

The City of Bastrop Convention Center and City Hall Project Cultural Resources Summary



by
Jon J. Dowling

DRAFT

Prepared for:
City of Bastrop
Office of the City Manager
904 Main Street, P.O. Box 427
Bastrop, TX 78602



Prepared by:
Center for Archaeological Research
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Technical Report, No. 11

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Under contract with the City of Bastrop, Office of the City Manager, the Center for Archaeological Research (CAR) at The University of Texas at San Antonio conducted a cultural resources inventory of properties associated with the proposed Bastrop Convention Center and City Hall project area (Figure 1-1). A compilation of data pertaining to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and archaeological sites in, and immediately around, the Area of Potential Effect (APE) has been carried out to provide a comprehensive review of cultural resources. Information from this desk-top review may be used to obtain a Texas Historical Commission (THC) pedestrian survey permit, as is the recommendation of CAR, based on the findings of this report.

The historic and prehistoric cultural resources summarized in detail all fall within one kilometer of the APE (Figure 1-2 and 4-10), consisting of Blocks 52, 53 and 69 and 70 east of Water Street in downtown Bastrop (Figure 1-3). A brief overview of Central Texas and Bastrop County will serve as a point of departure into more detailed discussions of specific historic resources within the vicinity of the project area. Data from THC's Archaeological Site Atlas, historic documents and maps, archaeological reports, and various archives were examined. The photo-documentation of historic resources within, and immediately around the APE, also occurred to provide an up-to-date assessment of what cultural resources are present and no longer present within the vicinity of the APE (Figure 1-2).

The Project Area

The proposed Bastrop Convention Center and City Hall project is located in an urban setting within the central business district of Bastrop, Texas (Figure 1-3). It covers approximately four city blocks that are staggered between Farm Street in the north and Pine Street in the south. Fayette Street and the railroad serve as the western boundary for Blocks 52 and 53, with Marion Street as the western boundary for building Block 70. A small rectangular enclave within building Block 70 in the northwest corner, measuring roughly 40 by 60 feet, has been excluded from the project area. The east boundary of the APE is Chambers Street, that runs into where Piney Creek meets Gills Branch, east of Blocks 69 and 70. The east boundary of Block 53 is Martin Luther King Drive. The north boundary of the project area is Farm Road, north of Block 70, and also Spring Street, north of Block 52. The south boundary of the APE is Pine Street, south of Block 53, and also Chestnut Street, south of Block 69.

This locality is part of the downtown Historic District of Bastrop (THC 2007), and sits on a terrace above the Colorado River that flows roughly five miles away. Piney Creek and Gills Branch receive most of the rainfall runoff. The Historic District rests above the 100-year floodplain. Piney Creek is in good hydrologic condition and is fairly stable. It currently contains some construction debris, but its banks are well vegetated and it is relatively obstacle free, facilitating sediment transport in the channel. Elevation is roughly 366 ft amsl. Blocks 52, 53, 69 and 70 are covered primarily in Elm, Hackberry, Chinaberry, Sycamore, Magnolia, and Pecan trees, as well as native grasses.

The surface geology of the project area is composed of Eocene-aged Claiborne Group Limestones (Renfro 1979). This area falls within the Oak-Hickory to Pine Forrest vegetative region of the Central Texas and geographical region (Biesart et al. 1985). Soils within the project area consist of light reddish-brown to brown sands, overlying clay loams (Godfrey et al. 1973). They are mapped as Smithville Fine Sandy Loam and Sayers Fine Sandy Loam (Baker 1979).

Chapter 2: Overview of Central Texas from Prehistory to European Contact

This culture history section will primarily reference Central Texas prehistoric regional patterns. The term “prehistoric” pertains to temporal sequences that span over 10,000 years falling prior to A.D. 1550, for which no written historic records exist. Once the prehistoric culture chronology for this region of Texas has been reviewed, a brief summary of the historic period will be provided before honing in specifically on the history of Bastrop County.

Paleoindian

The arrival of humans in the New World occurred during the Paleoindian period which dates from 11,500-8800 BP (Collins 1995). As the Pleistocene ended, diagnostic Paleoindian materials in the form of Clovis, Folsom, and Plainview projectile points began to enter the archaeological record. These points were lanceolate-shaped and fluted for hafting to wooden spears. Using the launching momentum from atlatls (spearthrowers), large game such as mammoth, mastodons, bison, camel, and horse were frequently taken (Black 1989). Stylistic changes in projectile point technology occurred during this later portion of the period, eventually shifting to Dalton, Scottsbluff, and Golondrina traditions. While widespread in geographic range, these types occurred in high densities in the High Plains and Central Texas (Meltzer and Bever 1995). As megafauna gradually died off and as the climate warmed, subsistence patterns shifted toward smaller game and plant foraging.

Archaic

The Archaic period, broadly divided into the Early, Middle, and Late Archaic sub-periods, signifies a more intensive reliance on local floral and faunal resources with an increase in the number of projectile point styles (Collins 1995). The archaeological record begins to indicate more widespread use of burned rock middens, a wider variety of site functions, and more localized geographic distributions of these materials.

Early Archaic

Hester places the Early Archaic between 7950 and 4450 BP based on the occurrence of Early Corner Notched and Early Basal Notched projectile points (1995:436-438). Collins’ dating of the Early Archaic sub-period to 8800 to 6000 BP is centered on the occurrence of unstemmed point types that were previously considered Paleoindian in age (1995:383). Around 8000 BP projectile point hafting styles transitioned to stemmed varieties such as the Martindale and Uvalde (Black

1989). As the extinction of megafauna herds took hold, a subsistence shift towards heavier reliance on deer, fish, and plants became necessary. In the archaeological record, this trend equates to greater densities of ground stone artifacts, fire-cracked rock midden features, and task specific tools. A number of Early Archaic open air-campsites have been investigated along the eastern and southern margins of the Edwards Plateau in areas with reliable water sources (McKinney 1981). Population densities were relatively low and consisted of small bands with a fairly high degree of mobility (Story 1985:39). Loeve-Fox, Jetta Court and Sleeper sites are representative of Early Archaic sites (Collins 1995).

Middle Archaic

Middle Archaic materials date from about 6000 to 4000 BP. The sub-period is characterized by the increased occurrence of multi-use bifacial knives and burned rock middens (Collins 1995:383). Diagnostic points from this sub-period include Bell, Andice, Taylor, Nolan, and Travis. The first two types are considered as Early Archaic by Hester (1995). Although bison may still have been hunted in the state during the beginning of the Middle Archaic, the climate became much drier towards the end of the Middle Archaic necessitating a heavier reliance on sotol and acorn harvesting (Weir 1976:126). An expansion of oak woodlands on the Edwards Plateau and Balcones Escarpment may have been conducive to the intensified exploitation of certain plants (Weir 1976). This sub-period also experienced population increases and it is possible that previously scattered bands of hunter-gatherers began to combine harvesting and processing efforts (Weir 1976:126). Panthers Spring, Landslide, Wounded Eye and Gibson sites demonstrate well the cultural trends of the Middle Archaic (Black and McGraw 1985; Collins 1995).

