

Appendix C

Additional Agency Coordination:

Cultural Resources

Mid City Plaza



ALABAMA-COUSHATTA TRIBE OF TEXAS

571 State Park Road 56 • Livingston, Texas 77351 • (936) 563-1100

January 23, 2015

LADOTD
Environmental Engineer Administrator
P.O. Box 94245
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

Dear Administrator:

On behalf of Mikko Colabe III Clem Sylestine and the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe, our appreciation is expressed on your efforts to consult us regarding H011295: LA 73 reconfiguration proposal in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Our Tribe maintains ancestral associations throughout the state of Louisiana despite the absence of written records to completely identify Tribal activities, villages, trails, or burial sites. However, it is our objective to ensure significances of American Indian ancestry, especially of Alabama-Coushatta origin, are administered with the utmost considerations.

Upon review of your December 18, 2014 submission, no known impacts to cultural assets of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas are anticipated in conjunction with this proposal. In the event of the inadvertent discovery of human remains and/or archaeological artifacts, activity in proximity to the location must cease and appropriate authorities, including this Office, notified without delay for additional consultations.

Should you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryant J. Celestine".

Bryant J. Celestine
Historic Preservation Officer

Maria Reid

From: Lindsey Bilyeu <lbilyeu@choctawnation.com>
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 10:23 AM
To: Maria Reid
Subject: RE: State Project No. H.011295, LA 73 (GOVT ST) East Blvd - Lobdell Ave, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA

Ms. Reid,

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma thanks the Louisiana DOTD for the correspondence regarding the above referenced project. East Baton Rouge Parish, LA lies in the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's area of historic interest. Before the Choctaw Nation provides final comments on this project, we will need some additional information.

Please forward our office a copy of the SHPO concurrence letter along with the official finding of effect to historic properties. If you have any questions, please contact me at 580-924-8280 ext. 2631.

Thank you,

Lindsey D. Bilyeu
NHPA Senior Section 106 Reviewer
Historic Preservation Department
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74701
580-924-8280 ext. 2631
lbilyeu@choctawnation.com

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Environmental Section

PO Box 94245 | Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245
ph: 225-242-4502 | fx: 225-242-4500

John Bel Edwards, Governor
Shawn D. Wilson, PhD., P.E., Secretary

February 3, 2016

STATE PROJECT NO. H.011295
FEDERAL PROJECT NO. H011295
PROJECT NAME: LA 73 (GOVT ST) EAST BLVD - LOBDELL AVE
ROUTE: LA 73 (GOVERNMENT STREET)
PARISHES: EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

Mr. Phillip Boggan
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
Office of Cultural Development
P.O. Box 44247, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

The proposed undertaking will have no adverse effect on historic properties. This effect determination could change should new information come to our attention.

Phil Boggan
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

03/04/2016

SUBJECT: No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties

Dear Mr. Boggan:

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge Government (City/Parish) propose improvements to Louisiana State Highway LA 73 (LA 73) known locally as Government Street (Figure 1). The project would consist of rehabilitating the existing pavement (patching the existing concrete, cold planing the existing asphaltic concrete, and overlaying the road surface with asphaltic concrete) and reducing the number of travel lanes on a large section of Government Street from four lanes (two lanes in each direction) to three lanes (one travel lane in each direction with a center two-way-left-turn-lane) and incorporating bicycle and pedestrian friendly concepts (Figures 2-4). The bicycle path would incorporate proposed and existing bicycle lanes and sharrows (road used by jointly by bicycle, motorized vehicles and other modes of transportation). A roundabout would replace the signalized intersection at Government Street, Lobdell Avenue, and Independence Park Boulevard. The turning geometry at the Government Street and Jefferson Highway intersection would also be improved. The existing sidewalk in several areas along Government Street is not handicapped accessible. The proposed project would improve the sidewalks to comply with the American Disabilities Act by adding handicapped ramps at intersections and driveway crossings and meeting width requirements.

