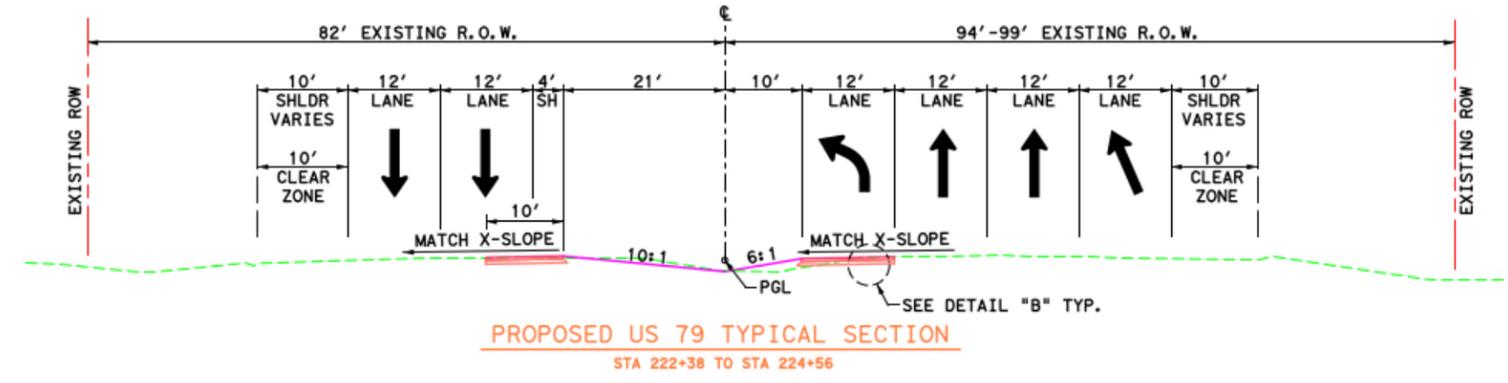
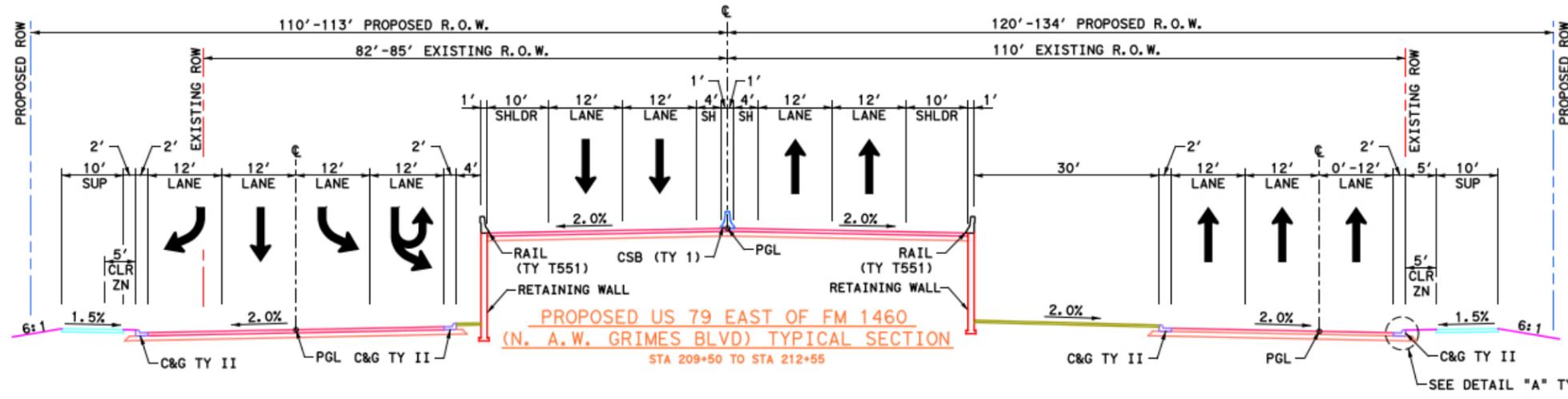
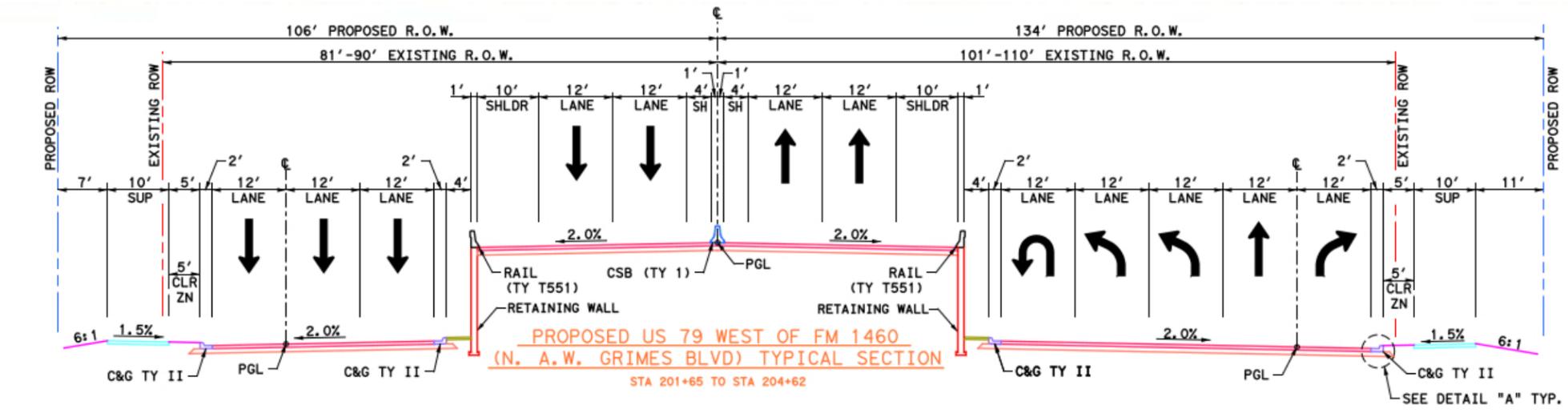
Appendix C. Sheet 4 of 4  
 Project Schematic  
 US 79 from I-35 to east of FM 1460  
 CSJ: 0204-01-063

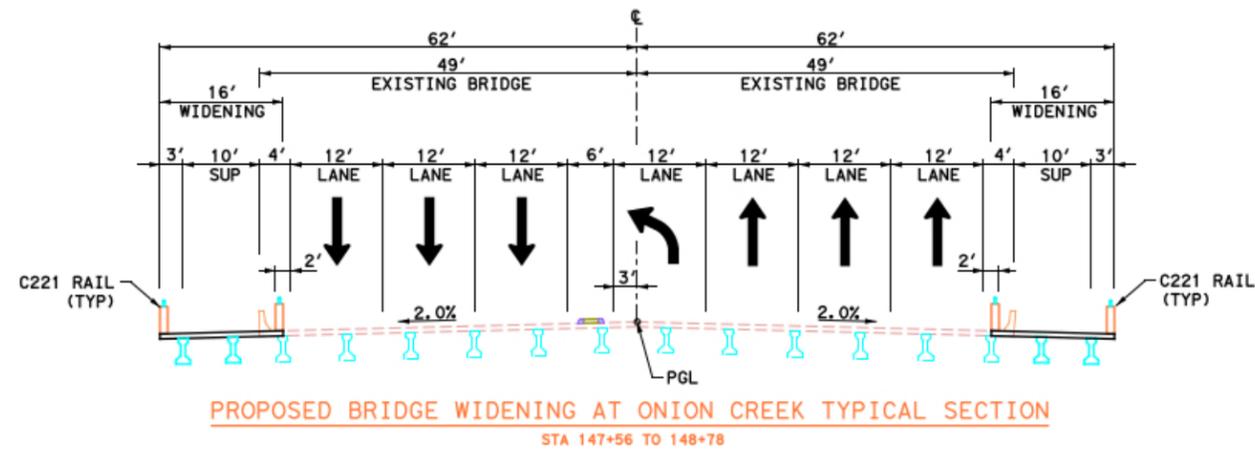
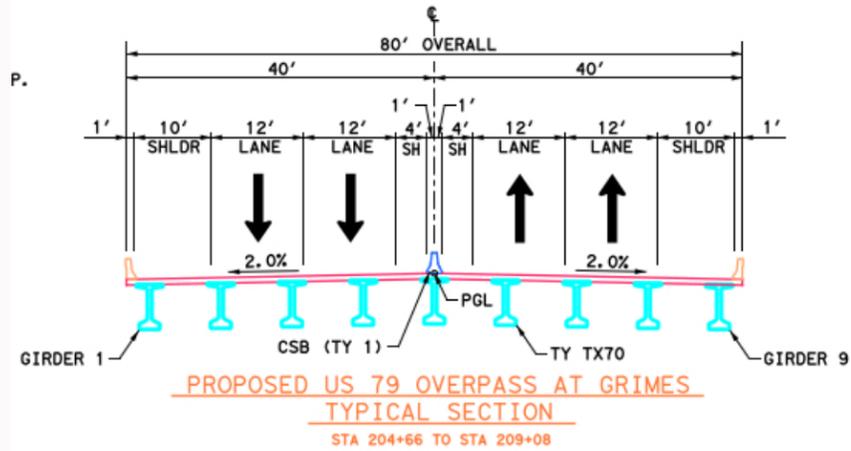
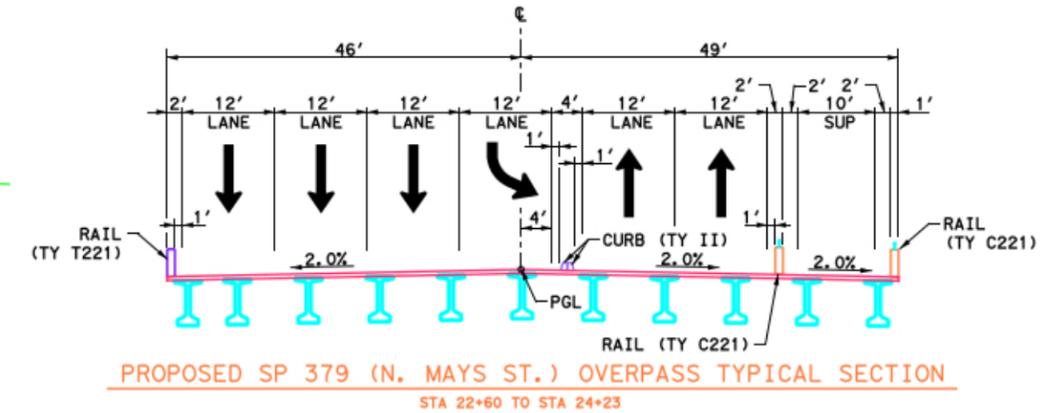
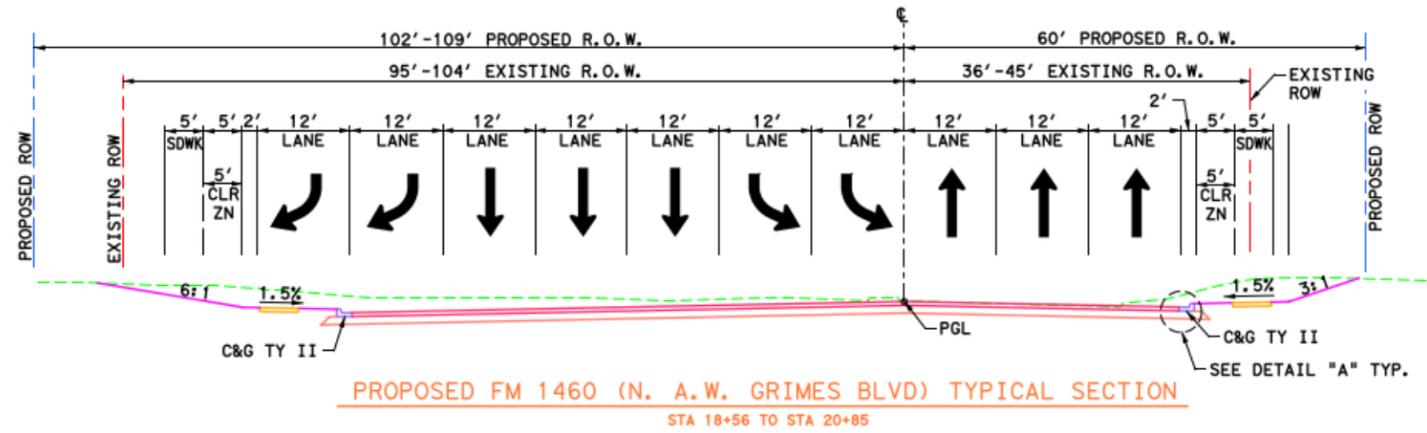
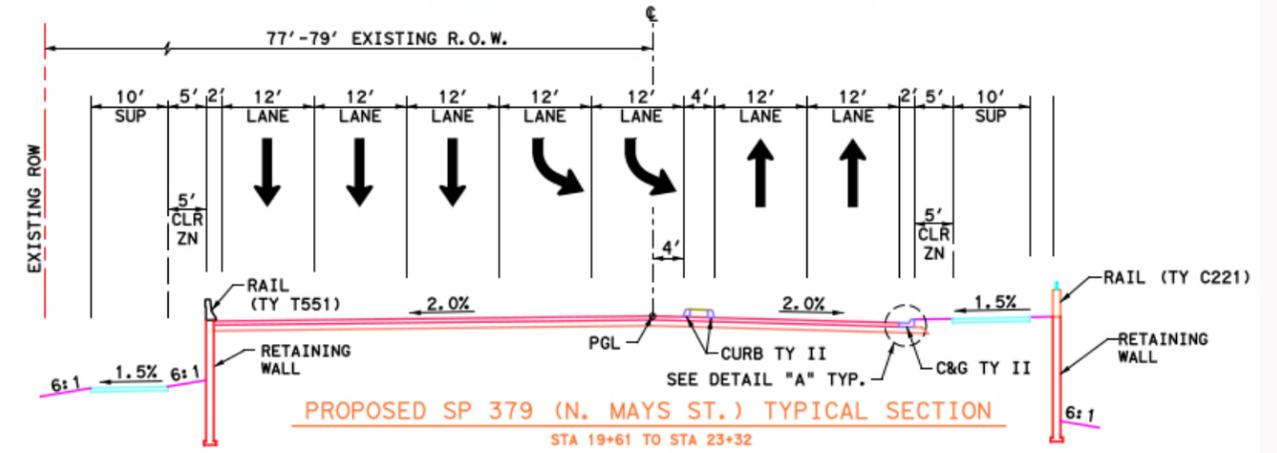
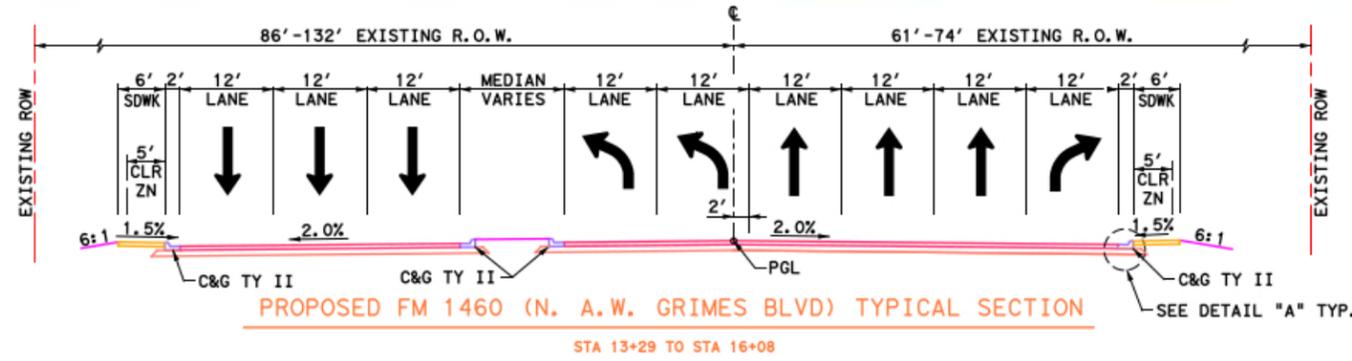
## Appendix D—Typical Sections