Late Archaic

The last subperiod of the Archaic falls between 4000-800 BP (Collins 1995:384). Dart point diagnostics of the Late Archaic are somewhat smaller, triangular points with corner notches such as the Ensor and Ellis (Turner and Hester 1993:114,122). Preceding Late Archaic points include Bulverde, Pedernales, Marshall, and Marcos (Collins 1995). It is not entirely clear whether this sub-period experienced a rise (Collins 1995, Prewitt 1981) or decline (Black 1989) in population numbers, but large cemeteries, grave goods, and exotic trade items are known to occur at this time at sites such as Loma Sandia, Rudy Haiduk, Silo, Ernest Witte, Morhiss Mound in Central and South Texas. Evidence from these and other cemetery sites (i.e. Thunder Valley sinkhole cemetery) has suggested that territoriality may have established during the Late Archaic, possibly as a result of population increase (Bement 1989). The frequency of burned rock middens and

open campsites appears to increase. The Anthon and Loeve Fox sites are characteristic of the Late Archaic sub-period (Collins 1995).

Late Prehistoric

There exists some degree of overlap between diagnostic tools that are considered Late Archaic and Late Prehistoric, but the commonly held date for the beginning of this period is 1200 BP. A hallmark transition for this period is the introduction of the bow and arrow that enabled prehistoric hunters to harvest prey from greater distances with a lesser need for brushless, wide open spaces required for atlatl maneuverability in hunting. The use of arrows is indicated by much smaller sized projectile points like the Perdiz and Scallorn forms. Another turning point in the Late Prehistoric period is the first substantial presence of pottery in the northern South Texas Plain and Central Texas (Black 1989, Story 1985). Researchers generally agree that during this period there was a drop in population (Black 1989). Inter-group conflicts between various bands of hunter gatherers may have also been an issue based on evidence of arrow inflicted deaths seen in human remains from various Late Prehistoric cemeteries. Sites with distinct Late Prehistoric components include the Kyle, Smith and Currie sites (Collins 1995). The Late Prehistoric period is divided into the Austin and Toyah phases. Johnson (1994) believes these phases to possibly be two distinct cultures (see Black and Creel 1997).

The Austin Phase of the Late Prehistoric may represent the most intensive use of burned rock middens (Black and Creel 1997), and includes diagnostic arrow point types Scallorn and Edwards (Collins 1995; Turner and Hester 1993). During this phase, the use of burned rock middens was quite widespread. The Toyah Phase of the Late Prehistoric suggests interaction between Central Texas and ceramic producing traditions in East and North Texas due to the presence of bone-tempered plainware ceramics commonly referred to as Leon Plain in Toyah components (Pertulla et al. 1995). Ceramics were in common usage in East Texas by 2450 BP, but the first Central Texas plainwares did not appear until ca. 650/700 BP. Other technological traits of this phase include the diagnostic Perdiz arrow point, alternately beveled bifaces, and specialized processing kits as an adaption to flourishing bison populations (Ricklis 1992) or an intensification of bison procurement.

Historic

Europeans began entering Central Texas sporadically the late A.D. 1500s but did not settle there until around A.D. 1700 (Webb 1952). First European contact on the Texas coast most likely began with the landing of Cabeza de Vaca and the Narvaez expedition survivors in 1528. Later

Spanish incursions recorded insightful information on various Native American groups like the Payaya and dozens of other named groups, collectively referred to as the Coahuiltecans. Late seventeenth century accounts describe these people as family units of hunter gatherers that resided near streams and springs, in areas conducive to nut harvesting. These camps were revisited on a seasonal basis, allowing interaction with different groups along the way as well as the hunting of bison in open grassland settings (Campbell 1983:349-351, Hester 1989:80). By the eighteenth century, the cultural integrity of the Coahuiltecans was significantly compromised by European settlers and invading neighboring Native American groups, such as the Lipan Apache, made possible through access to European horses. Efficiently skilled Comanche horsemen in turn displaced the Lipan Apache culture, carrying out continuous raids on European and Native American settlements alike in Central Texas (Hester 1989:82-83).

Many Native Americans and Spanish settlers alike sought refuge in the numerous Spanish Missions established early in the eighteenth century. Spanish-Catholic missions, military outposts, and the roads that connected them were integral to the settlement of most Texas communities, particularly Bastrop County.

Chapter 3: Culture History of Bastrop County

Bastrop, Texas is one of the earliest settlements in Central Texas dating back to 1832. Before this locality was known as Bastrop, it was settled briefly during the Spanish Colonial period, and eventually colonized by Stephen F. Austin as the center of his “Little Colony,” founded in 1830. Pivotal to the early colony’s beginnings was the Spanish road network that ran through this area, known as the Camino Real (Figure 3-1).

Camino Real, meaning “Kings Highway” in Spanish, is the oldest road network in Texas that began as a series of Indian trails (THO 2007). The Spanish eventually improved and expanded them to link a series of fortified missions, connecting settlements in Mexico to colonies in Louisiana via the Texas hinterland. Camino Real ran from Monclova, Mexico to Robline, Louisiana. The Texas segment consists of roughly 540 miles, with 47 miles of road in Louisiana. Portions of it were also known as The Old San Antonio Road, the King’s Highway, and the San Antonio-Nacogdoches Road.

The Camino Real’s European expansion beyond an Indian trail started with provisional Governor Domingo Teran de los Rios’ expedition in 1691, cutting a course from Monclova, Mexico, to the Spanish missions in East Texas (THC 2007). It was more than a route, it was a “complex set of relationships between travelers and nature, buyers and sellers, governors and governed”, where the threat of Indian attack, transportation impediments, and subsistence procurement were constant obstacles (de la Teja 1998:43). Proceeding east from San Juan Bautista (Presidio del Rio Grande), an expedition gateway of sorts on the Rio Grande River, the Camino Real eventually crossed the Colorado River into present day Bastrop County, before making its way to the end of the line in Robline, Louisiana and Los Adaes, Louisiana (Figure 3-1). One segment of Camino Real, called the Camino Arriba, was subjected to greater traffic from East Texas travelers headed to the West Coast during the Gold Rush in the 1940s. During the American Civil War, it served as an important trade artery for transportation of cotton from East Texas to Mexico. Throughout Texas history, depending on transport mode, season, and route choice, the Camino Real was utilized for a variety of reasons including commerce, transportation, communication, and military campaigning (McGraw et al. 1998). The junction at the Colorado River, however, was a particularly important one and served as a catalyst to continuous growth and settlement, giving rise to Bastrop County’s first major settlement in 1805, a stockade known as Puesto del Colorado (Post on the Colorado) (Kesselus 1986:26-27). Bastrop remains one of only four permanent Texas settlements with roots grounded in Mexican rule.

After the second Mexican Revolution of 1821, Stephen F. Austin soon began to focus Anglo settlement efforts in the area around Puesta del Colorado, establishing his permanent colony that he named Mina, after a tragically fated Mexican hero. Mina was designated as four square leagues for a geometric town tract with streets running in the cardinal directions with a town square at its nucleus (THC 2007). The west block of town was designated for municipal buildings, the east for church functions, the north for the jail and the south and southwest served as educational districts. The cemetery was placed in the northeast. This design maintains little prevalence today. In the 1830s, growing numbers of Anglo/Celts began to settle in this area receiving large land grants, contributing to the prominent Anglo population.