The section of Government Street from East Boulevard to Jefferson Highway is a designated state highway (LA 73). The section of Government Street from Jefferson Highway to Lobdell Avenue is an East Baton Rouge Parish maintained roadway. Approximately 4.2 miles of the Government Street corridor from East Boulevard (30.443714, -91.18071) continuing eastward to the Lobdell Avenue intersection (30.445397, -91.111033) near Independence Park is included in

this project (See Figure 1). The purpose of this project is to improve the condition of the pavement on Government Street, provide safe and diverse multimodal transportation options, and contribute to the livability and the economic revitalization of the corridor. During construction, one lane in each direction would remain open at all times. Lane closures would only be allowed at night and/or on weekends. Upon completion of these improvements, the ownership of Government Street (LA 73) will be transferred to the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge.

Government Street currently typically has 4- 11' travel lanes with curb and sidewalks outside of the pavement (See Figure 3). The right of way (ROW) width varies within the project limits from 50' to 75', but the ROW is typically 60' wide (leaving only 8' outside the road pavement on each side of the ROW). Sidewalk widths are substandard in many areas and numerous intersections do not have handicap-accessible crossings with ramps (See Figure 3). There are a large number of residential and commercial driveways on Government Street.

The proposed project would provide a 3-lane roadway (two 11-foot wide travel lanes with a 12-foot wide center two-way left turn lane) with five foot wide bike lanes on each side through most of the project corridor. Median islands are proposed throughout the corridor to define or limit left turns or to offer pedestrian crossing refuge. Throughout the project area, the design goal has been to minimize parking or backing out into the ROW or directly onto Government Street (See Figures 2-4).

The reduction in the number of lanes will reduce the number of conflict points for vehicles, enhance safety for pedestrians (crossing a fewer number of lanes) and provide better access for the many side streets and driveways. Another benefit of the reduction to three lanes is there would be room to incorporate the Complete Streets policy which provides street space for multi-modal improvements such as bike lanes.

The lane reduction would be conducted approximately from East Boulevard to Moore Street (See Figure 2). Traffic analysis has shown the highest traffic counts (approximately 25,000 vehicles per day) on the 11-block section of Government Street from Moore Street to Jefferson Highway. Traffic analyses has also shown that reducing the number of lanes would not provide a traffic benefit. However, a modified cross-section is proposed. Currently, the intersection of Foster Drive (southbound) has two left turn lanes which require two through lanes to accept vehicles turning eastbound onto Government Street. The two eastbound through lanes on Government Street must remain. At Jefferson Highway, the right eastbound lane on Government Street would become a dedicated right turn lane onto Jefferson Highway. Bike lanes would extend from East Boulevard eastward to Moore Street, south along a proposed sharrow to existing bicycle lanes along Capital Heights with an option to take the existing Rapides Street sharrow south to Claycut Road. From there cyclists have the choice to ride the existing sharrow of Claycut Road east across Jefferson Highway to the Goodwood Boulevard sharrow and travel further east to Lobdell Avenue. Or cyclists can take existing sharrows north along Winn Avenue and Esplanade Avenue, next to proposed sharrows north along the east side of Sevenoaks Park

back to Government Street, then west to Lobdell Avenue. Riders heading westward may also take Sevenoaks Avenue on the west side of Seven Oaks Park, south to Goodwood, then take the reverse route toward East Boulevard. For the existing and proposed sharrows not located on Government Street, the proposed work would consist of signage and possibly pavement markings. A single lane roundabout is proposed for the intersection at Government Street, Lobdell Avenue and Independence Park Boulevard.

The project would be restricted to the current right of way (ROW) and would not require any additional right of way (ROW) with the exception of the northeast quadrant of the proposed roundabout at Government Street, Lobdell Avenue and Independence Drive; the required ROW in the northeast quadrant is currently owned by the City of Baton Rouge. It would require approximately .52 acre of additional ROW. Within the .52 acre of required ROW is an out of use fire/emergency medical service station, which would be demolished. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) would be the required ROW. The indirect APE would consist of those areas fronting Government St. from East Boulevard to Lobdell Avenue.