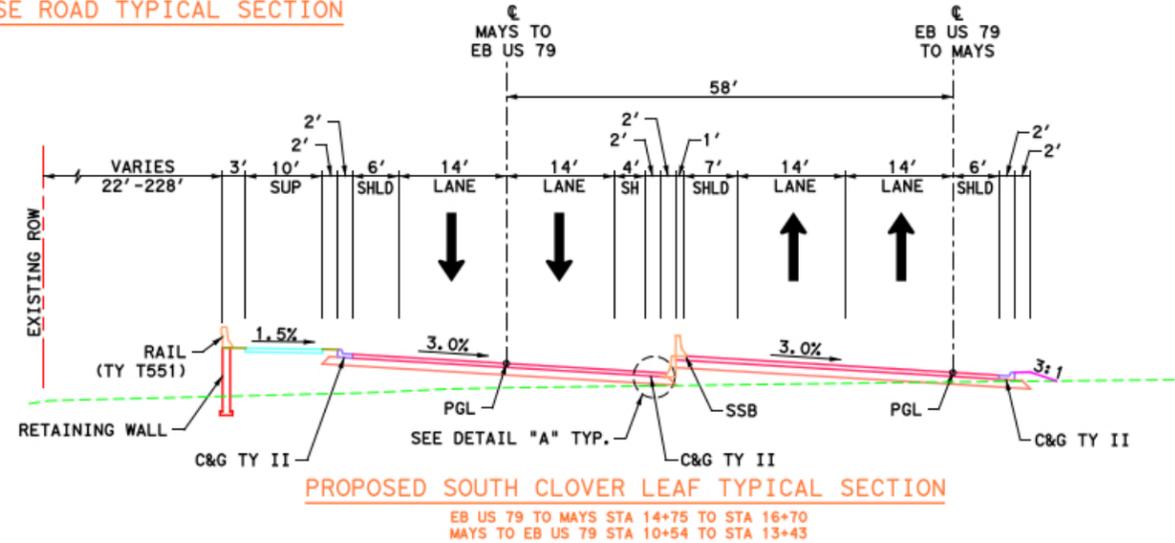
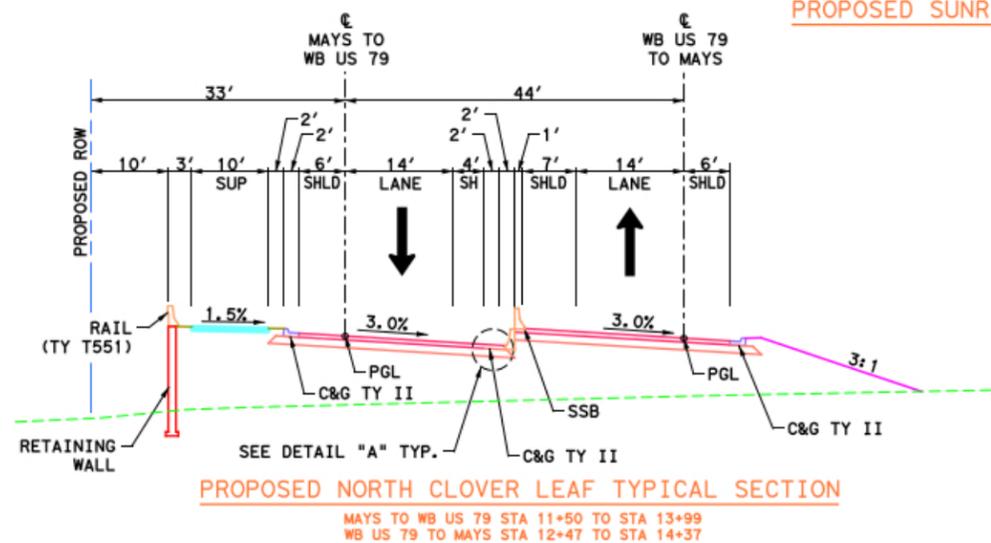
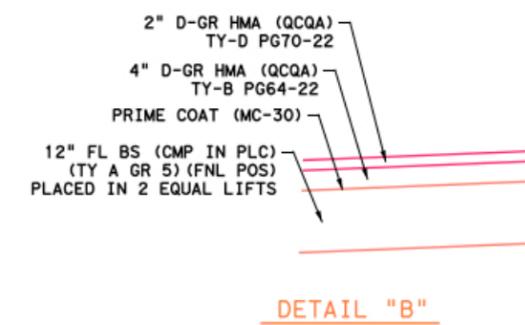
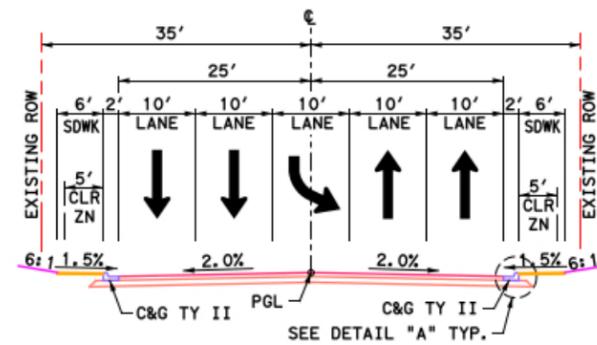
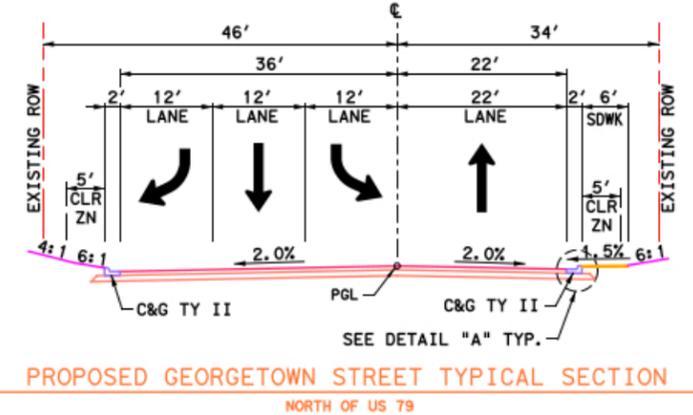
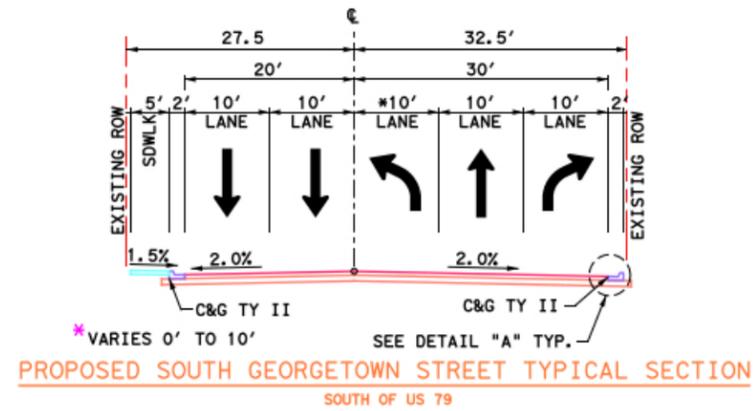












## Appendix E—Plan and Program Excerpts

STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
CAMPO - HIGHWAY PROJECTS  
FY 2022

2019-2022 STIP		07/2018 Revision: Approved 09/28/2018							
DISTRICT	MPO	COUNTY	CSJ	TIP FY	HWY	PHASE	CITY	YOE COST	
AUSTIN	CAMPO	TRAVIS	0000-00-000	2022	RM 620	C	OTHER	\$ 41,000,000	
<b>LIMITS FROM</b> Aria Dr/Cavalier Dr.		<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b> TxDOT							
<b>LIMITS TO</b> Oak Grove Blvd.		<b>REVISION DATE</b> 07/2018							
<b>PROJECT</b> Upgrade existing four-lane roadway to a six-lane divided roadway		<b>MPO PROJ NUM</b> 51-00233-00							
<b>DESCR</b>		<b>FUNDING CAT(S)</b> 2M							
<b>REMARKS</b>		<b>PROJECT HISTORY</b>							
P7									
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST INFORMATION</b>			<b>AUTHORIZED FUNDING BY CATEGORY/SHARE</b>						
PREL ENG \$	4,612,500	<b>COST OF APPROVED PHASES</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>FEDERAL</b>	<b>STATE</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
ROW PURCH \$	5,400,000		2M	\$ 0	\$ 41,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 41,000,000
CONSTR \$	41,000,000		TOTAL	\$ 0	\$ 41,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 41,000,000
CONST ENG \$	3,280,000								
CONTING \$	4,100,000								
INDIRECT \$	2,435,400								
BOND FIN \$	0								
PT CHG ORD \$	0								
<b>TOTAL CST \$</b>	<b>60,827,900</b>								

2019-2022 STIP		07/2018 Revision: Approved 09/28/2018							
DISTRICT	MPO	COUNTY	CSJ	TIP FY	HWY	PHASE	CITY	YOE COST	
AUSTIN	CAMPO	WILLIAMSON	0204-01-063	2022	US 79	C,E,R	OTHER	\$ 28,000,000	
<b>LIMITS FROM</b> IH 35		<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b> TxDOT							
<b>LIMITS TO</b> East of FM 1460		<b>REVISION DATE</b> 07/2018							
<b>PROJECT</b> Add One Lane In Each Direction		<b>MPO PROJ NUM</b> 61-00118-00							
<b>DESCR</b>		<b>FUNDING CAT(S)</b> 2M							
<b>REMARKS</b>		<b>PROJECT HISTORY</b>							
P7									
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST INFORMATION</b>			<b>AUTHORIZED FUNDING BY CATEGORY/SHARE</b>						
PREL ENG \$	1,605,045	<b>COST OF APPROVED PHASES</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>FEDERAL</b>	<b>STATE</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
ROW PURCH \$	212,000		2M	\$ 22,400,000	\$ 5,600,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 28,000,000
CONSTR \$	32,756,039		TOTAL	\$ 22,400,000	\$ 5,600,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 28,000,000
CONST ENG \$	1,624,699								
CONTING \$	651,845								
INDIRECT \$	0								
BOND FIN \$	0								
PT CHG ORD \$	1,225,075								
<b>TOTAL CST \$</b>	<b>38,074,703</b>								

2019-2022 STIP		11/2018 Revision: Approved 12/19/2018							
DISTRICT	MPO	COUNTY	CSJ	TIP FY	HWY	PHASE	CITY	YOE COST	
AUSTIN	CAMPO	TRAVIS	0113-13-167	2022	SL 360	C	OTHER	\$ 45,000,000	
<b>LIMITS FROM</b> At Spicewood Springs Road		<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b> TxDOT, City of Austin							
<b>LIMITS TO</b>		<b>REVISION DATE</b> 11/2018							
<b>PROJECT</b> Grade Separate Intersection		<b>MPO PROJ NUM</b> 51-00188-00							
<b>DESCR</b>		<b>FUNDING CAT(S)</b> 3LC,2M							
<b>REMARKS</b>		<b>PROJECT HISTORY</b>							
P7		10/23/18: Revised to Update&nbsp;Facility Location							
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST INFORMATION</b>			<b>AUTHORIZED FUNDING BY CATEGORY/SHARE</b>						
PREL ENG \$	2,621,353	<b>COST OF APPROVED PHASES</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>FEDERAL</b>	<b>STATE</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>LC</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
ROW PURCH \$	0		3LC	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 12,000,000
CONSTR \$	53,497,013		2M	\$ 26,400,000	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 33,000,000
CONST ENG \$	2,509,009		TOTAL	\$ 26,400,000	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 0	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 45,000,000
CONTING \$	1,599,560								
INDIRECT \$	0								
BOND FIN \$	0								
PT CHG ORD \$	2,402,015								
<b>TOTAL CST \$</b>	<b>62,628,950</b>								

## Roadway Projects

District	County	CSJ	Roadway	Phase	City	Sponsor	Fiscal Year	Year of Expenditure Cost
Austin	Williamson	0204-01-063	US 79	C,E,R		TxDOT	2022	\$28,000,000.00
<b>Limits (From):</b>	IH 35				<b>MPO ID:</b>	61-00118-00		
<b>Limits (To):</b>	East of FM 1460				<b>Revision Date:</b>	7/1/2018		
<b>Description:</b>	Add One Lane In Each Direction				<b>History:</b>			

**Remarks:**

Total Project Cost Information		Authorized Funding by Category/Share						
		<u>Category</u>	<u>Federal</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Regional</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>LC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Preliminary Engineering:	\$1,605,045.94							
Right-of-Way:	\$212,000.00	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Construction:	\$32,756,039.67	2	\$22,400,000.00	\$5,600,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$28,000,000.00
Construction Engineering	\$1,624,699.57	3	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contingencies:	\$651,845.19	4	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Indirects:	\$0.00	5	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bond Financing:	\$0.00	6	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Potential Change Orders:	\$1,225,075.88	7	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Cost:	\$38,074,706.25	8	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cost of Approved Phases:	\$28,000,000.00	9	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$22,400,000.00</b>	<b>\$5,600,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$28,000,000.00</b>

## Roadway Projects

MPO ID	Sponsor(s)	County	Roadway	Limits (From)	Limits (To)	Description	Let Year	Total Cost
61-00113-00	TxDOT	Williamson	IH 35	FM 3406	RM 1431	Widen NB Frontage Rd To 3 Lanes With Associated Paving, Grading, Drainage And Driveway Improvements	2019	\$11,118,575.77
61-00114-00	TxDOT	Williamson	US 183	RM 620/SH 45	Travis County Line	Widen From 3 To 4 General Purpose Lanes	2019	\$60,000,000.00
61-00116-00	City of Cedar Park	Williamson	US 183	Cedar Park Dr	South of Buttercup Creek Blvd	Relocation of 4-Lane US 183 to 4-Lane Old Hwy 183	2019	\$15,352,849.75
61-00117-00	City of Liberty Hill	Williamson	SL 332	SH 29	CR 279	Liberty Hill Downtown Bike/Ped Loop	2019	\$1,645,868.05
61-00118-00	TxDOT	Williamson	US 79	IH 35	East of FM 1460	Add One Lane In Each Direction	2022	\$38,074,706.25

## **Appendix F—Resource-Specific Maps**

Figure 1: Potential Displacements

Figure 2: Census Geographies

Figure 3a–3b: Historic Resources Study Area

Figure 4a–4e: Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed

Figure 5: Water Resources

Figure 6a-6c: Observed EMST Vegetation Types

Figure 7: Critical Habitat Unit and Karst Zones

Figure 8: Hazardous Materials Sites of Concern

Figure 9: Noise Receivers

Figure 10: Area of Influence

Figure 11: Resource Study Area for Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species



**Figure 1**  
**Potential Displacements**

▭ Project Location   
 ● Commercial   
 ● Other

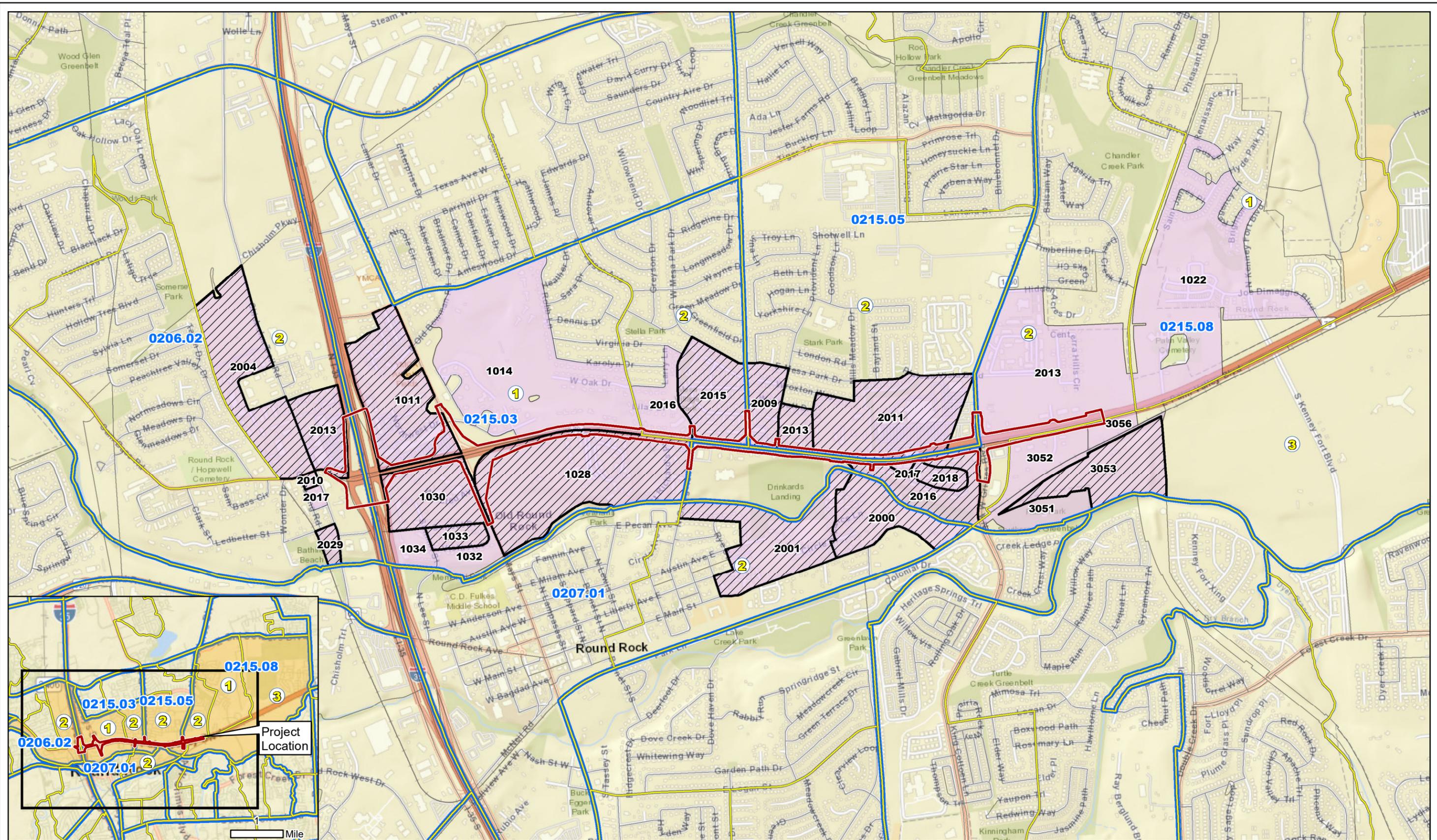
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 1 Potential Displacements\_20200203.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 1,000 Feet 1 in = 1,000 feet  
 0 300 Meters Scale: 1:12,000  
 Date: 2/21/2020