In answer to the bloody suppression of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and their blatant disregard of the Federalist Constitution of 1824, Mexican forces were expelled from Texas in the Battle of Bexar in December of 1835. Santa Anna's immense army was quickly mobilized, marching into the recalcitrant province of Texas the following month in January of 1836, beginning a series of bloody conflicts on Texas soil. Texans fought and suffered crushing defeats in Goliad, and at the Battle of the Alamo in San Antonio de Bexar. Colonel William B. Travis's predecessor, Colonel James Clinton Neill, was en route to Mina after he turned over command of the Alamo to Colonel Travis. During this period, Mina was abandoned during the "runaway scrape", sustaining several fires started by Mexican soldiers under the command of General Gaona. After the Texas victory over Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, the Republic of Texas was created and citizens of Mina returned to their lands only to face another increasing threat, Indian raids.

Indian attacks reached their peak during and immediately after the Texas Revolution (THC 2007). Upriver was Fort Colorado, which offered some protection from Comanche bands, but eventually a local company of rangers was organized to lessen the severity of Indian raiding. Local rangers, paid with public funds, were later complimented with government Texas Rangers to secure the area from attack.

With the founding of the new Republic of Texas, the Mexican municipality of Mina was renamed the county of Bastrop in 1837, one of twenty-three counties of the Republic of Texas. It was named after Felipe Enrique Neri, Baron of Bastrop, a pivotal figure in the settlement of Anglo Americans in Texas. Bastrop and Waterloo (Austin), were the two main choices for the capital of Texas, of which the latter was decided upon.

Following statehood in 1845, Texas later became a Confederate state voting for secession from

the Union. Bastrop County supported the decision, although some settlers were more supportive of abolition, but not war. Texas contributed more soldiers *per capita* than any other Confederate state with the exception of Alabama (THC 2007). Only five major engagements were fought on Texas soil. Two were fought in Sabine Pass, two were fought in Galveston, and one engagement was fought in Palmetto Ranch. Each of these locations involved major ports or entry areas into the state.

Following Reconstruction, the economic and political situation in Texas began to gradually improve during the mid 1870s. Ever-increasing traffic from stagecoaches, river ferries, and the railroad increased the transport of goods and travelers, establishing Bastrop as a desirable transition stop along the Camino Real. The railroad in particular stimulated Bastrop's economic growth considerably. The Houston and Texas Central Railroad, built in the early 1860s, included a stop in Bastrop County, that eventually hooked up with the Colorado and Post Oak Island Railway in 1871 (THC 2007). In 1887 the Missouri, Kansas and Texas (MKT) Railway Company established a presence in Bastrop, until MKT operations ceased in 1989. Cotton gins and plows that could handle the compact Blackland Prairie soils also began to appear, leading to an explosion in cotton cultivation in Bastrop County, contributing to a prominent tenant farm culture that persisted into the 1930s.

In deference to Bastrop's standing historical resources, it is important to address the influence of Victorian era architecture on Central Texas after Reconstruction. Technological advancements and the growing importance of the railroad meant that builders could utilize more than just local materials and take advantage of precut factory-made metal building hardware. The Victorian style, aggrandized in popularity, drew heavily from many revival styles such as Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque, that in turn also drew from historical references (HTO 2007). Texas was catching up with the mainstream of American architectural fashion. Both residential and civic commercial architecture at the time took advantage of asymmetrical planning styles, using eclectic materials and designs, typical of the revolutionary changes engendered by the Victorian style. These expressions included styles rich in ornate details, intended to achieve romantic and picturesque effects. Buildings were typically asymmetrical and characterized by off-center roof features and projecting bays and windows, spindlework, dormers, punch work, chimneys, decorative glass, and shingle patterns (HTO 2007). The final composition was intended to appear well balanced and picturesque.

Chapter 4: Documented Cultural Resources within Bastrop's Historic Township

For the purposes of this report, only cultural resources within one kilometer of the project area will be discussed in detail. Resources to be reviewed fall under three categories: National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), Neighborhood Survey (NS) listings, and previously documented archaeological sites. Not all recorded resources are still present, and some resources within, and around the Bastrop Convention Center and City Hall project area, have not yet been evaluated for their eligibility to the NRHP. Using data accessed from the Texas Historical Commission Site Atlas, this section reviews all relevant cultural resources associated with, or in close proximity to, downtown Blocks 52, 53 and 69 and 70 (Figure 1-3).

National Register Properties and Neighborhood Survey Resources

Eight properties listed as National Register of Historic Places are found in the immediate vicinity of the four blocks that comprise the project area. The first property listed on the National Register to be discussed is Bastrop's Iron Bridge over Piney Creek. It was formerly situated just west of the Farm Road and Highway 95 intersection. This iron-truss bridge facilitated transport over Piney Creek starting in the 1870s (THC 2007). It was designed by the MO. Valley Bridge & Ironworks Company. It is unclear when this bridge was removed and replaced with a modern concrete bridge (Figure 4-1), but some bricks that may have been part of its foundation, along with numerous other construction debris, still lie within the bed of Piney Creek.

The Willis Miley House at 1320 Farm Road still stands and has been preserved well by its current owners (Figure 4-2). It is a Late Victorian single dwelling residence. Its architectural style suggests it dates from around the 1870s to the turn of the nineteenth century (THC 2007). It is a one-story wood frame structure, with an ell shape plan and porch on the south and east side. It has small brackets on eaves, and semi-turned columns. The design is a transom, 2/2 windows with pedimented entablatures, with a tin roof and brick chimney. This property appears on the Neighborhood Survey of historic places and is listed on the NRHP.

The residence at 1316 Farm Road suggests a style reminiscent of Greek Revival vernacular in the 1850s (Figure 4-3). It is a domestic single-story dwelling. This structure is a simple board and batten construction house, with a t-shape plan and modernistic square porch columns (THC 2007). The property has been well maintained and appears on the neighborhood survey of historic

places and is listed on the NRHP.

A listing on the neighborhood survey of historic places that no longer stands, is the residence at 1312 Farm Street. It was a Greek Revival Vernacular style dwelling (THC 2007). Nothing currently remains of the original structure and a modern shack now rests on the property (Figure 4-4).

The next property appears on the neighborhood survey of historic places and is listed on the NRHP and is one of the county's oldest cultural centers. The Casino Hall is situated on the Northeast corner of Farm and Fayette. It is currently a vacant structure with architectural roots dating to 1848. It is a one-story brick industrial building with large ridge vents, simple gable roof with brick gable ends (THC 2007). Casino Hall has a prominent molded brick cornice and tin roof (Figure 4-5). The structure is symbolic of the cultural improvement in Central Texas that took place in the decades following Reconstruction. Dozens of opera houses across the state were being built, many of which had full scene-changing equipment, traps, and auxiliary rooms. By the late 1880s, Texas had joined the transcontinental theater circuit, and was entertained by performers such as Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, Sarah Bernhardt, Helena Modjeska, and Lillie Langtry (HTO 2007). Casino Hall also served as one of Bastrop's earliest schools.

