

Downtown 10: Historic Resources Survey

Project Overview

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is analyzing the environmental impacts related to the proposed improvements to Interstate Highway (I) 10 from Executive Center Boulevard to State Loop 478 (Copia Street). The environmental process for this undertaking began in 2017 as the Reimagine I-10 Corridor Study (Study). TxDOT identified the Downtown 10 project as the first breakout project from that Study. As part of the evaluation of environmental impacts on the Downtown 10 project, TxDOT completed a historic resources survey. The purpose of the survey is intended to:

1. Identify areas where the proposed project has the potential to impact buildings, structures, landscapes, or neighborhoods (see map below).
2. Identify any potential historic properties within those areas that could be impacted by the proposed project. Historic properties are generally those that are at least 50 years old and that meet the National Park Service's requirements for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) due to their historic significance and historic appearance.
3. Assess adverse direct effects, such as demolition and acquisition of land, posed to historic properties. TxDOT will evaluate potential adverse indirect effects, such as noise and visual impacts based on our technical analyses of these effects.

Historic Resource Survey Results

Along the I-10 corridor, TxDOT surveyed 464 properties containing 601 resources built in or before 1981. Of those resources:

- 24 resources are individually eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- 128 resources are contributing to historic districts eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

A review of all project alternatives indicated that some historic-age buildings and historic districts may be impacted by one or more project alternatives.

The Section 106 Process

Before TxDOT starts construction projects, historians look at how those projects affect important historic places.

- **Step 1:** TxDOT will notify you when it starts a project that might have impacts to historic resources.
- **Step 2:** TxDOT looks for places that are at least 45 years old.
- **Step 3:** TxDOT works with consulting parties to determine if there are sites or structures that tell an important story about a community's history.
- **Step 4:** TxDOT uses this information to determine how to balance preservation and progress.

Public participation is the cornerstone of effective government, and we know that Texans value the places that reflect a community's history.

Survey Area

The proposed Downtown 10 project National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process began in 2020 as an Environmental Assessment (EA), which studied eight Conceptual Build Alternatives and the No Build Alternative. In 2022, during project development, TxDOT determined that the project would be classified as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The survey focuses on alternatives considered during the development of the Preliminary Draft EA as well as the Draft EIS. Four Viable Alternatives (D, G, H, and I) are currently under study during the Draft EIS phase of the project. As a result, the **Area of Potential Effect (APE)** is 150 feet from the Historic Analysis Area, which overlays the footprint of existing and proposed right-of-way (ROW) and easements for all Viable Alternatives (Alternatives D, G, H, and I).

Impacts to Historic Resources

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, federal agencies must consider the effects of their projects on historic properties. In this case, the historic resources survey identified several historic properties that may be impacted as a result of one or more alternatives of this project.

TxDOT wants to hear from you regarding the results of the historic resources survey. Please join us for an in-person meeting on September 26th, 2024, in the West Star room of the El Paso Convention Center from 5 to 7 p.m. Mountain Time. You may also send your comments and thoughts to Downtown10@txdot.gov. Comments will be accepted until October 18, 2024.

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