Data Source: CMEC (2020)  
 Basemap Source: Google (2018)



**Figure 2**  
**Census Geographies**

- Project Location
- 2010 Census Block Group
- Populated Adjacent 2010 Census Block
- 2010 Census Block
- 2010 Census Tract
- Minority Population >50%

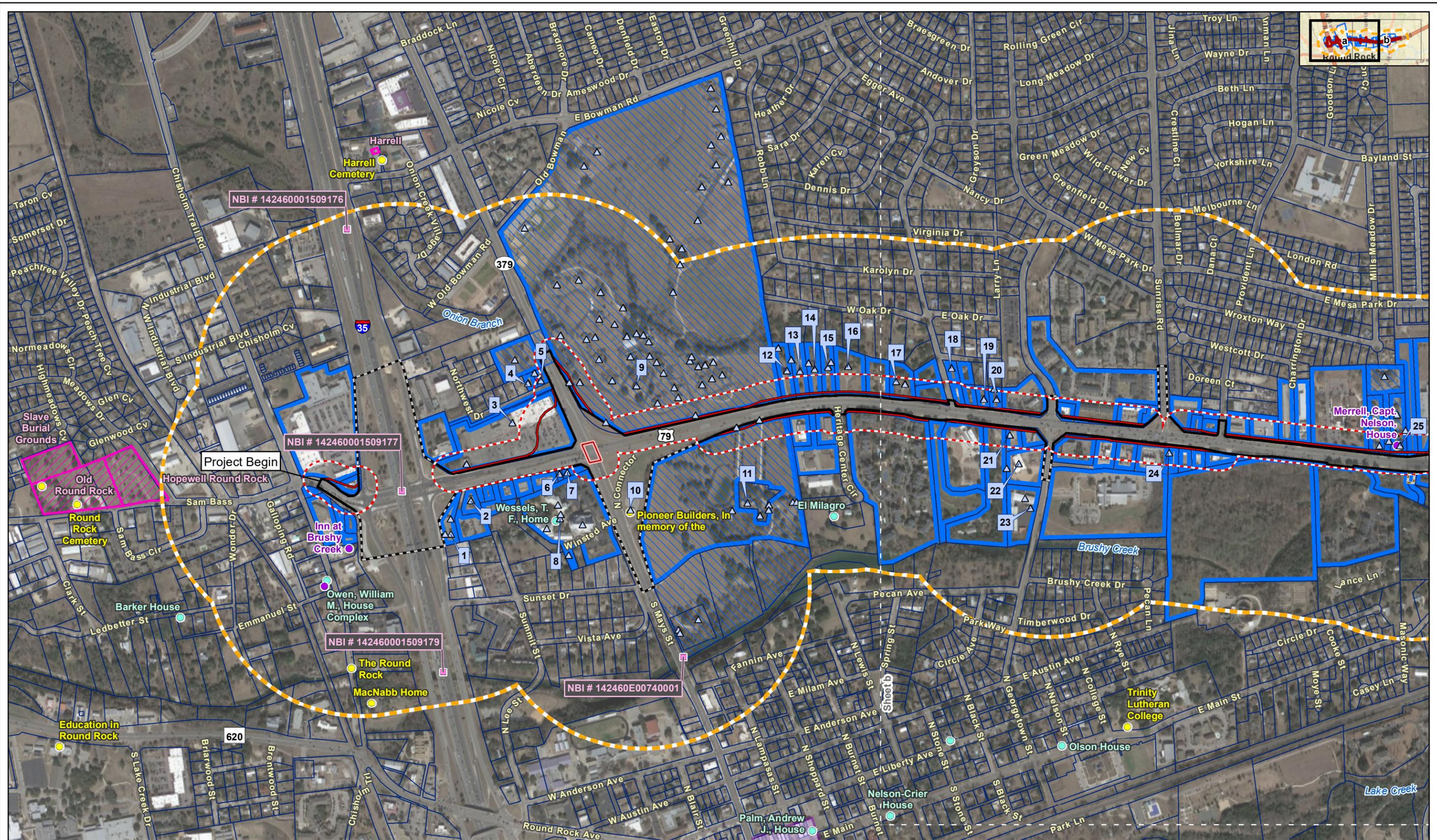
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 2 Census Geographies\_20200203.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 1,500 Feet  
0 400 Meters

1 in = 1,500 feet  
Scale: 1:18,000  
Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 3a**  
**Historic Resources Study Area**

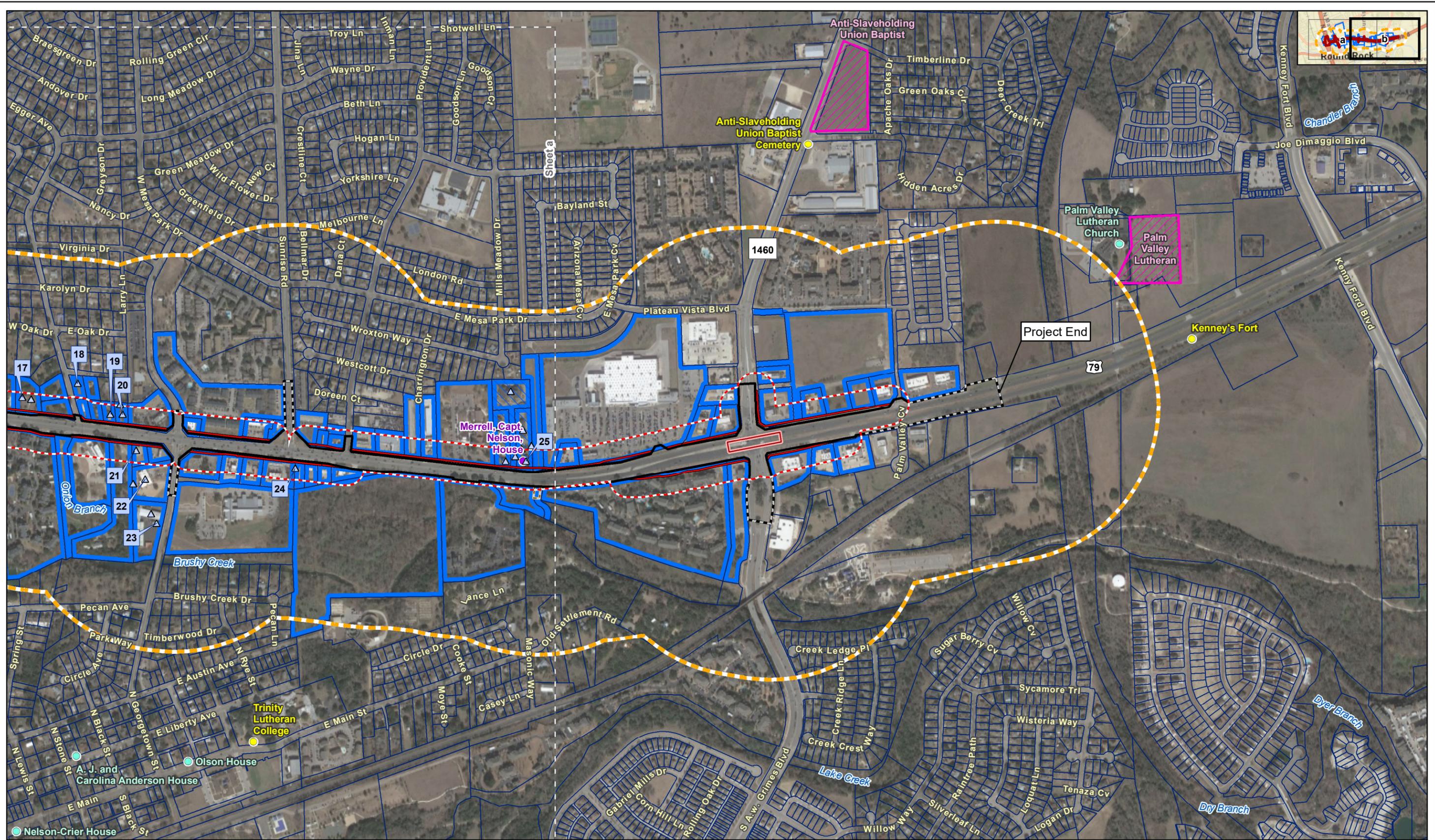
- |                       |                       |                            |                         |                                     |          |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Existing Right-of-Way | Proposed Bridge       | National Register District | Intensive Survey Parcel | Historical Marker                   | APE      |
| Existing Easement     | 1,300-foot Study Area | Parcel Boundary            | Parcel Intersecting APE | Historic-Age Bridge                 | 150-foot |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Cemetery              | Sheet Limits               | RTHL                    | Existing Right-of-Way and Easements |          |

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460  
 G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_135\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_135\_FM1460\_Figure 3\_Historic Resources Study Area\_20200207\_SGL.mxd

Data Sources:  
 THC (2020), TXDOT (2020),  
 WCAD (2019), FHWA (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 750 Feet 1 in = 750 feet  
 0 200 Meters Scale: 1:9,000  
 Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 3b**  
**Historic Resources Study Area**

- |                       |                       |                         |                   |                                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Existing Right-of-Way | Proposed Bridge       | Parcel Boundary         | Sheet Limits      | <b>APE</b>                          |
| Existing Easement     | 1,300-foot Study Area | Parcel Intersecting APE | RTHL              | 150-foot                            |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Cemetery              | Intensive Survey Parcel | Historical Marker | Existing Right-of-Way and Easements |

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_135\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_135\_FM1460\_Figure 3\_Historic Resources Study Area\_20200207\_SGL.mxd

Data Sources: THC (2020), TXDOT (2020), WCAD (2019), FHWA (2019) Aerial Source: Google (2018)	CSJ: 0204-01-063	 0 750 Feet 0 200 Meters 1 in = 750 feet Scale: 1:9,000 Date: 2/11/2020
--	------------------	--



**Figure 4a**  
**Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed**

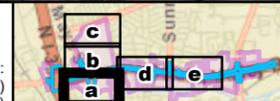
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

- Existing Right-of-Way
- Proposed Right-of-Way
- Parcel Boundary
- Parcel Intersecting APE
- Intensive Survey Parcel
- Sheet Limits
- 150-foot APE
- Existing Right-of-Way and Easements

**Surveyed Property**

- Historic Age
- Non-Historic Age

Data Sources:  
 CMEC (2019), WCAD (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)



CSJ: 0204-01-063

Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 4b**  
**Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed**

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

- Existing Right-of-Way
- Proposed Right-of-Way
- Parcel Boundary
- Parcel Intersecting APE
- Intensive Survey Parcel
- Sheet Limits
- 150-foot APE
- Existing Right-of-Way and Easements

**Surveyed Property**

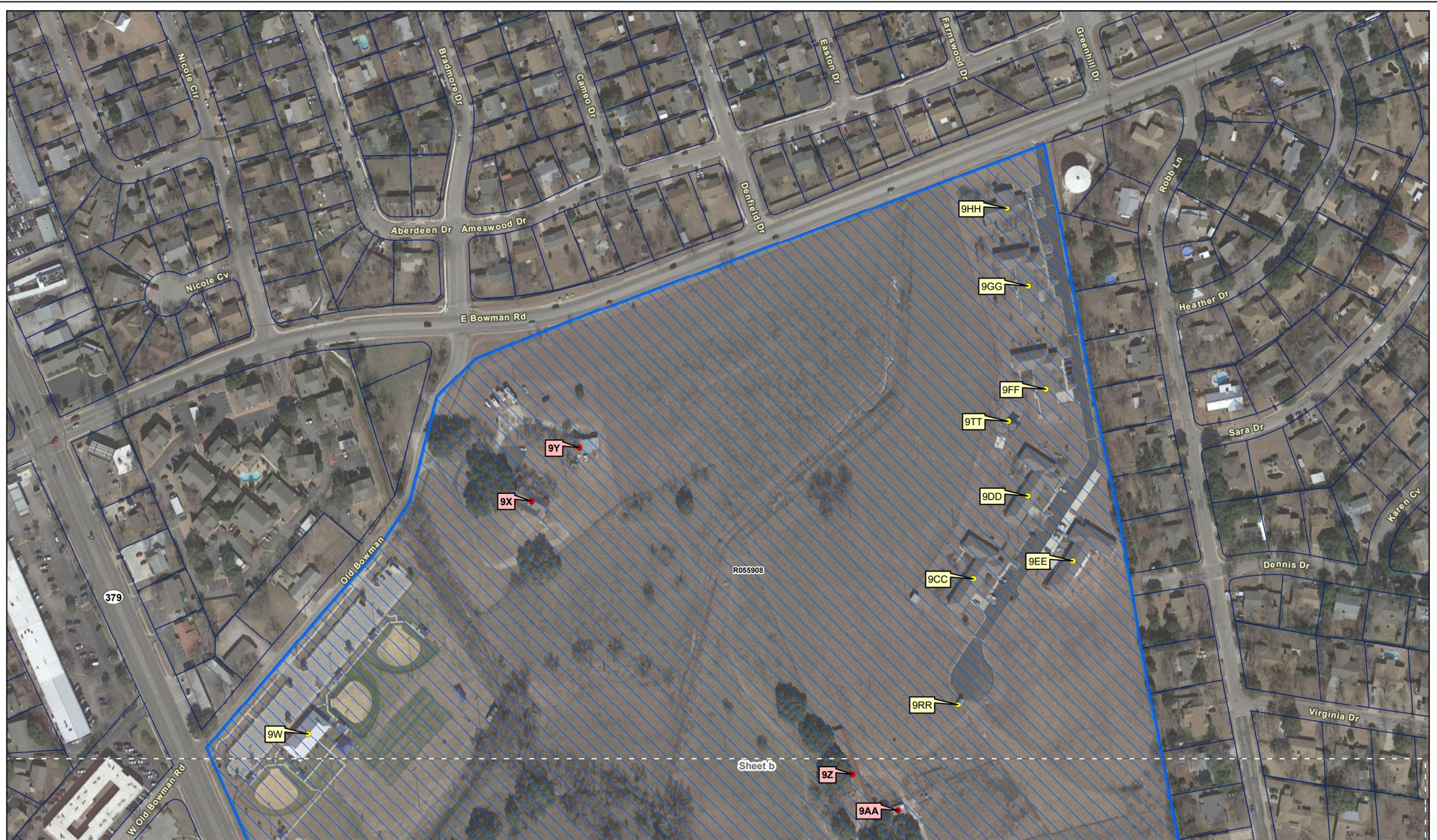
- Historic Age
- Non-Historic Age

Data Sources:  
 CMEC (2019), WCAD (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)



CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 200 Feet 1 in = 200 feet  
 0 60 Meters Scale: 1:2,400  
 Date: 2/11/2020



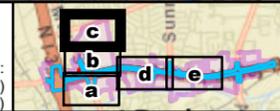
**Figure 4c**  
**Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed**

- Parcel Boundary
- Sheet Limits
- Non-Historic Age
- Parcel Intersecting APE
- Surveyed Property
- Historic Age
- Intensive Survey Parcel

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 4. Documented Historic-Age Resources\_20200207\_SGL.mxd

Data Sources:  
 CMEC (2019), WCAD (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)