At the northwest corner of Chestnut and Fayette, the M.K.T. Depot used to stand just west of the railroad tracks. The Missouri, Kansas, Texas Railroad line erected the structure in 1885 for storage purposes (THC 2007), and it remained in use for its original purpose into the 1980s. Nothing remains of its board and batten frame, but its original position can still be detected by comparing old photographs with still-standing landmark features (Figures 4-6 and 7). It is listed as both an NRHP and as a historic property on the NS.

The Beverly and Lula Kerr House has a long history. It is located at 1305 Pine Street and was constructed in the 1890s. Its condition is fairly good, and consists of a one-story wood frame Victorian superstructure atop a full basement (Figure 4-8). It has a projecting front bay, and ell-shaped porch on the northeast corner (THC 2007). This domestic single dwelling was home to the Kerr family, and appears on the neighborhood survey of historic places and is listed on the NRHP.

Also an NRHP and NS historic property, is the Kerr Community Center and Park. Recognizing a need for an African American activity facility, the Kerr family saw to the construction of the Kerr Community Center in 1914 (THC 2007). It is a two-story, narrow rectangular building with

gabled end and a stairway on the eastern side. Beverly and Lula Kerr were music teachers and prominent African American leaders in Bastrop. Generations of the Kerr family advanced educational conditions for African Americans in the Bastrop community. Numerous social events were held at the original Kerr's Hall structure, which has been beautifully restored as the Kerr Community Center (Figure 4-9). It has housed GIs, senior citizens, and mentally challenged people over the years, and hosted numerous community events as a testament to the good will of its founders.

The final NRHP and property to be discussed is the residence at 1308 Fayette Street. This structure, listed as a Late Victorian domestic single dwelling does not stand at the location plotted by the Texas Site Atlas (THC 2007), shown to be within the APE. The actual location of 1308 Fayette Street is over 200 meters to the northwest of the project area, well outside of the APE. This NRHP property, is therefore, not considered to be in close association with the project area.

Archaeological Site Areas

Numerous archaeological undertakings have been carried out in the county of Bastrop in the last five years alone (Nickels et al. 2003; Moses 2004; Godwin 2005; Godwin and Clark 2005; Driver 2006; Figueroa 2006; Lohse and Bousman 2006; Munoz 2006). However, the following archaeological sites to be discussed are all located within one kilometer of the APE. All are previously documented archaeological sites listed on the Texas Archaeological Site Atlas.

Site 41BP687 is a twentieth century well associated with the above mentioned Kerr Community Center. This site has associated historic artifacts including whiteware ceramics and building materials with house mounds remnants, and was investigated by Antiquities Planning & Consulting (Godwin 2005). The research potential of the artifacts appears to be limited, but the fact that the well is associated with an NRHP property makes it a significant historic property in its own right.

Site 41BP340 consists of the standing 1891 jailhouse and 1883 courthouse buildings, along with the twentieth century annexes to the courthouse. Archaeological deposits associated with the structures are highly disturbed due to the placement of a parking lot and various underground utilities. Architectural elements were recorded by the Texas Archaeological Research Laboratory (THC 2007).

Site 41BP79 is a cemetery that occupies two large blocks near Gills Branch Creek. It contains a

small number of early nineteenth century headstones. This site is northeast of the APE. 41BP80 is a prehistoric occupation site that yielded a small number of mussel shell fragments, lithic debitage and a small number of burned rocks. It is also located northeast of the project area. Site 41BP87 is located northwest of the project area. It is described as a shallow lithic debris scatter in the southeast corner of an athletic field. 41BP79, 41BP80, and 41BP87 were all recorded by John W. Clark (THC 2007). There is also a site registered as 41BP65 in this area, but no information exists on it.

Chapter 5: Undocumented Structures Associated with the Project Area Requiring Further Investigation

This section provides a brief summary of unrecorded cultural resources found within the APE that warrant further archaeological assessment (Figure 5-1).

The southwest corner of Block 53 contains what appears to be a historic freight depot for what is currently known as the Texaco Company. The structure consists of corrugated tin wall panels and roof, erected on an elevated concrete foundation (Figure 5-2). The north wall of the structure reads “The Texas Company, USA, Texaco Petroleum Products” (Figure 5-3). The Texaco oil company formally went by the name the “Texas Company” until officially changing its name to “Texaco Inc.” in 1959 (Figure 5-4). The condition of the structure and the building materials used also suggest it is over 50 years old. This structure is fairly well preserved and might have significant cultural relevance to Bastrop’s industrial past.

Another possible historic structure situated within the APE, is on the northeast corner of Block 53. It appears to be a mechanic’s garage with a more recent concrete foundation that may or may not be historic. Its design is also that of a corrugated tin panel structure (Figure 5-5). This building most likely has limited research value and may not be 50 years old, but at a minimum its construction date and ownership history need to be more precisely determined.

The final undocumented area of interest is a residence on the northwest corner of building Block 70. Due to the rectangular enclave removed from this portion of the project area, it is unclear whether this structure falls directly within the APE. This structure rests on the lot directly east of 1401 Farm Road. It is a board and batten single dwelling (Figure 5-6) with an associated chicken coup (Figure 5-6). Preservation is poor, however, and its research potential most likely limited.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

The City of Bastrop has a long rich history. It has played a role in many significant events in Texas history, and many remnants of these episodes still exist today. It is very likely that the *Camino de Arriba* segment of the Camino Real forms a route at the “junction of SH 21 and SH 71 and crosses the Colorado River at Gills Branch...heading upstream along the creek to Pecan Street in Bastrop, the route resumes its eastward path on SH 21” (McGraw et al. 1998:221). According to Jenkins’ “Recollections of Early Texas” 1837 account, the Camino Real route in downtown Bastrop curved northeast from the Austin Street/Pecan Street intersection, and then proceeded into the Jefferson Street/Chestnut Street intersection, and headed directly northeast towards SH 21 along a linear trajectory (Jenkins 1958:50). This would place the route of the Camino Real immediately north of the APE, therefore corroborating the old V.N. Zivley map of 1915 (Figure 6-1), and increasing the likelihood of archaeological deposits indicating early historic activity in this area. Also, given the proximity to the Colorado River and Gills Branch, this locality would make a probable candidate for prehistoric occupation, which is hinted at by the presence of surrounding archaeological sites. Clearly, the area immediately around the proposed Bastrop Convention Center and proposed City Hall is host to several historically significant standing structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Currently, the precise boundaries of the project APE have not been determined but it is apparent that all four blocks will be impacted by the planned construction. Also, no information is yet available regarding the nature and the depth of construction impacts across the four blocks. Nonetheless, it is clear from the earlier review of the historic properties found in the vicinity of the project APE that the area has substantial cultural resources present. Furthermore, given that the blocks are situated just west of Piney Creek and within five miles of the Colorado River, the potential is high that prehistoric groups also may have utilized the area systematically. Prehistoric occupations may stretch back the length of the entire prehistoric sequence.