LADOTD Cultural Resources Staff consulted databases maintained by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Divisions of Archaeology and Historic Preservation to determine if there were any previously recorded archaeological sites or historic properties that may be eligible for inclusion on the NRHP within or adjacent to the APEs. Through these databases, an area extending .5 mile from the APE was examined to determine the presence and nature of recorded archaeological sites (Figure 5).

Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites

While no previously recorded archaeological sites were located within the APE, one is directly adjacent; 16EBR208, Baton Rouge City Square 24, is adjacent to the north side of Government Street just west of Park Boulevard/19th Street (See Figure 5, Figures 6-7). The site is described as an early-Mid 20th Century domestic site associated with residences formerly located on it. The site no longer contains a residence and is instead a partially graveled parking lot for a commercial businesses. The site does not appear in the Louisiana Division of Archaeology Site NRHP Eligibility Database. While the site is directly adjacent to the APE, the project in this area will be restricted to the current ROW and will not affect the site.

Within .5 mile there are 11 additional archaeological sites, including mostly late 19th Century and early to mid-20th Century sites related to urban development. Apart from 16EBR208 discussed above, the closest, 16EBR69, the State Police Headquarters/Magnolia Grove Plantation Site, a 19th Century Plantation site, is approximately 91m to the north of Government Street. It also is not listed in the Louisiana Division of Archaeology Site NRHP Eligibility Database. Due to the distance between the APE and the archaeological site, the proposed project will not affect the site (See Figures 6-7).

National Register Historic Districts

The APE lies within three National Register Historic Districts (NRHD): Beauregard Town, Roseland Terrace and Drehr Place. The western end of the APE is within the Beauregard Town NRHD, which is a mid-19th to early 20th Century residential district. Much of this district, especially in the areas of the indirect APE, has experienced considerable commercial development and redevelopment in the past 50 years. Even still, there are several buildings remaining that may be considered contributing to the district (Figure 8). Along East Boulevard, south of Government Street, trolley tracks can still be seen in the median breaks south of Government Street at France Street, Europe Street and Mayflower Street (See Figure 8, Figure 9). It is probable that the steel rails are still present beneath the grassy medians. The tracks end at the north side of France Street and are not visible further north toward or beyond Government Street. The trolley that ran along East Boulevard was established in 1913 as an electric trolley. The line ran eastward on Florida Street from Lafayette Street to 10th Street, south down 10th Street to North Boulevard, eastward down North Boulevard to East Boulevard, and southward down East Boulevard to Howard Street. The trolley ran this route at least through 1924 but was no longer running by 1932. Currently the only surface expression of the rails is in the above mentioned median openings on East Boulevard between France and Mayflower Streets. There are no tracks visible between France Street and Government Street. The proposed project would not impact the remaining track rails.

Louisiana Historical Resource Inventory Structures

Adjacent previously recorded structures include 17-00494 (982 Government Street), 17-00495 (970 Government Street), 17-00670 (929 Government Street), all within the Beauregard Town NRHD (See Figure 8).

17-00494 (982 Government Street) is a two story Craftsman bungalow residential home built around 1916-1922. Though renovated for commercial use around 1982, the house retains most of its original characteristics and is a contributing element to the NRHD and is individually eligible under Criterion C-Construction as a good example of a two story bungalow townhouse (See Figure 8, Figure 10).

17-00495 (970 Government Street) is a former auto service station (See Figure 9, Figure 11) built sometime around 1957. It has been altered considerably since construction and no longer retains the features that would make it eligible for the NRHP.

17-00670 (929 Government Street) is a large commercial building constructed in 1926 as Baton Rouge General Hospital. The building has functioned as a non-medical office building for several decades. The windows have been replaced and in 1979-1980 an additional building was built to its east. Though the building has had some alterations, its main features are still present

that characterize a 1920s hospital building. It is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C-Construction as a good example of an early 20th Century city hospital (See Figure 8, Figure 12).