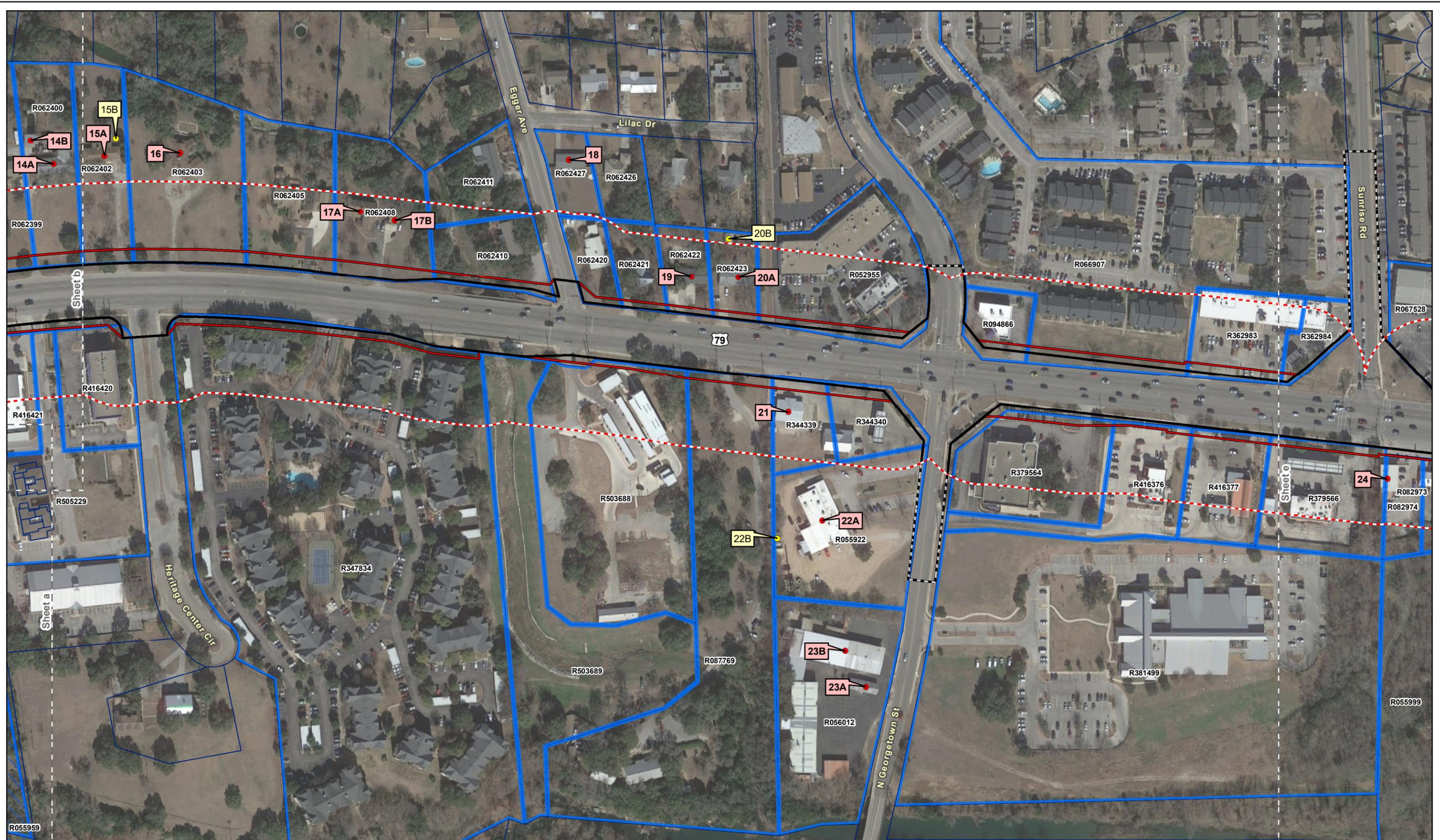


CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 200 Feet 1 in = 200 feet

0 60 Meters Scale: 1:2,400

Date: 2/11/2020



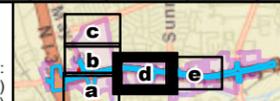
**Figure 4d**  
**Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed**

- |                       |                                     |                  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Existing Right-of-Way | Parcel Intersecting APE             | 150-foot         |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Intensive Survey Parcel             | Historic Age     |
| Parcel Boundary       | Sheet Limits                        | Non-Historic Age |
|                       | Existing Right-of-Way and Easements |                  |

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 4\_Documented Historic-Age Resources\_20200207\_SGL.mxd

Data Sources:  
 CMEC (2019), WCAD (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)



CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 200 Feet 1 in = 200 feet  
 0 60 Meters Scale: 1:2,400  
 Date: 2/11/2020



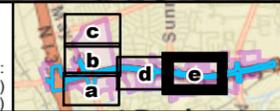
**Figure 4e**  
**Documented Historic-age Resources Surveyed**

- |                       |                         |                   |                                     |                  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Existing Right-of-Way | Parcel Boundary         | Sheet Limits      | Existing Right-of-Way and Easements | Non-Historic Age |
| Existing Easement     | Parcel Intersecting APE | APE               | 150-foot                            | Historic Age     |
| Proposed Right-of-Way | Intensive Survey Parcel | Surveyed Property |                                     |                  |

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

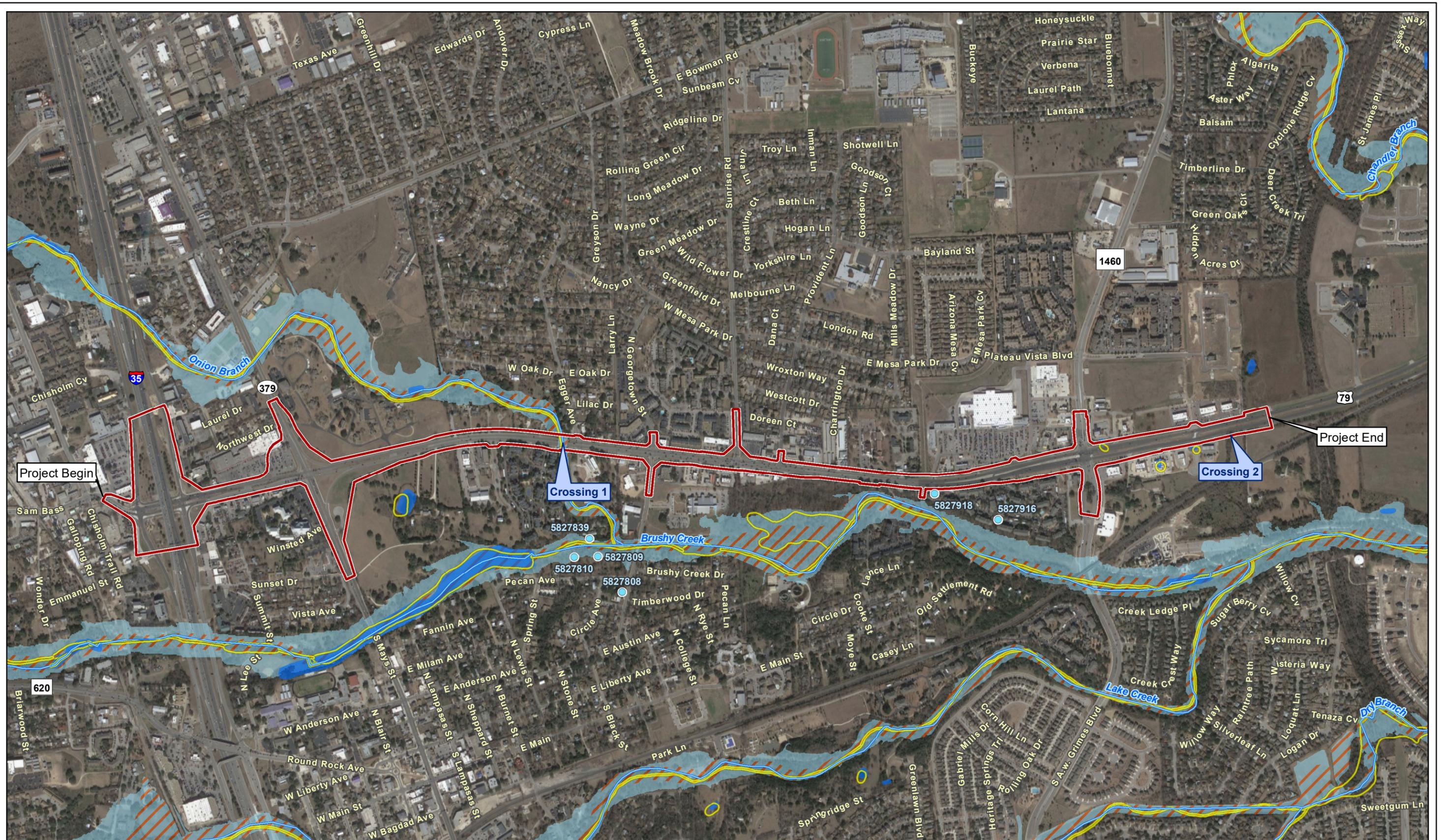
G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 4 Documented Historic-Age Resources\_20200207\_SGL.mxd

Data Sources:  
 CMEC (2019), WCAD (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)



CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 200 Feet 1 in = 200 feet  
 0 60 Meters Scale: 1:2,400  
 Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 5**  
**Water Resources**

- ▭ Project Location
- ⊞ NWI Wetland
- ⊞ 100-Year Flood Zone
- TWDB Groundwater Well within 1/4 mile
- ~ NHD Stream
- ⊞ NHD Water
- ▨ Designated Floodway

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 5 Water Resources 20200205.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0	1,000 Feet	1 in = 1,000 feet
0	250 Meters	Scale: 1:12,000
		Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 6a**  
**Observed EMST Vegetation Types**

- Project Location
- Native Invasive: Deciduous Woodland
- Edwards Plateau: Live Oak Motte and Woodland
- Urban Low Intensity

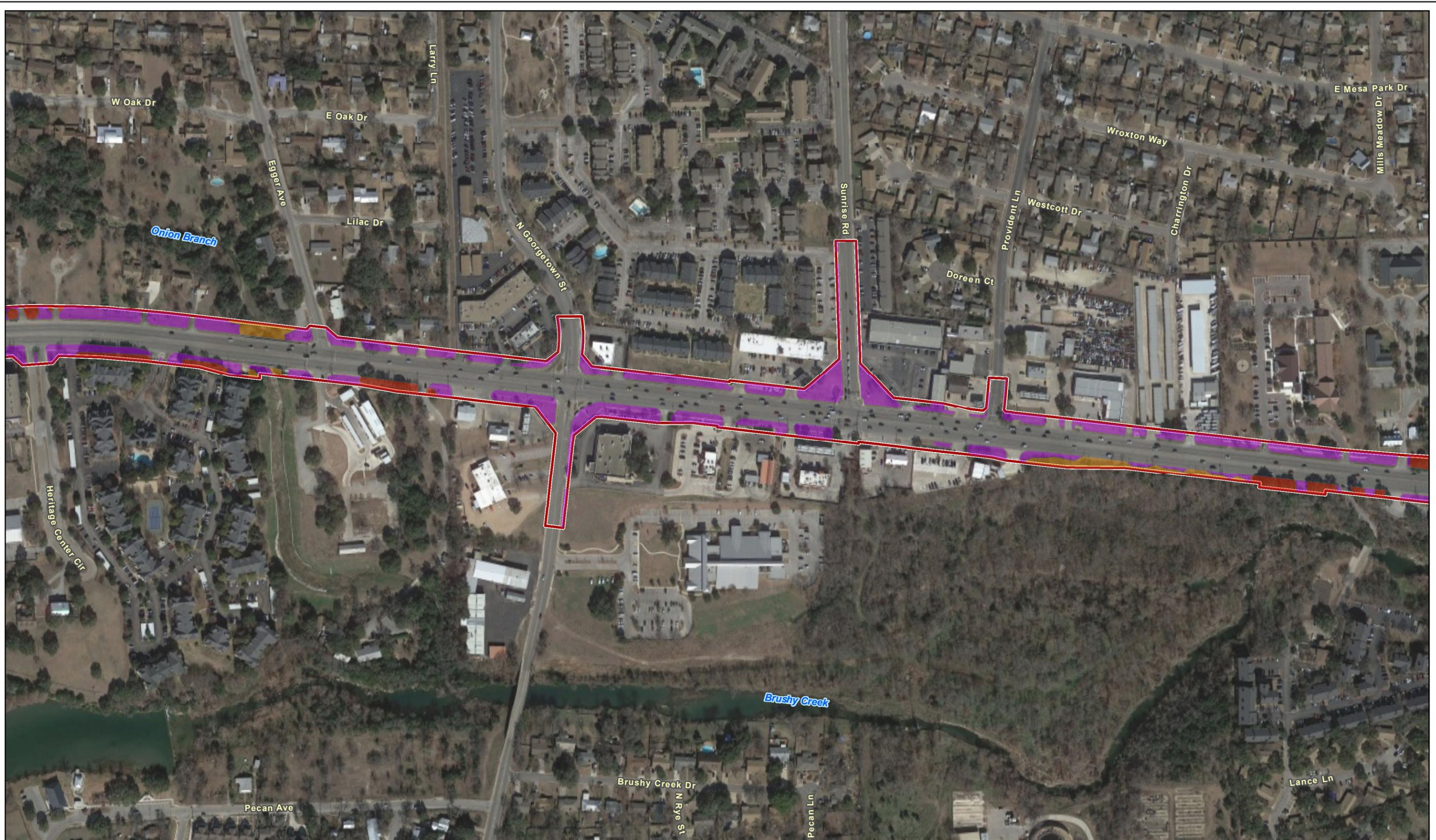
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 6\_Observed\_Vegetation\_20200207.mxd



Data Sources: CMEC (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)

	CSJ: 0204-01-063
	1 in = 300 feet Scale: 1:3,600 Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 6b**  
**Observed EMST Vegetation Types**

- Project Location
- Edwards Plateau: Live Oak Motte and Woodland
- Edwards Plateau: Floodplain Hardwood Forest
- Urban Low Intensity

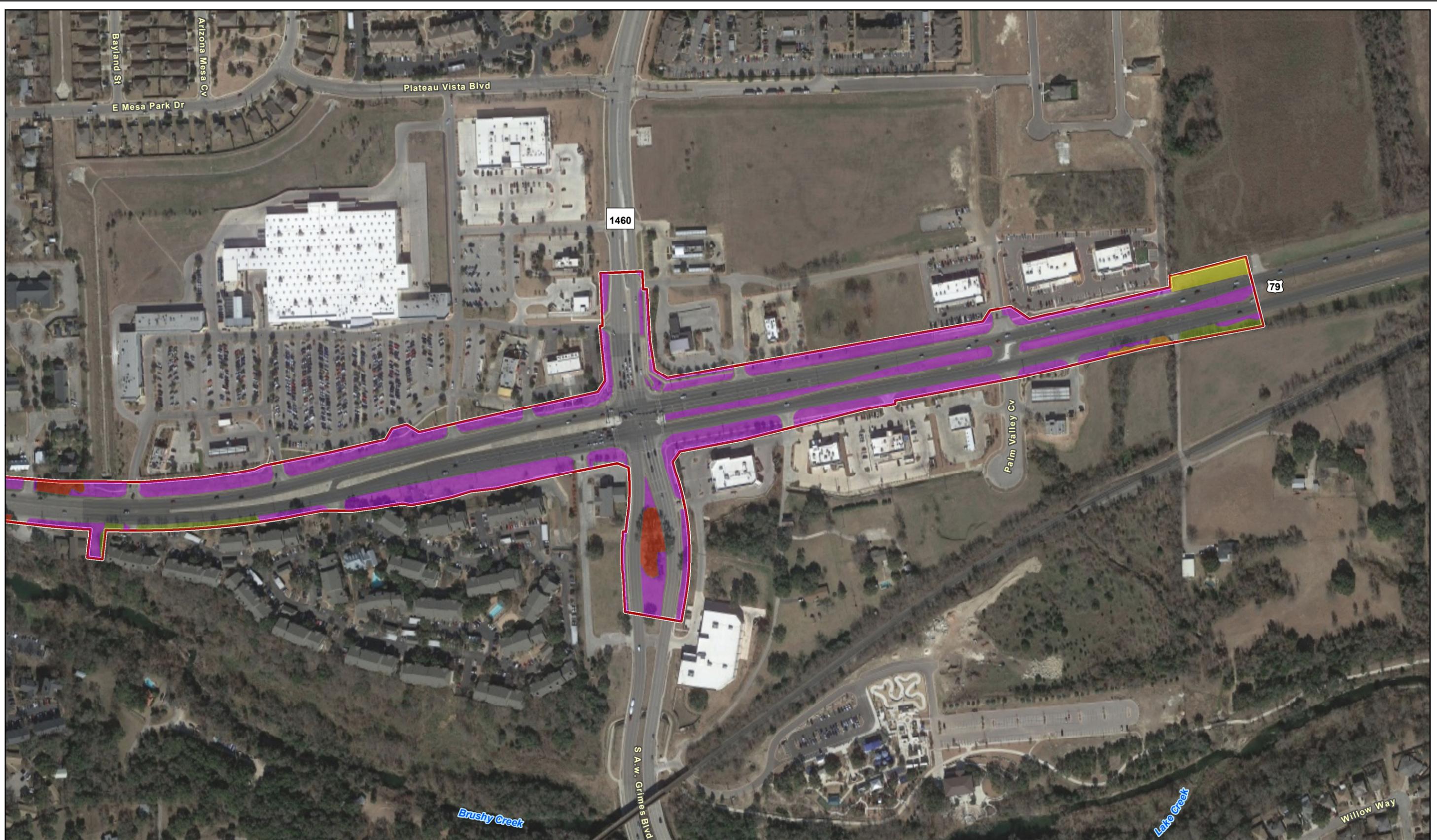
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 6\_Observed\_Vegetation\_20200207.mxd



Data Sources: CMEC (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)