Therefore, the Center for Archaeological Research recommends that an intensive pedestrian survey should be carried out across all four blocks earmarked for construction activity. Since the project falls within the historic district of downtown Bastrop and within which many standing historic structures still remain, the likelihood of intact archaeological deposits associated with these structures and their associated outbuildings is high. In addition to identifying deposits associated with existing NRHP-listed properties, the pedestrian survey should also focus on precisely documenting the age and ownership history of the possible historic properties present.

As part of the pedestrian survey, CAR also recommends systematic shovel testing and backhoe trenching to determine whether buried prehistoric and/or historic deposits are present within the project APE and in particular along the stretch of Piney Creek that skirts the southeast corner of Block 70 and the northeast corner of building Block 69.

Finally, given that the proposed development activities are planned in the vicinity of several National Register of Historic Places-listed historic properties, and the developments have the potential to visually impact the historic character of the Historic District, CAR recommends that the City of Bastrop or its representative archaeological firm contact the Architecture Division of The Texas Historical Commission to inform them of the planned developments. This contact shall occur in addition to the application for the Texas Historical Commission contact regarding the pedestrian survey permit.

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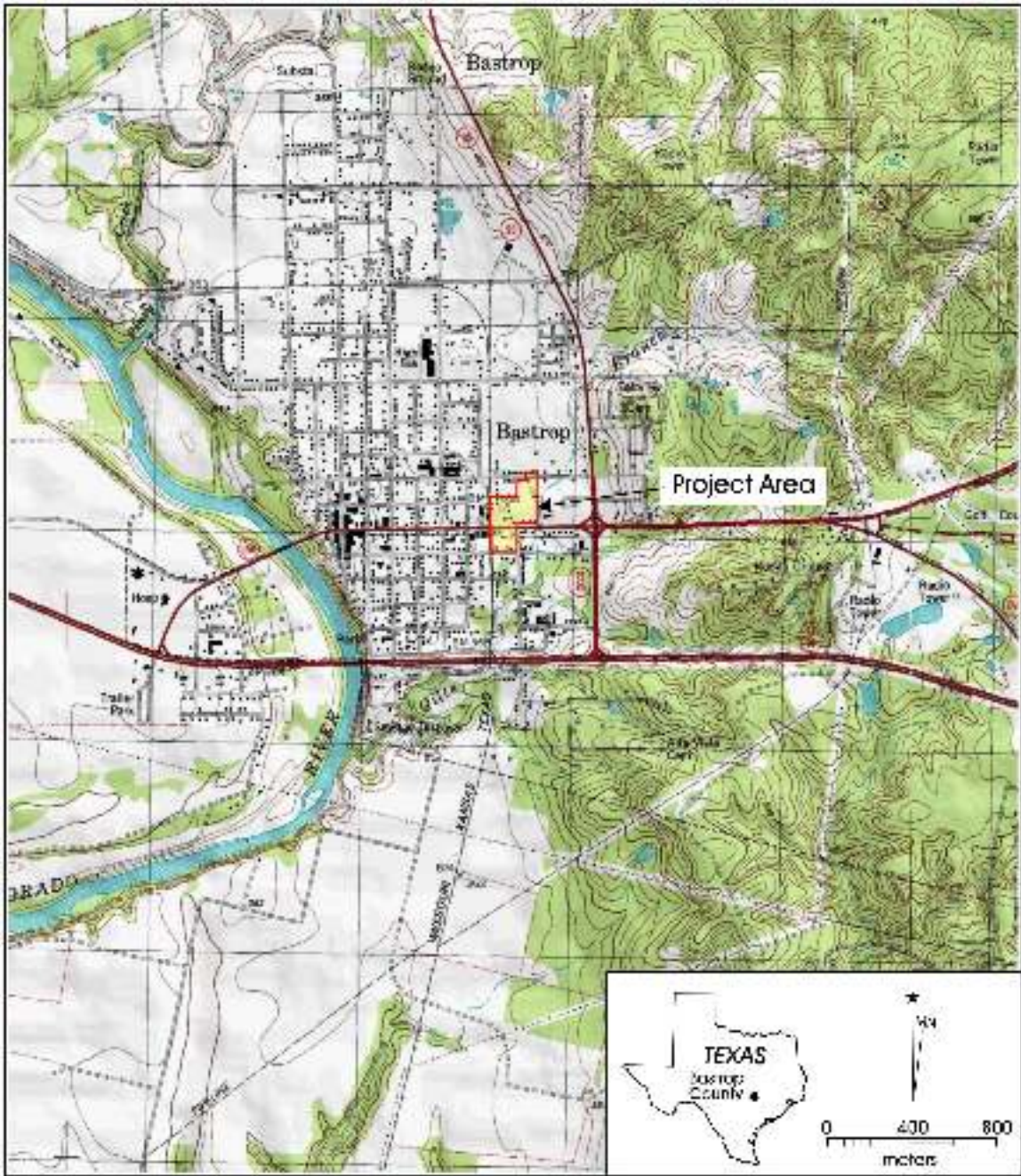


Figure 1-1. Area of Potential Effect in downtown Bastrop.