The APE runs adjacent to the Roseland Terrace NRHD which is bordered by the south side of Government Street, the north side of Myrtle Avenue, the east side of South 18th Street and the west side of South 22nd Street (Figure 13). Roseland Terrace is a residential neighborhood developed from 1911 to 1930. The south side of the APE is adjacent to the Roseland Terrace NRHD. Along the south side of the APE on Government Street, the historic district possesses 19 residences that contribute to the district, however, the proposed project will not physically or visually impact them or the district.

The APE runs also runs adjacent to the Drehr Place NRHD, which is bordered by the south side of Government Street, the west side of South 22nd Street, the east side of St. Rose Street and the north side of Myrtle Avenue (See Figure 13). Drehr Place is a residential neighborhood developed from 1921 to 1947. On the south side of the APE along Government Street, the historic district possesses six residences that contribute to the district, however, the proposed project will not physically or visually impact them or the district.

National Register of Historic Places Individually Listed Properties

In addition to the above mentioned Beauregard Town, Roseland Terrace and Drehr Place NRHDs, there are two NRHP listed structures adjacent to the APE along Government Street: Baton Rouge High School and Dufroq Elementary (See Figure 13). Baton Rouge High School, located at 2825 Government Street, was constructed in 1926 and is a four story neo-Gothic brick and terra cotta building located in an older residential area of Baton Rouge (Figures 14-15). A significant renovation completed in 2012 included removal of later built ancillary buildings to the east and north of the original structure. At that time, massive additions were connected to the east and north sides of the original structure. The original jalousie windows on the original building were also replaced but many other interior and exterior architectural features were retained and rehabilitated. Certain other changes to the interior were conducted, including replacement of restrooms and their fixtures, water fountains, and mechanical equipment. Despite these alterations, the building retains ample features to remain listed on the NRHP. Dufroq Elementary School, built in 1922 and located on 19th Street at Government Street is a two story Beaux Arts style brick building (Figures 16-18). In the mid-2000s, it also received a makeover that included renovations to the original school building and large additions to its south and east sides. Similar to Baton Rouge High School, the changes did not eliminate the original building's NRHP eligibility. The proposed project will not physically or visually impact either property.

There were no other buildings along the APE that were individually recorded with the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation or listed on the NRHP.

From South 10th Street eastward, Government Street possesses alternating zones of mostly commercial or mostly residential developments. As Government Street extends eastward, the

buildings reflect later construction periods, from the 1920s to the 1970s with some commercial construction in the past ten years. In general, from South 10th Street to South 18th Street there are mostly commercial or industrial buildings dating from the 1920s to 1940s. From South 18th Street to St. Rose Avenue there are mostly residential structures dating from the 1920s to 1940s. From St. Rose Avenue to Jefferson Highway there are mostly commercial structures dating from the late 1940s to the 1960s. From Jefferson Highway to Lobdell Drive there are mostly residential structures dating from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Many of the commercial buildings abut the sidewalk along Government Street, while the residential structures are typically buffered by either a front or side yard. Changes to the sidewalk and roadway would not physically affect any of the buildings. As there is already a major roadway with sidewalks present, the proposed work would not significantly visually affect the adjacent buildings. Similarly, the proposed bicycle lanes and sharrows would not physically nor visually affect any historic properties.

At the east end of the APE, within the approximately .52 acre of required ROW for the proposed roundabout at Government Street, Lobdell Avenue and Independence Park Boulevard is the out of use Independence Park Fire Station and Drew McKinnis Memorial EMS building, owned by the City of Baton Rouge (Figures 19-23). The original fire station building was constructed sometime between 1952 and 1962. In the 1990s it was significantly enlarged to include the EMS component and remodeled so much so that there is no original exterior historic fabric apparent. The building is not eligible for the NRHP.