	CSJ: 0204-01-063
	1 in = 300 feet Scale: 1:3,600 Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 6c**  
**Observed EMST Vegetation Types**

- Project Location
- Edwards Plateau: Floodplain Hardwood Forest
- Native Invasive: Deciduous Woodland
- Blackland Prairie: Disturbance or Tame Grassland
- Edwards Plateau: Live Oak Motte and Woodland
- Urban Low Intensity

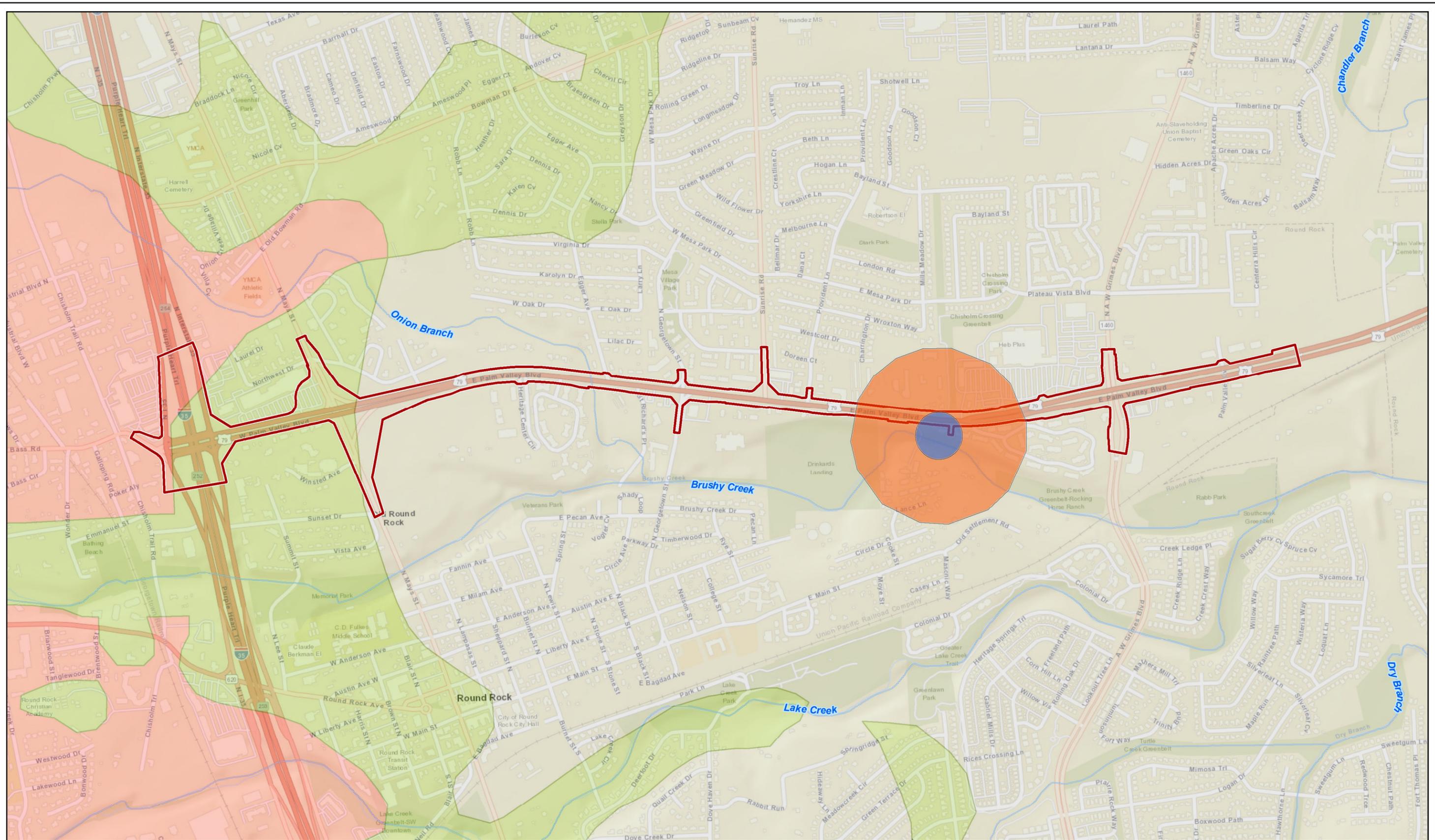
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 6\_Observed\_Vegetation\_20200207.mxd



Data Sources: CMEC (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)

	CSJ: 0204-01-063
	1 in = 300 feet Scale: 1:3,600 Date: 2/11/2020



**Figure 7.**  
**Critical Habitat Units and Karst Zones**

- Jollyville Plateau Salamander Surface Critical Habitat
- Jollyville Plateau Salamander Subsurface Critical Habitat
- Project Location
- Karst Zones
- Zone 3 - Low Probability E.C.S.
- Zone 4 - No E.C.S.

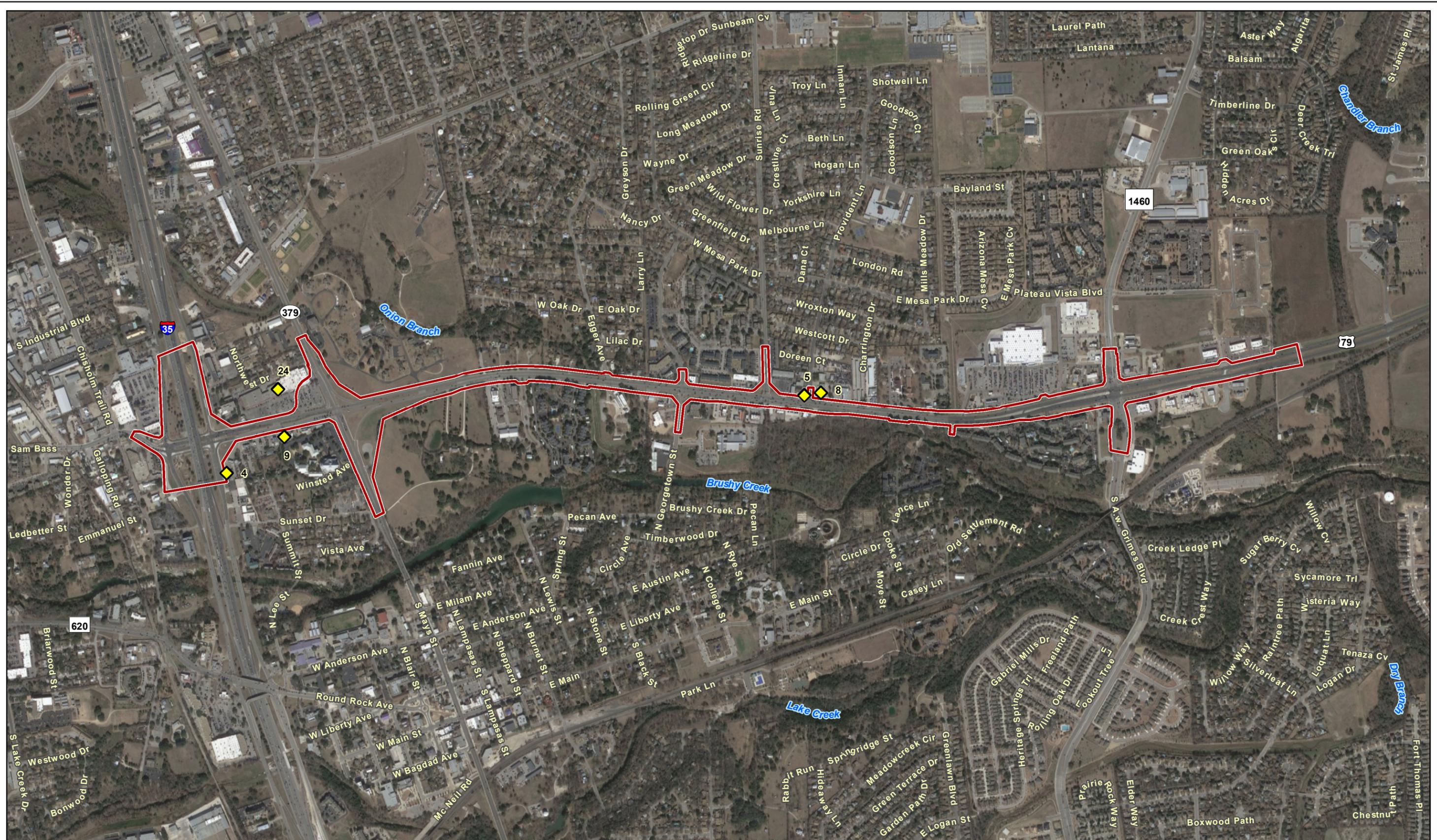
US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\Figure 7 Critical Habitat Karst Zones 20200203.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

			1 in = 1,000 feet Scale: 1:12,000 Date: 2/11/2020
--	--	--	---

Data Source: Veni (2007), USFWS (2013)  
 Basemap Source: Esri (2020)



**Figure 8**  
**Hazardous Materials Sites of Concern**

- ▭ Project Location
- ◆ Potential Hazardous Material Site

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 8 Hazmat 20200207.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 1,000 Feet 1 in = 1,000 feet

0 250 Meters Scale: 1:12,000

Date: 2/11/2020

Source: Bank (2019), TCEQ (2019)  
 Aerial Source: Google (2018)



US 79 FROM IH 35 TO EAST OF FM 1460  
CSJ: 0204-01-063

NOISE RECEIVER LOCATIONS  
WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

FIGURE 9

- Proposed Noise Barrier
- Proposed ROW
- Existing ROW/Property Boundaries

**Receiver**

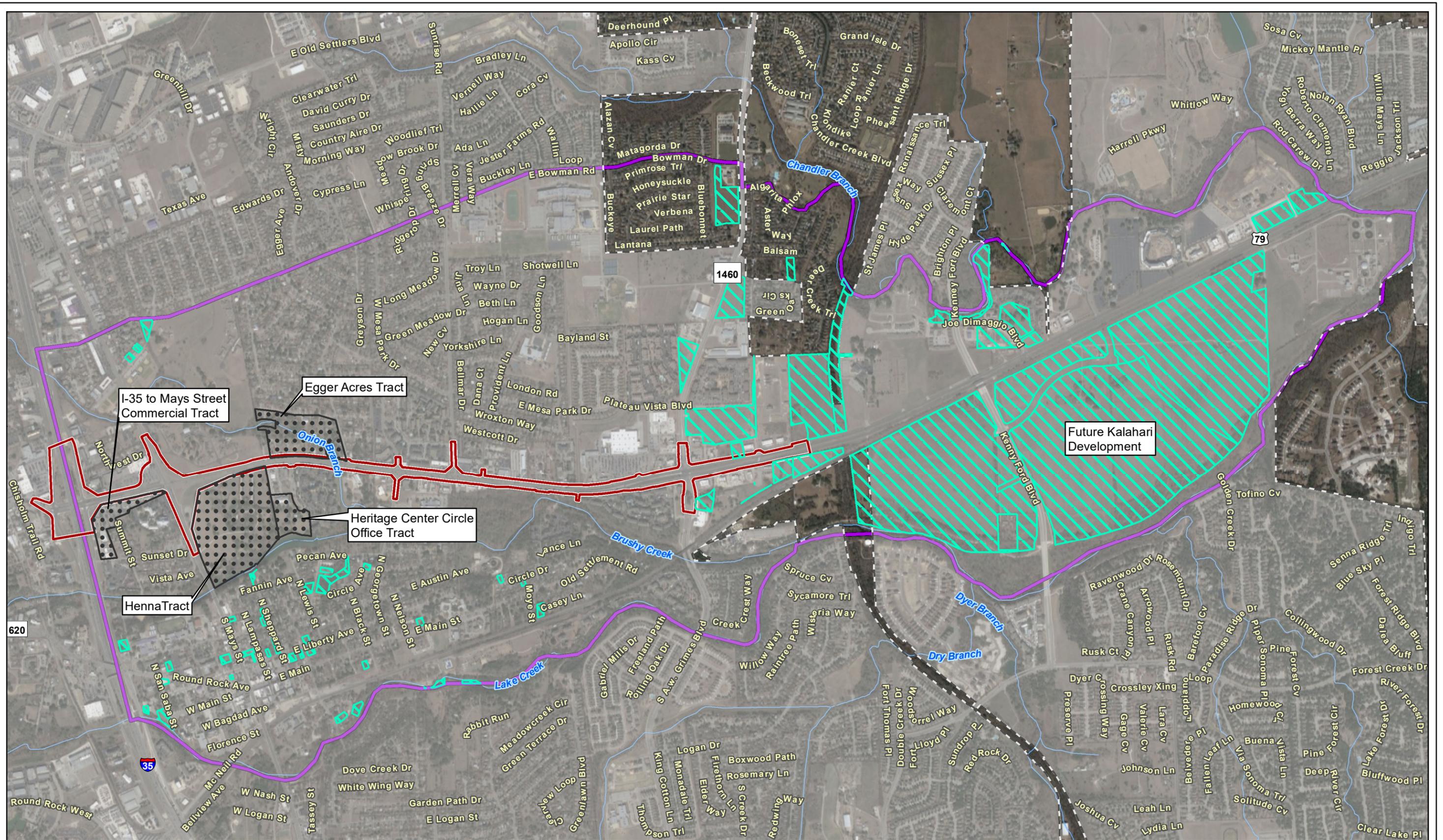
- Not Impacted
- Impacted and No Benefit
- Impacted and Benefited



1:11,000

Created By: KS  
Project Number: 42648  
Date: 11/21/2019  
NAD 1983 StatePlane Texas  
Central FIPS 4203 Feet





**Figure 10**  
**Area of Influence**

- ▬ Project Location
- City Boundary
- Potential Redevelopment
- Area of Influence
- Potential Development

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 9 Area of Influence\_20200203.mxd

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 1,500 Feet

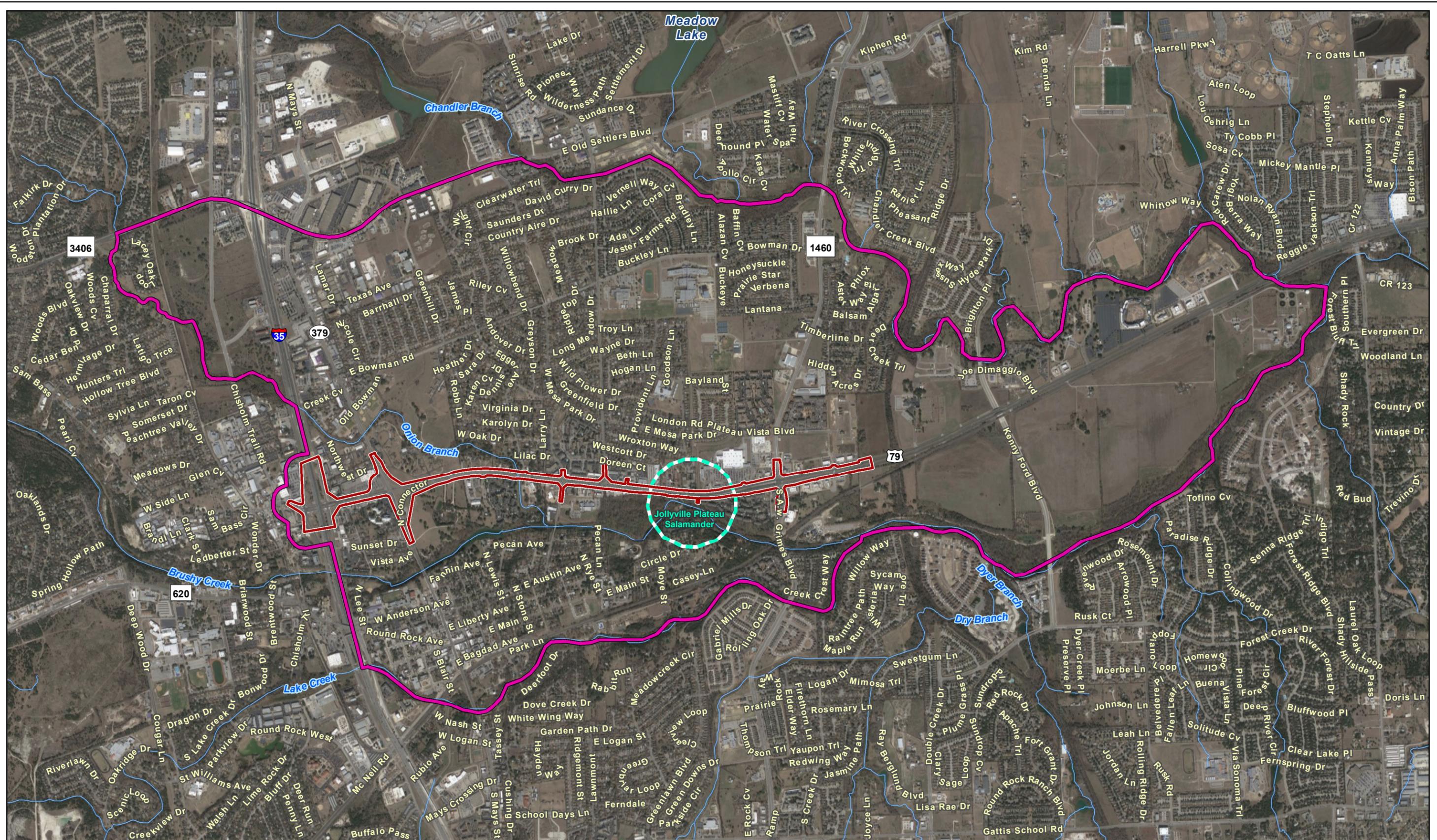
0 400 Meters

1 in = 1,500 feet

Scale: 1:18,000

Date: 2/11/2020

Data Sources: CMEC (2018), TxDOT (2018)  
Aerial Source: Google (2018)



**Figure 11. Resource Study Area for Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species**

- ▭ Project Location
- ▭ RSA
- ▭ USFWS Critical Habitat Unit

US 79 from I-35 to East of FM 1460

G:\Projects\TXDOT\US79\_I35\_FM1460\EA\_US79\_I35\_FM1460\_Figure 10\_RSA\_Federally\_TS\_20200203\_LG.mxd

Data Sources: CMEC (2020)  
 NHD (2019), TCEQ (2005),  
 USFWS (2017)

Aerial Source: Google (2018)

CSJ: 0204-01-063

0 2,000 Feet

0 500 Meters

1 in = 2,000 feet

Scale: 1:24,000

Date: 2/11/2020

**Appendix G— Resource Agency Coordination**

THC Coordination

TPWD Coordination

Tribal Coordination

USFWS Coordination



RECEIVED

AUG 23 2018

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August 23, 2018

Section 106/Antiquities Code of Texas: Coordination: Intensive Archeological Survey Draft  
Report: US 79 from Interstate Highway 35 to East of Farm to Market Road 1460: Widen  
Roadway: Williamson County: Austin District: CSJ: 0204-01-063  
Texas Antiquities Permit Number: 8459

Ms. Patricia A. Mercado-Allinger  
Division Director/State Archeologist  
Archeology Division  
Texas Historical Commission  
PO Box 12276  
Austin, TX 78711-2276

Dear Ms. Mercado-Allinger:

The proposed project will be undertaken with Federal funding. In accordance with Section 106 and the Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Texas State Historical Preservation Officer (TSHPO), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Antiquities Code of Texas and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and TxDOT, this letter initiates consultation for the proposed undertaking.