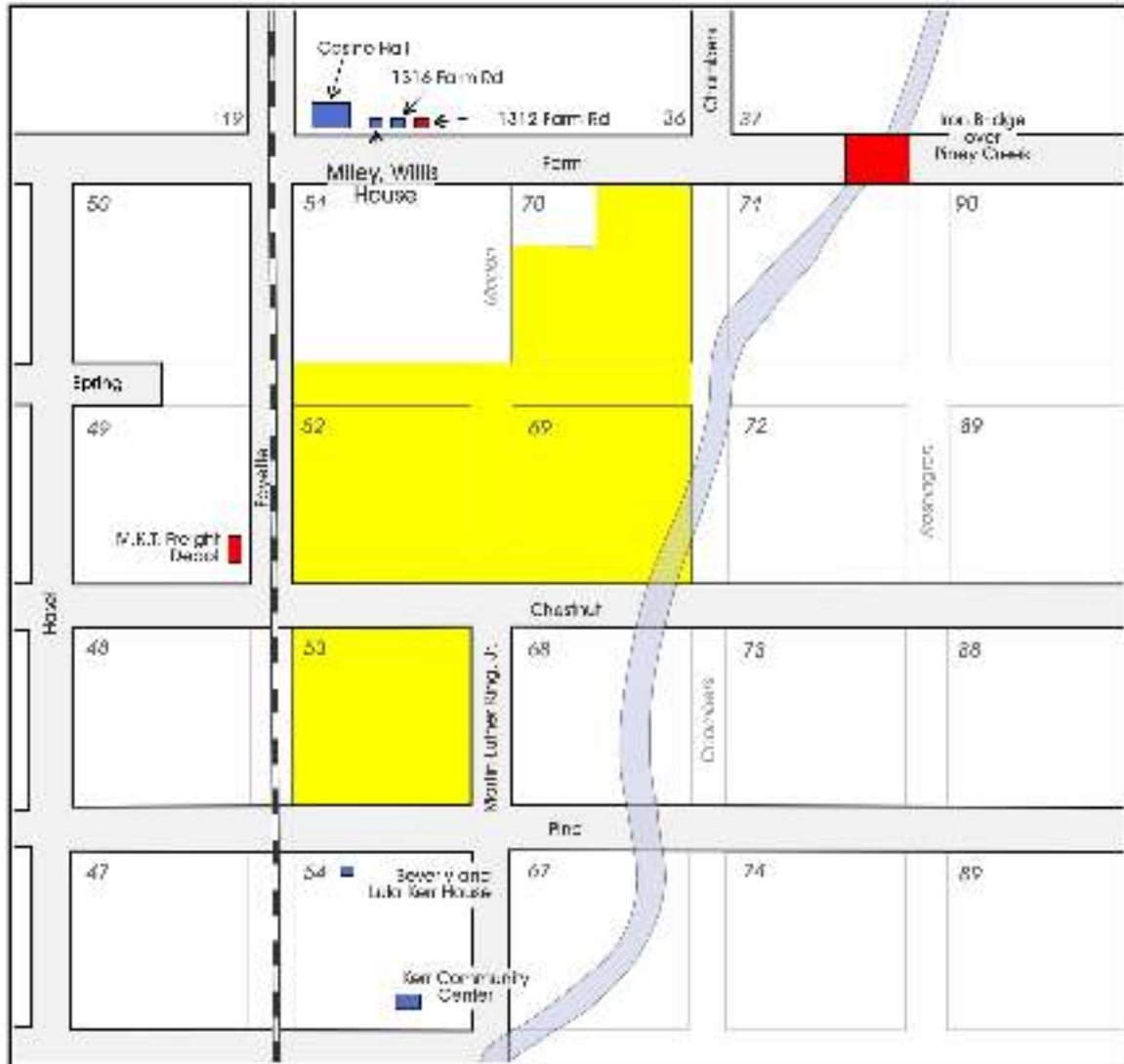


Figure 1-2. NRHP cultural resources associated with the APF (yellow). NRHP properties in blue are still present, NRHP properties in red are no longer present.

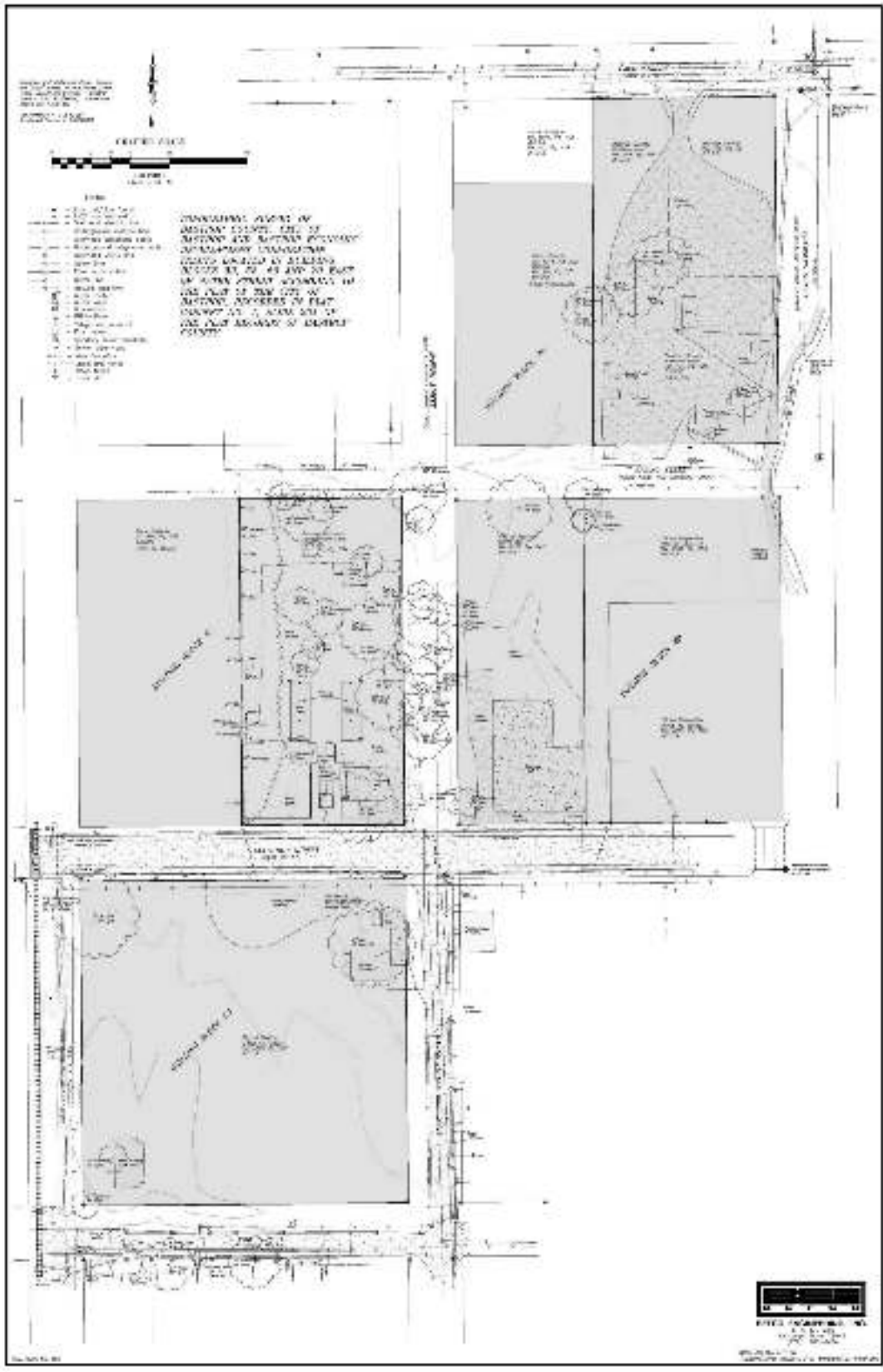


Figure 1-3. APN Blocks 52, 53 and 69 and 70.