In addition to the desktop review, the APE and indirect APE were visually inspected to identify historic components within and adjacent to the APE, such as buildings, abandoned trolley rail lines or other historic street and traffic related components. No historic street features or trolley rail lines were apparent within the APE. No subsurface archaeological investigation was conducted.

The one area of .approximately .52 acre of required ROW, at the location of the proposed roundabout on the eastern end of the APE at Government Street, Lobdell Avenue, and Independence Park Boulevard has been greatly altered by construction of the fire/EMS station, driveway and rear parking areas and underground utilities. It is highly unlikely that any subsurface archaeological remains are present.

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FEDERAL PROJECT NO. H011295
PROJECT NAME: LA 73 (GOVT ST) EAST BLVD - LOBDELL AVE
Letter to Mr. Boggan
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LADOTD, in conjunction with the FHWA, believe that no historic properties will be adversely affected by the proposed project. We request your concurrence. Please contact Carey Coxe (carey.coxe@la.gov, 225-242-4520) if you have any questions regarding this request.

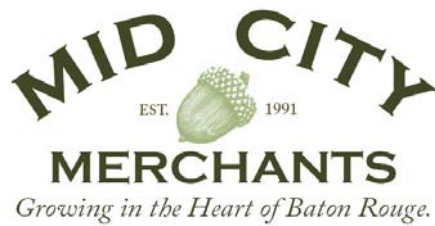
Additional project exhibits and information are available at the following website:

http://wwwapps.dotd.la.gov/administration/public_info/projects/home.aspx?key=91

Sincerely,

Noel Ardoin
Environmental Engineer Administrator

Attachment
NA/clc
cc: SHPO File



June 9, 2016

Anna Hanks
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
201 Capitol Access Rd
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Ms. Hanks:

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Mid City Merchants Association (MCM). Our organization has been working for some time to have the right turn lane at the corner of South Eugene and Government Street decommissioned so that we can put a public park in its place. This is something that has been talked about for the last 20 years, and we believe that this is the perfect time to put our plan into motion. If we are able to get the lane revoked, we can put money towards the necessary improvements to make it a public park. Attached find a sketch of one option for the new park. This could also accommodate a full pull out for a bus stop, which I understand is one of the things you are looking for.