The TxDOT Austin District along with the City of Round Rock proposes to widen a section of US 79 in Williamson County. Proposed improvements include widening the existing US 79 roadway to add a third travel lane in each direction, installing a raised median, constructing overpasses at Mays Road and FM 1460, and improving the I-35 intersection. In addition the project proposes to modify driveways and access points to improve safety and traffic flow. Finally, the project would install shared-use paths on both sides of US 79 to improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. Approximately, 8.97 acres of proposed new right of way (ROW) would be required.

The APE is defined as the existing 150 to 300 foot wide US 79 ROW beginning at IH 35 and extending 2.54 miles east to 730 meters east of FM 1460. The APE also includes approximately 8.97 acres of proposed new ROW that is illustrated on the project map imbedded within the attached intensive archeological survey report. According to typical design the depth of impacts would be up to 50 feet for overpass supports and up to 10 feet for the rest of the project. The APE is comprised of approximately 84.22 acres.

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Your office issued Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8459 to Cox/McLain Environmental Consultants (CMEC) to conduct an intensive archeological survey of the APE. Fieldwork has recently been completed. The investigation consisted of 100% windshield survey of the APE and pedestrian survey of the undisturbed areas of existing ROW and areas of proposed new ROW where right of entry had been obtained. The areas of proposed new ROW where there was no right of entry were assessed from the existing ROW. The investigation included a total of three shovel tests and five backhoe trenches. No archeological sites were observed within the APE. CMEC has recommended that no further work is warranted for the undertaking. TxDOT agrees with their recommendations. A draft copy of the related report is attached for your review.

Based upon the results of the investigations, TxDOT seeks your concurrence with recommendations that the inventory of the APE is complete, for a finding of "no historic properties affected", no State Antiquities Landmarks affected, and no further work or consultation is required. TxDOT also seeks your concurrence that the attached report is adequate and the stipulations set forth in the Antiquities Code have been fulfilled. Please signify your concurrence by signing on the line provided below.

In the event that archeological materials are discovered during construction in the areas recommended for no further work, construction in the immediate area shall cease, and the your office will be contacted to initiate accidental discovery procedures in accordance of the terms of the PA and the MOU. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have any questions or further need of assistance, please contact Jon Budd of the TxDOT Archeological Studies Program at (512) 416-2640.

Sincerely,  
  
Jon Budd  
TxDOT staff archeologist

  
Concurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 8/23/18  
for Mark S. Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer

Attachment

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.



**DRAFT REPORT  
ACCEPTABLE**

by William A. Monte  
for Mark Wolfe  
Executive Director, THC  
Date 8/23/18  
Track# \_\_\_\_\_

# Archeological Survey Report

Intensive Archeological Survey for Proposed  
Improvements to US Highway 79 from Interstate  
Highway 35 to Farm-to-Market Road 1460  
Williamson County, Austin District

CSJ: 0204-01-063

Principal Investigator: David Sandrock, MA, RPA  
Cox | McLain Environmental Consulting, Inc.

August 2018

TAP# 8459

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.



# MEMO

December 19, 2019

**To:** ECOS, Various Road Projects, Various CSJs, Various Districts

**From:** Scott Pletka, Ph.D.

**Subject:** Internal review under the Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Implementation of Transportation Undertakings (PA-TU), and internal review under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas Department of Transportation

Listed below are projects reviewed internally by qualified TxDOT archeologists. The projects will have no effect on archeological historic properties. As provided under the PA-TU, consultation with the Texas State Historic Preservation Officer is not necessary for these undertakings. As provided under the MOU, the proposed projects do not require individual coordination with the Texas Historical Commission.

CSJ	District	County	Roadway	Description	Work Performed	Consultation	Initial Consult Date
0909-22-180	WAC	McLennan	CS 5452	Bridge replacement	Background Study	ETCT	3/2/2018
0155-02-029	CRP	Goliad	US 183	Minor road widening	Background Study	ETCT	1/6/2017
0508-01-357	HOU	Harris	IH 10	Trail/sidewalk	Background Study	ETCT	3/10/2017
0204-01-063	AUS	Williamson	US 79	Minor road widening	Background Study	Formal	
3278-01-003	AUS	Blanco	RM 473	Minor road widening	Background Study	ETCT	4/10/2017

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 For TxDOT  
 cc: THC

Date: 12 / 19 / 2019

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 9, 2019, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

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February 25, 2020

**SECTION 106 REVIEW: DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND NO ADVERSE EFFECT  
SECTION 4(f) REVIEW: NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO RENDER *DE MINIMIS* SECTION 4(F) FINDING**

Williamson County/Austin District  
US 79 Widening  
CSJ: 0204-01-063

Mr. Justin Kockritz  
History Programs  
Texas Historical Commission  
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Mr. Kockritz:

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated 12-9-19, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT. In accordance with 36 CFR 800 and our 2015 Section 106 Programmatic Agreement, this letter initiates Section 106 consultation on the effect the proposed undertaking poses for a historic property located within the project's area of potential effects (APE). As a consequence of these agreements, TxDOT's regulatory role for this project is that of the Federal action agency.

**Project Description**

See attached description from TxDOT's Environmental Coordination Oversight System (ECOS).

**Determination of Eligibility**

TxDOT historians conducted research to identify properties previously listed in or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), as State Antiquities Landmarks (SAL), and Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL). TxDOT identified the following previously known historic properties within the project's area of potential effects (APE):

- Captain Nelson Merrell House, listed in the NRHP
- In Memory of the Pioneer Builders Centennial Historical Marker, eligible for the NRHP

TxDOT historians determined the area of potential effects (APE) for this project is the 150 feet from the existing and proposed new road right-of-way (ROW). TxDOT conducted a historic resources reconnaissance survey of the entire APE. TxDOT also conducted an intensive survey of three properties within the APE: the Merrell House, the Henna House, and the Texas Baptist Children's Home. We recommend the following three historic-age (built prior to 1978) as eligible for listing in the NRHP:

1. In Memory of the Pioneer Builders Centennial Historical Marker: Erected in 1936 as part of the statewide Texas centennial marker program. This marker is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A for its association with the area of Social History.
2. Texas Baptist Children's Home (Resource 9): First opened in 1950, this children's home served children in the Round Rock and Austin area. It is significance under Criterion A for its

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social history in serving more than 10,000 children and families since its founding. It is also eligible under Criterion C for its design as a cottage plan model in child welfare management. There are 28 contributing resources and 22 non-contributing resources in the historic property boundary. Contributing resources also include open spaces and viewsheds as well as agricultural fields at the rear of the property that previously supported the Texas Baptist Children's Home. For more information on the history, development, boundaries, and contributing resources for the Children's Home, see the attached Historic Resources Survey Report (HRSR), especially pages 29-38.

3. Henna House (Resource 11): Prominent Round Rock citizen and businessman Louis Henna, Sr. constructed this house in 1951 for his family. This house and associated outbuildings and land are eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B for its association with Louis Henna, Sr. It is also eligible under Criterion C for its significance in architecture and design, as a cohesive post-World-War-II estate. There are 5 contributing resources and 7 non-contributing resources. The surrounding land and pasture are also character-defining features of the historic property. For more information on the history, development, boundaries, and contributing resources for the Henna House, see the attached HRSR, especially pages 38-46.

Subsequent development around the NRHP-listed Captain Nelson Merrell House (Resource 25) impacted the resources listed in the c. 1980 nomination. Recent subdivision of the property resulted in the demolition of a cistern house, an outbuilding, and a smokehouse. Currently there are modern office buildings on the location of these structures. The c. 1900 barn is currently used as office space, and changes to the barn prior to the HRSR and then subsequent to the survey as indicated on Google StreetView, have damaged the historic integrity of the barn as such that it is no longer contributing to the historic character of the Merrell House. TxDOT recommends that the NRHP boundary only encompass the main house and follow the parcel lines for this property. For more information, see pages 22-28 in the attached HRSR.

TxDOT finds the remaining 25 historic-age properties identified in the HRSR as not eligible for listing in the NRHP. The properties either do not retain any historic integrity or are not significant in events in history, people or design.

#### **Consultation with Interested Parties**

TxDOT conducted two public meetings regarding this project in 2017 and 2018. In addition, TxDOT identified the following interested parties:

- Williamson County Historical Commission (CHC)
- Round Rock Certified Local Government (CLG)
- Texas Baptist Children's Home officers and administrators
- Current owners of Merrell House
- Current owners of Henna House

TxDOT met individually with the officers of the TBCH and the owners of the Merrell House and Henna House to discuss the project and the potential effects of the project on these historic properties. The meetings with the property owners are summarized in Appendix H of the HRSR.

TxDOT reached out to the Round Rock CLG and the Williamson CHC with the findings of the HRSR and TxDOT's findings of effects. We received no response from the Williamson CHC. The City of Round Rock encouraged TxDOT to retain as many trees as possible in front of the Merrell House

property, and TxDOT intends to do so as further planning progresses. All correspondence with interested parties and from the public is available in the ECOS project file.

### Determination of Effects

TxDOT finds that the proposed project will cause **no adverse effect** to the historic properties in the APE. Below is a discussion of effects on each historic property.

Pioneer Builders Historical Marker: TxDOT does not plan to affect this historic property. The marker will remain in its location and will be accessible to the public after the end of construction.

Merrell House: TxDOT proposes to acquire approximately 0.11 acres of new right-of-way (ROW) from the Merrell House property. This acquisition will occur at the front of the property where US 79 currently exists. TxDOT will construct a new sidewalk along the front of the Merrell House. TxDOT, the Merrell House property owner, and the Round Rock CLG recognize that although the trees at the front of the property are not historic landscape features, they serve as an important screen between the historic house and US 79. TxDOT will place tree preservation measures in our project plans and specifications as well as in the general notes to the contractor. We will also highlight the need to preserve the trees in our pre-construction meeting with the contractor. These measures ensure that TxDOT will have no adverse effect to the Merrell House.

Texas Baptist Children's Home: TxDOT proposes to acquire approximately 0.55 acres of land from the 104-acre Texas Baptist Children's Property. Originally, TxDOT planned an interchange on the front lawn of the Children's Home between US 79 and the chapel, but redesigned the project to minimize any effects to this historic property. As part of this project, TxDOT may need to relocate some historic walls adjacent to US 79. If necessary, TxDOT will submit the relocation plan and scope of work to your office once developed as part of our design process. This measure will ensure that TxDOT will have no adverse effect to the Texas Baptist Children's Home.

Henna House: TxDOT proposes to acquire approximately 0.24 acres of land from the 44-acre Henna Property. The acquisition will occur at the front of the property where US 79 currently exists. Four contributing features to the historic property, the driveway entrance pillars, exist within the property TxDOT will acquire. Based on consultation with the property owners, TxDOT proposes to relocate these pillars outside of the new ROW. TxDOT will submit the relocation plan and scope of work to your office for your review and concurrence prior to relocating the pillars. The plans, specifications, and general notes will contain specific instructions to the contractor on the relocation of these pillars. This measure will ensure that TxDOT will have no adverse effect to the Henna House.

### Section 4(f) Findings

As part of this coordination, TxDOT determined that the proposed project meets the requirements for a Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact findings on three properties under 23 CFR 774. TxDOT based its determination on the fact that the uses for the Merrell House, Texas Baptist Children's Home, and Henna House are minimal and the project will have **no adverse effect** on the historic properties. TxDOT plans to acquire less than 1 acre of land from each property. Any character-defining features within the ROW acquisition will be moved further in to the properties. All work will be coordinated with the THC and the property owners before commencing. The function of the properties will not be impaired, nor will it cease. This *de minimis* finding does not require the traditional second step of including all possible planning to minimize harm because avoidance, minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures are included as part of this determination.

US 79 Widening Project  
Williamson County/AUS District

**Conclusion**

In accordance with 36 CFR 800 and our Programmatic Agreement, I hereby request your signed concurrence with TxDOT's findings of eligibility and of **no adverse effect**. We additionally notify you that SHPO is the designated official with jurisdiction over Section 4(f) resources protected under the provisions of 23 CFR 774 and that your comments on our Section 106 findings will be integrated into decision-making regarding prudent and feasible alternatives for purposes of Section 4(f) evaluations. Final determinations for the Section 4(f) process will be rendered by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and the afore-mentioned MOU dated 12-9-19.

We look forward to further consultation with your staff and hope to maintain a partnership that will foster effective and responsible solutions for improving transportation, safety and mobility in the state of Texas. Thank you for your cooperation in this federal review process. If you have any questions or comments concerning these evaluations, please call me at (512) 416-2570 or rebekah.dobrasko@txdot.gov.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:

*Rebekah Dobrasko*

Rebekah Dobrasko  
Historic Preservation Specialist  
Environmental Affairs Division

DS  
*BJ*

thru: Bruce Jensen, Cultural Resources Section Director,

SHPO concurs with your finding of No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties with the following conditions: *JJK*  
1) When available, TxDOT will submit a scope of work and plans for the relocation of the historic walls at the Texas Baptist Children's Home to the SHPO for review, and the plans meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; and,  
2) When available, TxDOT will submit a scope of work and plans for the relocation of the four historic driveway entrance pillars to the SHPO for review, and the plans meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

**CONCURRENCE WITH NRHP ELIGIBILITY AND  
NO ADVERSE EFFECT SECTION 106 DETERMINATION**

NAME: *AZA* DATE: *3/17/2020*  
for Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer

**NO COMMENTS ON DETERMINATION OF *DE MINIMIS* TO SECTION 4(F) REGULATIONS**

NAME: *AZA* DATE: *3/17/2020*  
for Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer

**From:** [Hilda Ortiz](#)  
**To:** [Claire Parra](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 19, 2020 11:30:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Claire,

TPWD early coordination is now closed. See my responses below.



Hilda Ortiz | Environmental Specialist  
Austin District  
7901 N IH 35, Austin, Texas 78753  
Phone: (512) 832-7387 | [Email: hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov)

---

**From:** Suzanne Walsh [mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2020 3:41 PM  
**To:** Hilda Ortiz <Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

Hi Hilda,

Thank you for the responses. I appreciate that the Vegetation BMPs will be added to the project. I am closing the project.

Thank you for submitting the following project for early coordination: US 79 from I-35 to FM 1460 (CSJ: 0204-01-063). TPWD appreciates TxDOT's commitment to implement the practices listed in the Tier I Site Assessment form submitted on November 20, 2019 and those listed in the emails below. Based on a review of the documentation, the avoidance and mitigation efforts described, and provided that project plans do not change, TPWD considers coordination to be complete. However, please note it is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with all federal, state, and local laws that protect plants, fish, and wildlife.