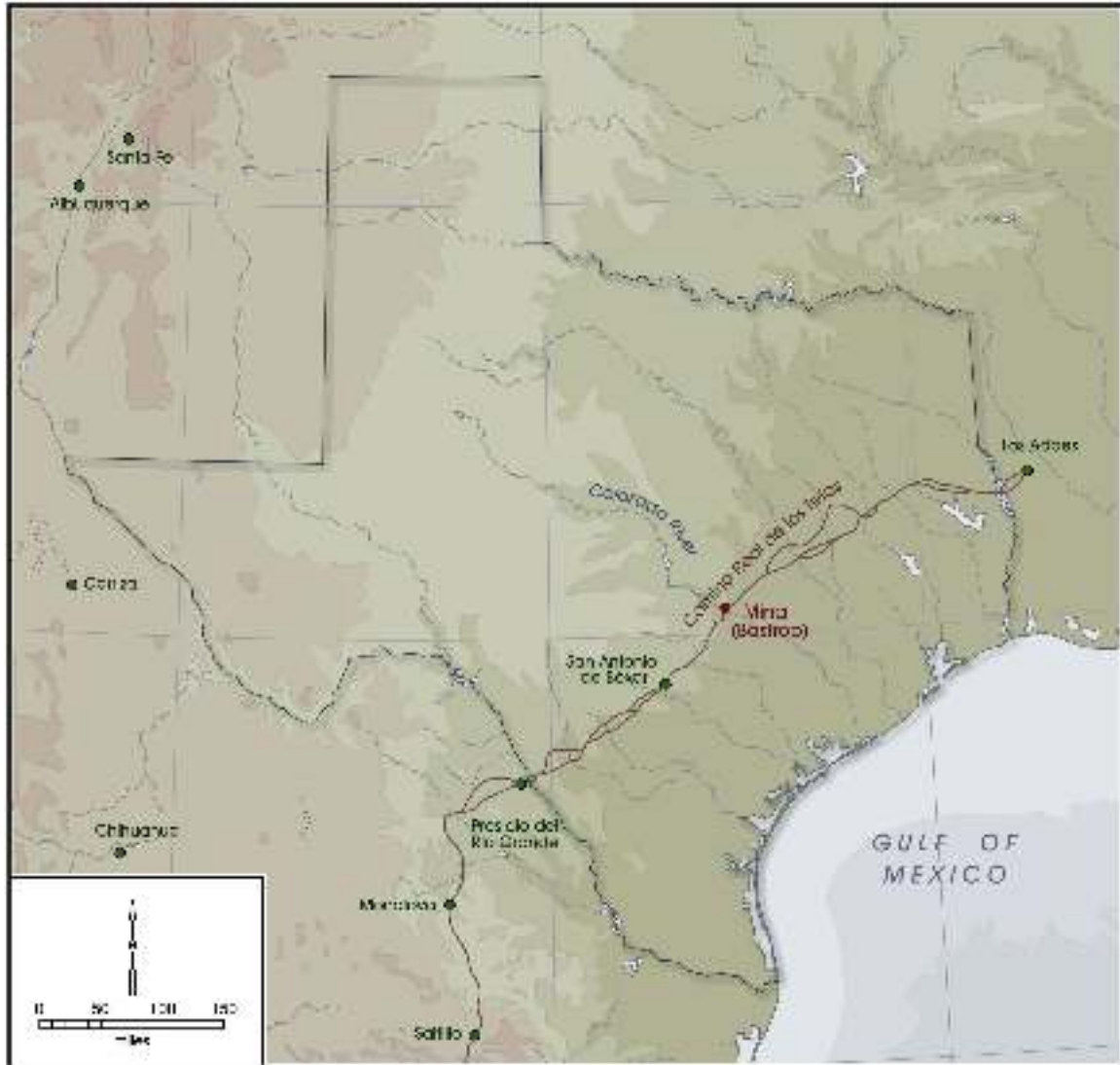


Figure 3-1. *Camino Real in relation to Mina (Bastrop).*



Figure 4-1. *Closet bridge over Piney Creek.*



Figure 4-2. *Willie Miley House at 1320 Fern Road.*



Figure 4-3. Residence at 1316 Farm Road.



Figure 4-4. Only remaining structure at location of 1312 Farm Road.



Figure 4-5. *Casino Hall.*



Figure 4-6. *Location of absent M.K.T. Depot.*



Figure 4-7. Old photograph of M.K.T. Depot with still standing landmarks in the background.



Figure 4-8. Beverly and Lula Kerr residence at 1305 Pine Street.