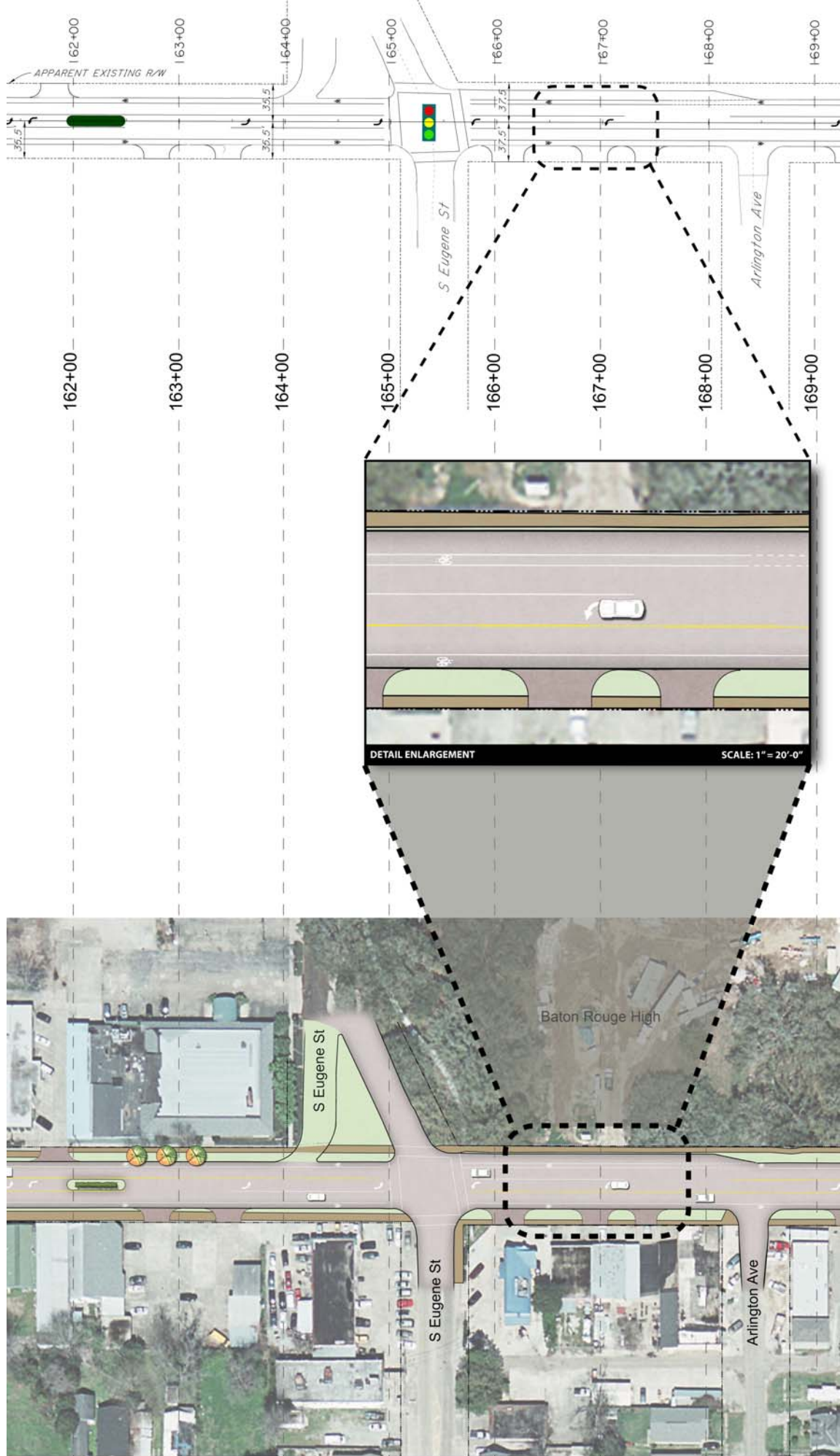
We are very much in favor of the road diet and the upcoming changes, and we are very excited to see progress towards getting the improvements implemented.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. If you should have any questions or need anything further, please feel free to contact me at (225)571-5596 or by email at dyke@dna-workshop.com.

Respectfully,

Dyke Nelson
President





June 9, 2016

Anna S. Hanks
LA Department of Transportation and Development
P.O. Box 94245
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

Dear Ms. Hanks:

Please receive this letter on behalf of Mid City Redevelopment Alliance (MCRA) indicating our complete support for the Government Street Road. We have been working with our sister organization, the Mid City Merchants Association for 25 years with a common vision of making Mid City a thriving residential and commercial area that serves as a destination for almost anyone.

MCRA's mission is to develop and promote the growth and renewal of Mid City Baton Rouge by attracting new and retaining current residents and businesses. We believe this Road Diet will help to make Government Street the destination corridor that boosts the area's economic vitality. The site between Baton Rouge Magnet High and Boudreaux's has been highlighted in the Government Street Master Action Plan (GoMAP!) as a place for a pocket park.

The Mid City Plaza, as we have coined it, would be a living space where we envision community gatherings to locate. We recognize the dedicated right turn lane would need to be revoked and the site adjusted to provide for right turns, but we think the remaining space is suitable for such a green space. These two Mid City organizations would like to partner with the city and state to see this gathering space come to life; and to have it aligned with the Road Diet makes perfect sense as well.

Please know that we remain excited by this project and we are ready to assist. Please let us know how we might help. Thank you for your continued efforts on this project.

Sincerely,



Samuel Sanders
Executive Director