According to §2.204(g) of the 2013 TxDOT-TPWD MOU, TxDOT agreed to provide TXNDD reporting forms for observations of tracked SGCN (which includes federal- and state-listed species) occurrences within TxDOT project areas. Please keep this mind when completing project due diligence tasks. For TXNDD submission guidelines, please visit the following link:  
[http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife\\_diversity/txnndd/submit.phtml](http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/txnndd/submit.phtml)

Sincerely,

Suzanne Walsh  
Transportation Conservation Coordinator  
(512) 389-4579

---

**From:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2020 2:56 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Walsh <[Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ  
0204-01-063

**ALERT: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links in unknown or unexpected emails.**

Hello Suzanne,

See below the answers to your questions/concerns.

- Yes, the consultation will be for the Jollyville plateau salamander and the bone cave harvestman.
- The project limits include areas mapped as Karst Zones 1, 3, and 4 (see attached location map). In 2019, project geoscientists conducted a Geologic Assessment (GA) to assess the project area for sensitive karst features. The GA did not identify any features that provided suitable habitat for karst invertebrates. No features were identified within Karst Zones 1 or 3.

The majority of the proposed improvements would be constructed on previously disturbed areas within the existing transportation right-of-way. This is especially true for the work proposed within Karst Zone 1, which would require minimal excavation into virgin bedrock. Although the construction in Karst Zone 3 has the potential to impact undisturbed bedrock through the installation of bridge foundations and larger drill shafts, the likelihood of encountering occupied karst features is low due to the distance from all other known Bone Cave Harvestman locations, and existing level of disturbance across the project area.

If a potential karst void is encountered during excavation activities, work within 50 feet of the feature will cease until an evaluation is complete. The feature will be evaluated for potential karst invertebrate habitat by a Professional Geoscientist (PG) or karst biologist holding an appropriate 10(a)(1)(A) permit following current USFWS karst survey guidelines.

- A WPAP will be submitted to the TCEQ prior to construction, in accordance with the Edwards Rules. The WPAP will include the GA conducted for the project and specific plans for water quality treatment and BMPs.
- Vegetation BMPs will be implemented, in accordance with the current BMP PA

Could you please clarify if we can consider the coordination to be complete?

Thanks,



Hilda Ortiz | Environmental Specialist

Austin District

7901 N IH 35, Austin, Texas 78753

Phone: (512) 832-7387 | Email: [hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov)

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**From:** Suzanne Walsh [<mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 13, 2020 5:06 PM

**To:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

Hi Hilda,

Thank you for your patience as I finalized my review of the US 79 project.

I appreciate the additional information that you provided and that the district will be consulting with the FWS. Will the consultation be for both the Jollyville plateau salamander and bone cave harvestman? Has TxDOT completed karst surveys? If not, TPWD recommends that TxDOT perform karst feature surveys in accordance with USFWS karst survey protocols within the project limits, including any areas proposed for disturbance.

As the proposed project is located within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, a Water Pollution Abatement Plan (WPAP) may be required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The aquifer within the recharge zone is "unconfined" and has a water table that rises and falls in response to rainfall. Within the recharge zone, the aquifer is fed both from streams and direct infiltration through karst limestone openings. These openings may be visible at the surface or hidden beneath thin soil coverings. Because there is little opportunity to capture released pollutants and the hidden location and orientation of the subsurface conduits, the aquifer is even more vulnerable to pollution from activities on the recharge zone. TPWD recommends that TxDOT contact the TCEQ Edwards Aquifer Protection Program (EAPP) to determine if a WPAP would be required for this project. Additional information on WPAP requirements can be found on the TCEQ website or by contacting the TCEQ at [eapp@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:eapp@tceq.texas.gov).

TPWD recommends that the Vegetation BMPs from the 2017 BMP PA be implemented to minimize impacts from the proposed project.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Suzanne

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**From:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 7, 2020 2:59 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Walsh <[Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

Thanks-



Hilda Ortiz | Environmental Specialist  
Austin District  
7901 N IH 35, Austin, Texas 78753  
Phone: (512) 832-7387 | [Email: hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov)

---

**From:** Suzanne Walsh [<mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 7, 2020 2:58 PM  
**To:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Hilda,

I wanted to send a note that I should be able to finalize my review and send comments next week.

Thanks,  
Suzanne

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**From:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2020 3:19 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Walsh <[Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ

0204-01-063

Hello Suzanne,

The answers to your questions are below (in red).

Are you including a void discovery protocol for the project? **Yes, TxDOT will follow a void discovery and reporting protocol during construction. The void protocol will be submitted to USFWS for review as part of the Section 7 ESA consultation.**

Did the district survey for SGCN plants? **No, the district did not survey for SGCN. In April 2019, TPWD revised the Williamson County species list to include additional protected species. Environmental scoping for the proposed project was already complete at this time. Per the TxDOT and TPWD MOU, changes to TPWD county lists are not required to be considered in cases in which environmental scoping has already occurred prior to the revision of the lists. In addition, SGCNs are not afforded regulatory protection under state or federal law; therefore, potential impacts to recently added SGCN species are not evaluated in this analysis. The additional state-listed threatened or endangered species have been included.**

Could you send a project schematic? **I'll send you the schematics shortly through a TxDOT drop box link.**

Thanks,



Hilda Ortiz | Environmental Specialist

Austin District

7901 N IH 35, Austin, Texas 78753

Phone: (512) 832-7387 | Email: [hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov)

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**From:** Suzanne Walsh [<mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov>]

**Sent:** Thursday, December 19, 2019 4:49 PM

**To:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ  
0204-01-063

Hi Hilda,

I had a couple of questions about the project.

Are you including a void discovery protocol for the project?

Did the district survey for SGCN plants?  
Could you send a project schematic?

Thanks,  
Suzanne

Suzanne Walsh  
Transportation Conservation Coordinator  
(512) 389-4579

---

**From:** WHAB\_TxDOT <[WHAB\\_TxDOT@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:WHAB_TxDOT@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 22, 2019 12:00 PM  
**To:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Cc:** Suzanne Walsh <[Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Suzanne.Walsh@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

The TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program has received your request and has assigned it project ID # 42783. The Habitat Assessment Biologist who will complete your project review is copied on this email.

Thank you,

John Ney  
Administrative Assistant  
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department  
Wildlife Diversity Program - Habitat Assessment Program  
4200 Smith School Road  
Austin, TX 78744  
Office: (512) 389-4571

---

**From:** Hilda Ortiz <[Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:Hilda.Ortiz@txdot.gov)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 20, 2019 10:09 AM  
**To:** WHAB\_TxDOT <[WHAB\\_TxDOT@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:WHAB_TxDOT@tpwd.texas.gov)>  
**Subject:** Request for TPWD Early Coordination: US 79 at Round Rock, Williamson County\_CSJ 0204-01-063

Dear Ms. Wicker,

Consistent with the memorandum of understanding signed by our two agencies, attached is a copy of the coordination documents [as required by 43 TAC §2.207(b)] covering the subject project for your review and comment.

If you have any questions regarding this project please contact me.

Sincerely,

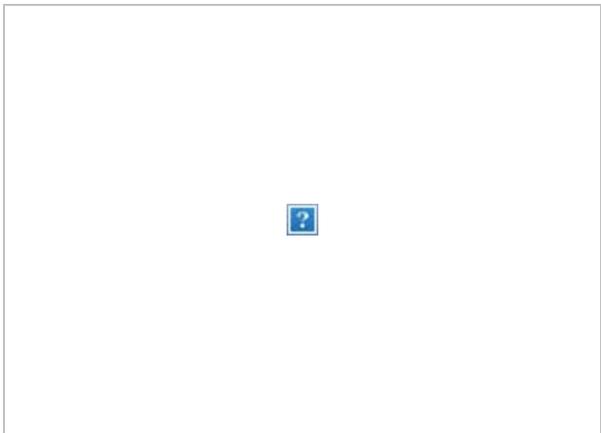
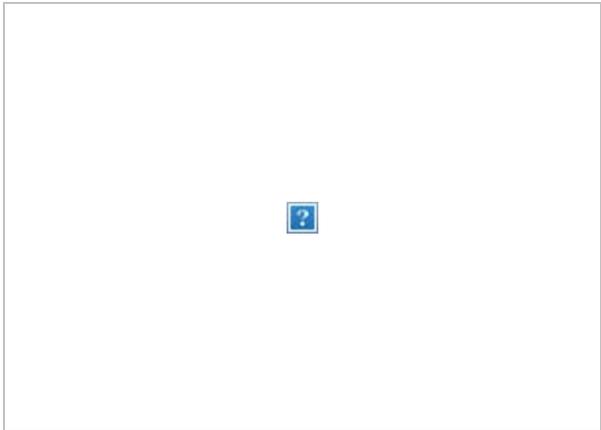


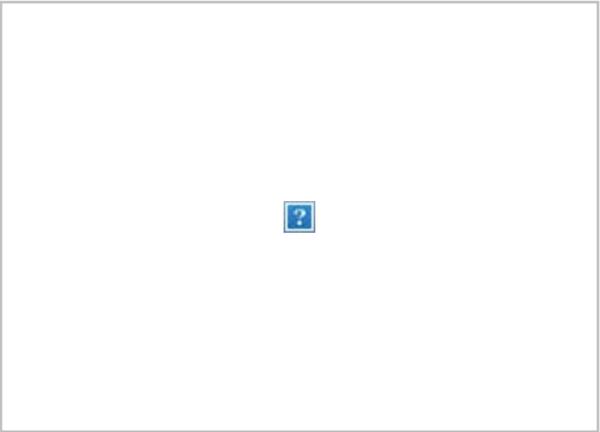
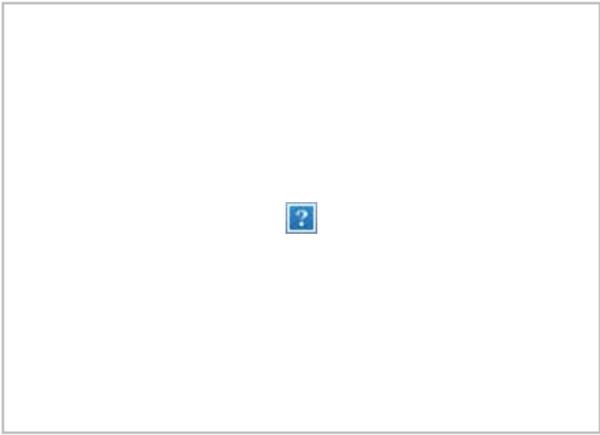
Hilda Ortiz | Environmental Specialist

Austin District

7901 N IH 35, Austin, Texas 78753

Phone: (512) 832-7387 | Email: [hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov](mailto:hilda.ortiz@txdot.gov)





**From:** [Laura Cruzada](#)  
**To:** [holly@mathpo.org](mailto:holly@mathpo.org); [gary.mcadams@wichitatribe.com](mailto:gary.mcadams@wichitatribe.com); [Terri.Parton@wichitatribe.com](mailto:Terri.Parton@wichitatribe.com); [dhill@caddo.xyz](mailto:dhill@caddo.xyz); [caddochair.cn@gmail.com](mailto:caddochair.cn@gmail.com); [chief@sno-nsn.gov](mailto:chief@sno-nsn.gov); [ethompson@delawarenation-nsn.gov](mailto:ethompson@delawarenation-nsn.gov); [lbrown@tonkawatribe.com](mailto:lbrown@tonkawatribe.com); [mallen@tonkawatribe.com](mailto:mallen@tonkawatribe.com); [epa4apachetribeok@gmail.com](mailto:epa4apachetribeok@gmail.com); [marlinac@comanchenation.com](mailto:marlinac@comanchenation.com); [theodorev@comanchenation.com](mailto:theodorev@comanchenation.com)  
**Cc:** [Jon Budd](#)  
**Subject:** TxDOT Sec. 106 Consultation Request - CSJ: 0204-01-063, US 79 roadway widening; Williamson County, Austin District  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 18, 2019 8:58:00 AM

Good morning,  
 Please find details below for a project with no properties and thus is recommended to proceed. Thank you for your consultation on this request.

<h1>Sec. 106 Consultation</h1>																					
<b>DECEMBER 18, 2019</b>																					
<p><b>Contacts:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Laura Cruzada</a> 512-416-2638</p>	<p>We kindly request your comments on historic properties of cultural or religious significance to your Tribe that may be affected by the proposed project. Please see the following summary for project details and information. To access the associated reports, which include a detailed project description, APE definition and identification efforts, use the attached link. After 21 days, the link will expire. We will provide an updated link upon request. This project will also be included during our monthly Sec. 106 conference call every third Wednesday of the month at 2 p.m.</p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>Project ID (CSJ), County and TxDOT District</i></td> <td>CSJ: 0204-01-063 Williamson County, Austin District</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Project Sponsor:</i></td> <td>TxDOT</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Consultation Status:</i></td> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Consultation  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation of Consultation            Reason(s): Minor design change         </td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Short Description:</i></td> <td>US 79 Roadway Widening</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>New Right of Way:</i></td> <td>10.32 acres.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Depth of Impacts:</i></td> <td>Typical roadway construction would occur within two feet of the ground surface; deeper impacts may occur at isolated locations where grade separation is proposed (depth to be determined)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Known Archeological Sites or Properties in project area:</i></td> <td>None</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Identification Efforts:</i></td> <td>Background Study</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Recommendations:</i></td> <td>No sites affected; proceed to construction</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Link to detailed report:</i></td> <td><a href="https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov">https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov</a></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Please provide any comments that you may have on the TxDOT findings and recommendations. Please provide your comments within 30 days of receipt of this letter. Any comments provided after that time will be addressed to the fullest extent possible.</b></p> <p>The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 16, 2014, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.</p>	<i>Project ID (CSJ), County and TxDOT District</i>	CSJ: 0204-01-063 Williamson County, Austin District	<i>Project Sponsor:</i>	TxDOT	<i>Consultation Status:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Consultation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation of Consultation Reason(s): Minor design change	<i>Short Description:</i>	US 79 Roadway Widening	<i>New Right of Way:</i>	10.32 acres.	<i>Depth of Impacts:</i>	Typical roadway construction would occur within two feet of the ground surface; deeper impacts may occur at isolated locations where grade separation is proposed (depth to be determined)	<i>Known Archeological Sites or Properties in project area:</i>	None	<i>Identification Efforts:</i>	Background Study	<i>Recommendations:</i>	No sites affected; proceed to construction	<i>Link to detailed report:</i>	<a href="https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov">https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov</a>
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<i>Project Sponsor:</i>	TxDOT																				
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<i>Link to detailed report:</i>	<a href="https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov">https://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/dropbox/pickup.php?claimID=xur68jjXDdYmV0Xw&amp;claimPasscode=z9wKiQ1hDyahD10U&amp;emailAddr=jon.budd%40txdot.gov</a>																				

Laura Cruzada  
 Public Involvement Specialist & Tribal Liaison  
 Environmental Affairs Division  
 125 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin TX 78701  
 512-416-2638

[laura.cruzada@txdot.gov](mailto:laura.cruzada@txdot.gov)