Figure 4-9. *Kerr Community Center.*

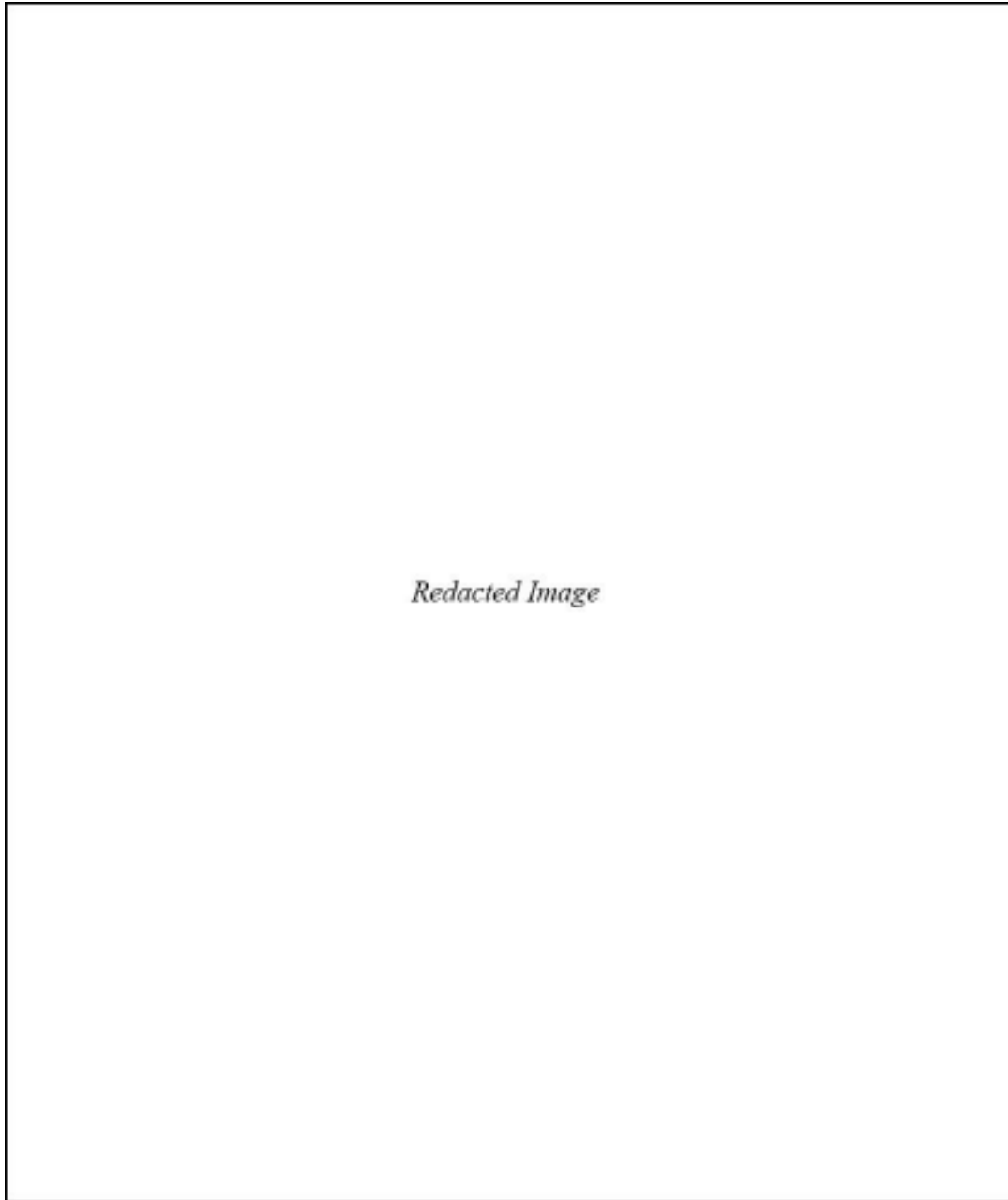


Figure 4-10. *Recorded archaeological sites within one km of the project area.*

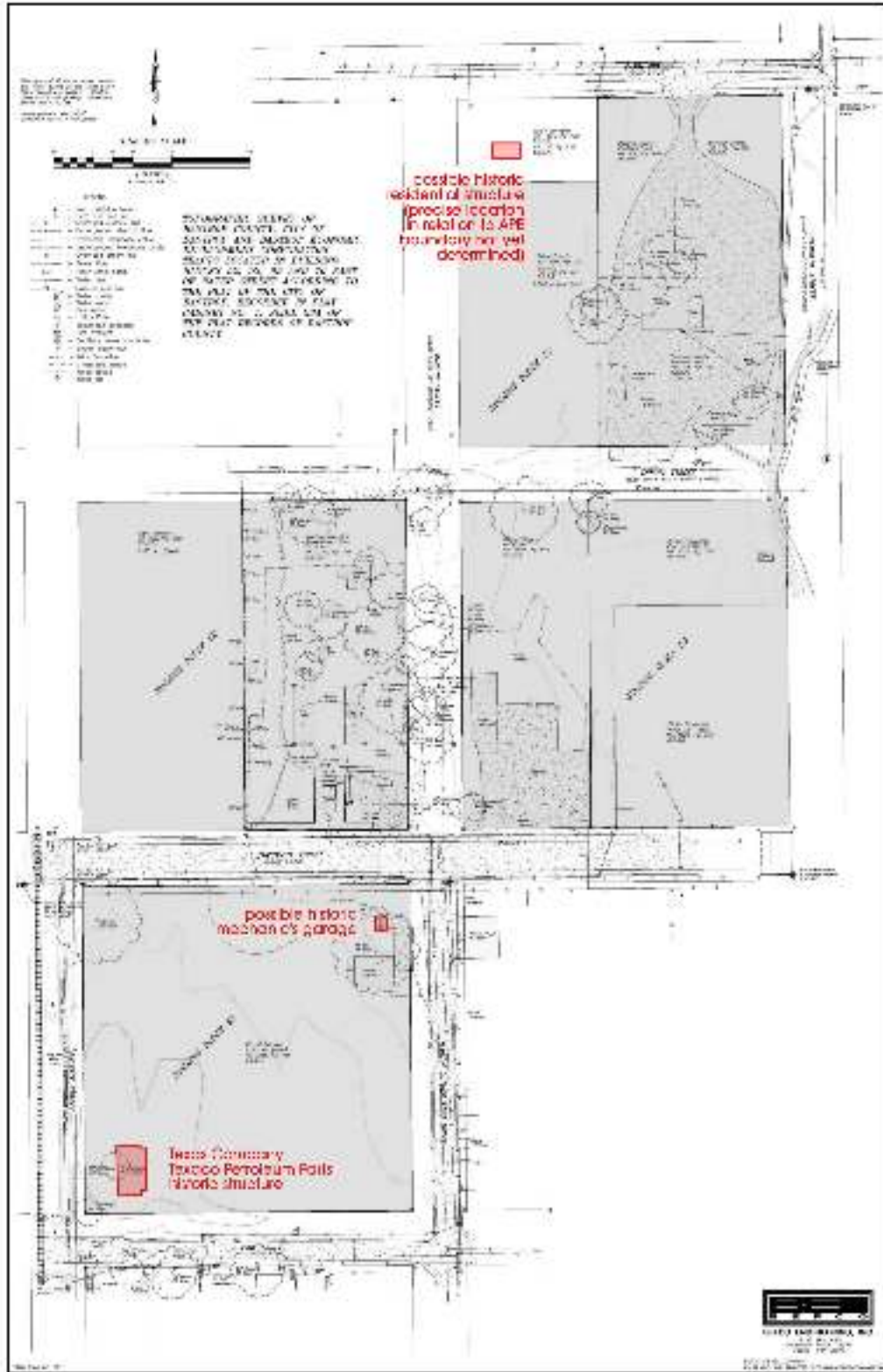


Figure 5-1. Undocumented structures associated with the project area.



Figure 5-2. *Undocumented structure in Block 53.*



Figure 5-3. *Company title adorning undocumented structure in Block 53.*



Figure 5-4. Old "Texas Company" "Texaco" logo.



Figure 5-5. Undocumented structure in Block 53.



Figure 5-6. Undocumented structure in Block 70.

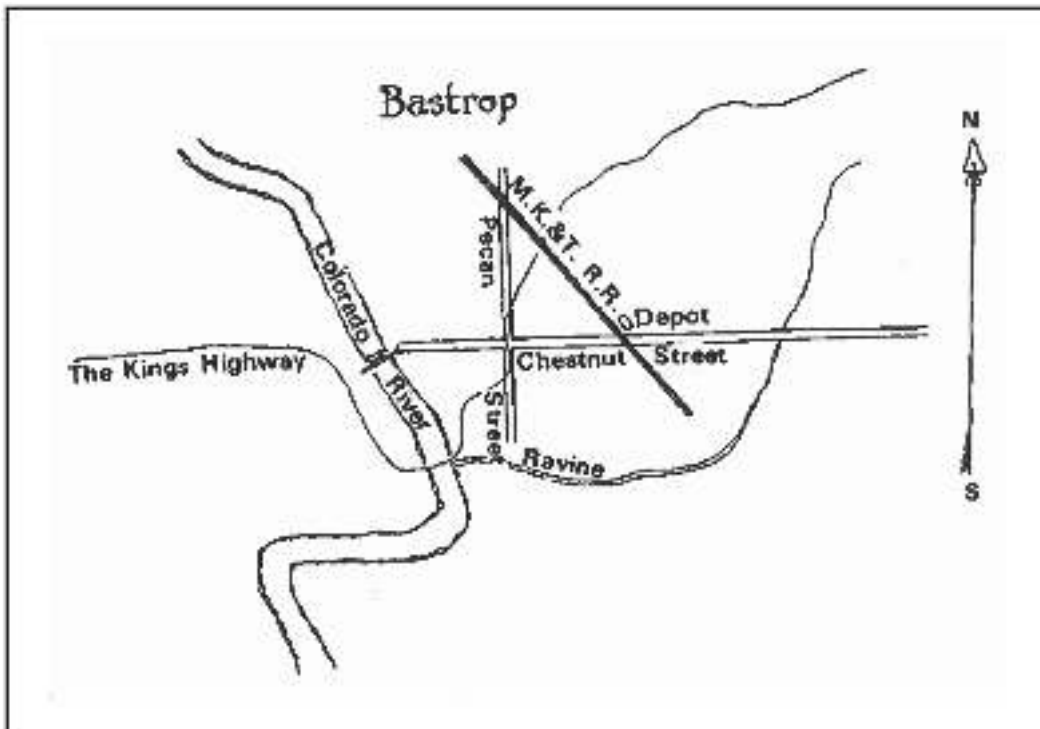


Figure 6-1. *W.N. Zivley 1915 map of Canino Real (on file at TxDOT ENR).*