**From:** Laura Cruzada  
**To:** ["celestine.bryant@actribe.org"](mailto:celestine.bryant@actribe.org); ["ithompson@choctawnation.com"](mailto:ithompson@choctawnation.com); ["theodorev@comanchenation.com"](mailto:theodorev@comanchenation.com); ["jantpo@gmail.com"](mailto:jantpo@gmail.com); ["david.cook@kialegetribe.net"](mailto:david.cook@kialegetribe.net); ["kentcollier2000@yahoo.com"](mailto:kentcollier2000@yahoo.com); ["thpo@tttown.org"](mailto:thpo@tttown.org); ["Holly Houghten"](mailto:Holly.Houghten); ["section106@mcn-nsn.gov"](mailto:section106@mcn-nsn.gov); ["raebutler@mcn-nsn.gov"](mailto:raebutler@mcn-nsn.gov); ["clowe@mcn-nsn.gov"](mailto:clowe@mcn-nsn.gov); ["earlii@tunica.org"](mailto:earlii@tunica.org); ["lbrown@tonkawatribe.com"](mailto:lbrown@tonkawatribe.com); ["mallen@tonkawatribe.com"](mailto:mallen@tonkawatribe.com); ["jwaffle@tonkawatribe.com"](mailto:jwaffle@tonkawatribe.com); ["Gary.McAdams@wichitatribe.com"](mailto:Gary.McAdams@wichitatribe.com); ["Terri.Parton@wichitatribe.com"](mailto:Terri.Parton@wichitatribe.com); ["rquezada@ydsp-nsn.gov"](mailto:rquezada@ydsp-nsn.gov); ["Elizabeth Toombs"](mailto:Elizabeth.Toombs); ["Alina Shively"](mailto:Alina.Shively); ["emspain@mcn-nsn.gov"](mailto:emspain@mcn-nsn.gov); ["dpacheco@okkt.net"](mailto:dpacheco@okkt.net); ["ahunter@osagenation-nsn.gov"](mailto:ahunter@osagenation-nsn.gov); ["khenry@coushattatribela.org"](mailto:khenry@coushattatribela.org); ["hahteed@comanchenation.com"](mailto:hahteed@comanchenation.com); ["martinac@comanchenation.com"](mailto:martinac@comanchenation.com); ["dbatton@choctawnation.com"](mailto:dbatton@choctawnation.com); ["kyrau@astribe.com"](mailto:kyrau@astribe.com); ["margaretm@comanchenation.com"](mailto:margaretm@comanchenation.com); ["kpritchett@ukb-nsn.gov"](mailto:kpritchett@ukb-nsn.gov); ["cwhite@pci-nsn.gov"](mailto:cwhite@pci-nsn.gov); ["alec.tobine@actribe.org"](mailto:alec.tobine@actribe.org); ["chascoleman75@yahoo.com"](mailto:chascoleman75@yahoo.com); ["106NAGPRA@astribe.com"](mailto:106NAGPRA@astribe.com); ["sodonnell@osagenation-nsn.gov"](mailto:sodonnell@osagenation-nsn.gov); ["THPO@pci-nsn.gov"](mailto:THPO@pci-nsn.gov); ["jonasj@coushattatribela.org"](mailto:jonasj@coushattatribela.org); ["mooseanico@gmail.com"](mailto:mooseanico@gmail.com); ["llangleyc@coushatta.org"](mailto:llangleyc@coushatta.org); ["lhaikey@pci-nsn.gov"](mailto:lhaikey@pci-nsn.gov); ["lbilyeu@choctawnation.com"](mailto:lbilyeu@choctawnation.com); ["dkelly@delawarenation.com"](mailto:dkelly@delawarenation.com); ["halligood@delawarenation.com"](mailto:halligood@delawarenation.com); ["jdaukei@mathpo.org"](mailto:jdaukei@mathpo.org); ["dhill@caddo.xyz"](mailto:dhill@caddo.xyz); ["caddochair.cn@gmail.com"](mailto:caddochair.cn@gmail.com); ["jlowe@alabama-quassarte.org"](mailto:jlowe@alabama-quassarte.org); ["thunt@mcn-nsn.gov"](mailto:thunt@mcn-nsn.gov); ["dfrazier@astribe.com"](mailto:dfrazier@astribe.com); ["epa4apachetribeok@gmail.com"](mailto:epa4apachetribeok@gmail.com); ["ethompson@delawarenation-nsn.gov"](mailto:ethompson@delawarenation-nsn.gov); ["dbatton@choctawnation.com"](mailto:dbatton@choctawnation.com); ["rdfontenot@coushatta.org"](mailto:rdfontenot@coushatta.org); ["mcurrie@choctawnation.com"](mailto:mcurrie@choctawnation.com); ["kellie@tribaladminserves.org"](mailto:kellie@tribaladminserves.org); ["jroddgers@osagenation-nsn.gov"](mailto:jroddgers@osagenation-nsn.gov); ["cbutler@astribe.com"](mailto:cbutler@astribe.com)  
**Cc:** [Scott Pletka](#); [Spencer Ward](#); ["Maley, Barbara \(FHWA\)"](#)  
**Subject:** Notes from today's Sec. 106 Conf. Call TODAY with TxDOT  
**Date:** Friday, January 17, 2020 12:20:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Notes - Jan 2020 Monthly Sec. 106 Call .docx](#)  
[1-17-20 Weekly List.pdf](#)

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Thank you for your participation on today's call. See the notes below and attached. Also attached is the list of projects reviewed by archeologists per the programmatic agreement with Texas Historical Commission (SHPO), FHWA and ACHP. Have a great day!

## January 2020 Sec. 106 Monthly Call Agenda and List of Projects

### 1. Participants

- Laura Cruzada, TxDOT
- Maddie Currie, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Jackie Rogers, Osage Nation
- Devon Frazier, Absentee Shawnee Tribe
- Erin Paden, Delaware Nation
- Turner Hunt, Muscogee Creek Nation
- Scott Pletka, TxDOT
- Spencer Ward, TxDOT
- Barbara Maley, FHWA – Texas Division
- Bryant Celestine, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas

### 2. Program Updates

- a. Introduce Spencer Ward - Spencer will be assisting with tasks related to TxDOT's

tribal programs, while Laura will continue being lead on program and project consultation issues. He'll work on the two supplemental mitigation projects: law enforcement training and NEPA/NAGPRA training. Spencer is a Community Impacts Specialist for TxDOT ENV's Human Environment team. He has been with TxDOT for just over a year, and before had spent time throughout the Pacific Northwest. He received a degree in Environmental Policy from Western Washington University, and has since worked with environmental nonprofits from Bellingham, WA to Portland, OR. [Spencer.ward@txdot.gov](mailto:Spencer.ward@txdot.gov)

- b. Annual Consultation Meeting – will not occur with TMD. Sept. 1-3 in Houston, TX (travel days Aug. 30 and Sept. 4?) in conjunction with TxDOT Annual Environmental Conference. Will host NEPA/NAGPRA training (supplemental mitigation). Need to establish planning committee. Will need to start planning by early spring.
  - i. Anyone interested in serving on the committee?
    - 1. Turner will see if Emman will want to be involved in the NAGPRA training planning committee.
  - ii. Any consultation topics or programs you'd like to see make it on the agenda for that meeting? - no responses.
  - iii. Is this time of year generally good? – Early September is good for Jackie; getting geared up for new fiscal year.
- c. Areas of Interest and Contact Information for ETCT – friendly reminder to send updated counties of interest in Texas.
- d. Tribal Histories Project Update – January for public outreach document; white papers are next, due by August.
- e. NAGPRA update – letters drafted and will send to lead tribes then all tribes.

### 3. Mitigation

- a. Supplemental
  - i. Paleoindian Museum Exhibit project needs tribal reps (Starr Co.)
  - ii. Law Enforcement Training kicking off
    - 1. Turner Hunt – Muscogee Creek Nation
    - 2. Bryant Celestine – Alabama Coushatta Tribe
  - iii. NAGPRA/NEPA Training – Sept. 2020
    - 1. Bryant Celestine – Alabama Coushatta Tribe: want tribal reps to be moderators and presenters on the panel. Training needed, tribal voices needed for audience to understand tribes during 106, priorities and cultural limitations. ACHP agreed to be on board with this training and not force anyone to pay any fees. Willing to make it less

expensive to attend; however if no tribes participate they will have to re-allocate funds. Can look into cultural presentation during conference.

2. Turner Hunt – Muscogee Creek Nation: always willing to be on panel or provide perspectives; 106 experience stories.
3. Barbara Maley – FHWA: Laura confirmed that additional funding might still be needed to off set meals, speaker travel, or other programming. Barbara will continue pursue funding and wait for budget specifics.

a. Data Recovery:

- i. Anderson County - CSJ 0198-03-026, US 176 Widen road to four lane divided highway;– 3 sites, 2 of which have Caddo components. Per discussions with tribes, TxDOT is working to honor using non-destructive methods for cemetery investigations as a starting point. So, cadaver dogs are scheduled to be on site at the end of Jan; the site has a mound site so chances of burials are higher. We are working directly with Caddo nation on consultation. Archeological fieldwork should start in early February (first or second week). Geophysical work will happen first, then shovel test sampling, and finally excavation units.
- ii. Borderland Expressway (Formerly Northeast Parkway) in El Paso County – Site testing in progress, additional fieldwork pending (41EP5740, processing dig permit for mechanical excavation on Fort Bliss). Two other sites recommended for data recovery. Working with Yselta del Sur Pueblo and other consulting parties – high interest in the project due to room blocks and pit house features discovered during testing.
- iii. Starr County – excavations on 2 sites to begin likely mid-Feb to mid-March.

#### 4. Field Work Updates

- a. CSJ: 2222-20-021, Recreational Trail Construction - Lago Vista; Travis County, Austin District – 1 site; survey to be scheduled. (1-6-20)
- b. CSJ: 2222-20-019, Trinity Trail Culvert Remediation, Collin County, Dallas District – no sitse; survey to be scheduled. (12-19-19)
- c. CSJ: 2222-20-020, Trophy Club Park road improvements, Denton County, Dallas District – no sites; survey to be scheduled. (12-19-19)
- d. CSJ: 2222-20-018, Escondido Draw Recreational Trail improvements, San Angelo District, Crockett County – 42 sites including 41 prehistoric lithic scatters and 1 historic scatter; survey to be scheduled. (11-19-19)
- e. CSJ: 2222-20-017, Rio Bravo Adventure Park trail improvements; Harris County, Houston District – no sites; survey to be scheduled. (11-19-19)
- f. CSJ: 2222-20-008, Twin Lakes Moto Recreation Trail construction; Fort Worth District, Jack County – no sites; survey to be scheduled. (10-25-19)

- g. CSJ: 0492-04-034, FM 756 widening, Smith County, Tyler District – no sites in APE, however landowner says prehistoric cemetery is in APE; survey to be scheduled. **Cadaver dogs scheduled for end of Jan/early Feb.** (10-25-19).
- h. CSJ: 0339-04-036, SH 105 Widening, Beaumont District, Hardin County – no sites in APE, survey to be scheduled. (10-25-19)
- i. Denton Co, FM 455 – testing on 3 historic age sites. **Testing fieldwork complete, and report is under review. At least one site (41DN617), and possibly two (41DN593) will proceed to data recovery.**
- j. CSJ: 0424-01-054; SH 31, Roadway Widening; Gregg and Smith Counties, Tyler District - 3 previously recorded sites in the existing ROW. TxDOT recommends no further work required for evaluated areas; TxDOT shall complete review for unevaluated areas once access is obtained. (10-9-19)
- k. CSJ 0165-02-061; US 271 Highway Widening; Smith and Gregg Counties, Tyler District - No additional work warranted on identified sites; no further work required for evaluated areas; TxDOT shall complete review for unevaluated areas once access is obtained. (10-4-19)
- l. CSJ: 2222-20-006, Construct Hike and Bike Trail in Austin, Travis County, Austin District – 2 sites with lithic scatters; **awaiting results of survey.** (10-4-19)
- m. CSJ: 2222-20-009, Construct Hike and Bike Trail in Kyle, TX. Austin District, Hays County – no sites; **awaiting results of survey.** (10-4-19)
- n. CSJ: 2222-20-002, Rec Trails construction, Avery, Red River County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-9-19)
- o. CSJ: 2222-20-016, Construct Trail from Annona to Avery, Red River County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-6-19)
- p. CSJ: 2222-20-013, Clarksville – to Highway 82, Construct Trail, Red River County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-6-19)
- q. CSJ: 2222-20-004, Construct Trail in Clarksville for Northeast Texas Trail, Red River County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-6-19)
- r. CSJ: 2222-20-003, Northeast Texas Trail, Wolfe City, Hunt County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-6-19)
- s. CSJ: 2222-20-001, Construct Northeast Texas Trail, Red River County, Paris District – no sites; survey to be scheduled (9-6-19)
- t. CSJ: 1951-01-011, FM 1515, Roadway Widening; Denton County, Dallas District; no sites; survey **Survey scheduled for early January.** (8-30-19)
- u. CSJ: 0015-09-187, IH-35 Intersection Improvements, South Bound Auxiliary Lanes, and Reverse South Bound Ramps, Williamson County, Austin District (8-26-19)
- v. CSJ: 2222-19-003, White Lake Loop Trail - construct trail, boardwalk - Fort Bend County, Houston District – sites in APE previously surveyed; will be resurveyed.

- w. CSJ: 2222-20-007, Winters Bayou Bird Sanctuary trail, boardwalk and trail bridge construction - San Jacinto County, Lufkin District – no sites identified in background study; survey to be scheduled.
- x. CSJ: 0214-03-035, SH 63 - Construct new bridge over Sabine River into Vernon Parish, Louisiana on new alignment., Newton County, Beaumont District - no sites identified in background study; survey to be scheduled.
- y. (8-9-19)
- z. CSJ 2158-01-019 and 2158-01-020, FM 2275 Road Widening; Gregg County, Tyler District; further evaluation on 41GG55 prehistoric site.
- a. CSJ 1502-03-006, Loop 88 Project: New Roadway; Lubbock County, LBB District – no sites but survey to be scheduled.
- b. CSJ 1502-02-002, Loop 88 Project: New Roadway; Lubbock County, LBB District – no sites but survey to be scheduled.
- c. CSJ 0255-05-044, US 281 Highway Widening; Brooks and Hidalgo, PHR District – survey to be scheduled; two sites in APE.

**5. Survey/No Properties/Proceed to Construction**

- a. CSJ: 0495-07-074, improvements to IH 20 and SH 31; Tyler District, Gregg County - Site 41GG134 was identified in survey. The site is the remains of a historic agricultural outbuilding. It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP or SAL and no further work is recommended for the project. (1-10-20)

**6. Desktop Reviews/No Properties/Proceed to Construction**

- a. CSJ: 0921-06-313 Veterans Bridge Expansion of Primary Lanes; Cameron County, Pharr District – One archeological sites are recorded in the APE: 41CF156 described as surface historic artifact scatter impacted by historic land-use, prior roadway construction. (1-10-20)
- b. CSJ: 0204-01-063, US 79 roadway widening; Williamson County, Austin District (12-18-19)

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**From:** Laura Cruzada

**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2020 1:35 PM

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**Cc:** Scott Pletka <Scott.Pletka@txdot.gov>; Spencer Ward <Spencer.Ward@txdot.gov>; Maley, Barbara (FHWA) <Barbara.Maley@dot.gov>

**Subject:** Agenda and list of Projects for 2 p.m. Sec. 106 Conf. Call TODAY with TxDOT

Good afternoon,

This is a reminder about today's 2 p.m. call and a proposed agenda and list of projects. If you have any topics you would like to add, please let me know. Thank you!

[Join Webex meeting](#)

**Meeting number (access code): 730 325 732**

**Meeting password: Enviro2019@**

Join by phone

[+1-415-655-0003](#) United States TOLL

**January Sec. 106 Monthly Call  
Agenda and List of Projects**

**1. Program Updates**

- a. Introduce Spencer Ward
- b. Annual Consultation Meeting
- c. Areas of Interest and Contact Information for ETCT
- d. Tribal Histories Project Update – January for public outreach document; white papers are next, due by August.
- e. NAGPRA update – letters drafted and will send to lead tribes then all tribes.

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  - ii. Law Enforcement Training kicking off
  - iii. NAGPRA/NEPA training – Sept. 2020
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Laura Cruzada  
Public Involvement Specialist & Tribal Liaison  
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**From:** [Jon Budd](#)  
**To:** [Hilda Ortiz](#)  
**Subject:** AUS: Williamson: US 79: 0204-01-063  
**Date:** Friday, January 17, 2020 1:14:26 PM

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Hi Hilda-

All Section 106 and ACT consultation, including tribal has been completed for the above referenced project. In regard to archeology, the project may now advance to construction. ECOS has been updated to reflect such. Please let me know if there are any issues, questions, or comments.

Thanks,

Jon Budd

**From:** [Wilson, Jenny](#)  
**To:** [Meghan P. Lind](#)  
**Cc:** [Kucera, Charlotte](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: US 79 project  
**Date:** Thursday, October 11, 2018 8:47:13 AM

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Meghan,

We are not aware of any features within your project area. It looks like you do have some karst zone 1 at the western edge of the project area and a bit of zone 3 as well. The closest caves with listed species (*Texella reyesi*) that we are aware of are at least 1.5 miles to the NW and to the SW of the western edge of the project area. I'm assuming you have the karst zones in your GIS? If not, you can download them at [https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/Maps\\_Data.html](https://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/AustinTexas/Maps_Data.html). There are also online mappers there.

I don't work on salamanders so I can't help with those.

Jenny

On Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 9:21 PM Meghan P. Lind <[meghanp@coxmcclain.com](mailto:meghanp@coxmcclain.com)> wrote:

Hi Jenny,

Attached is our project description for the project and a couple of figures. I believe TxDOT will be pursuing formal consultation on the karst inverts and the salamander (due to the CHU. I am just looking for any known occurrences within close proximity to the project that I can include in our consultation document. Feel free to give me a call on my cell phone if you have any questions. Thanks!

-Meghan

Meghan Pawlowski Lind

Ecologist/Project Manager

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**From:** Wilson, Jenny <[jenny\\_wilson@fws.gov](mailto:jenny_wilson@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 09, 2018 12:22 PM  
**To:** Meghan P. Lind <[meghanp@coxmcclain.com](mailto:meghanp@coxmcclain.com)>  
**Subject:** US 79 project

Meghan,

I'm so sorry I missed your voice message last week. I tried your office this morning but was told you are out in the field till Friday. I thought I would touch base by email since it is a much better way to get a hold of me. Your voicemail indicated you were wanting karst information for a US 79 project you were working on. If you would get me a general idea of the location of the project, I can let you know if we are aware of anything in the vicinity. If you need to speak with me, let me know when you might be available and a good number and I'll give you a call.

Jenny

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Jenny Wilson

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This report was written on behalf of the Texas Department of Transportation by



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