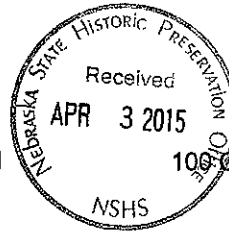




U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

NEBRASKA DIVISION

April 3, 2015



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Room 220
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402)742-8460

L. Robert Puschendorf
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historical Society
P.O. Box 82554
Lincoln, NE 68508

HP# 1405-135-01
County BH
STR. X ARCHEO.
Resp. Dave

Dear Mr. Puschendorf:

**Project ENH-49(46), CN 13214
Tecumseh Historic Square Preservation
City of Tecumseh, Johnson County
Project Effects Report**

Please review this document on historic resources for the subject project as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended and implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.

An evaluation of the potential for cultural resources, both archeology and standing structures, is included below [and in enclosures]. Your office concurred with eligibility recommendations on June 6, 2014 (HP# 1405-135-01). For their comment, this documentation has also been provided to the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska.

Project Description

The Project is generally described as a Reconstruction of existing brick streets and existing concrete walkways. The Project Study Area (Enclosure 2) includes brick paved streets, concrete paved parking, concrete paved walkways, and concrete curb and gutters. The brick surfacing has either deteriorated in place, been repaired/replaced with materials such as asphalt or concrete, or has remained in good condition. The same brick streets have over time settled or heaved creating uneven surfaces. The concrete paved parking areas, concrete paved walkways, and concrete curb and gutters range in condition from fair to poor and lack consistent width, type, or location.

The Project will include removing all existing brick, relaying the existing brick that are in good condition, and replacing the balance of the degraded brick with an acceptable brick that is either the same or similar type of brick as the existing. During this process not only will the brick roadway be replaced, but both the existing roadway profile and cross section deficiencies will be improved. In all areas of the brick roadway a granular sub-surface drainage system will be incorporated to primarily address the structural integrity of the brick system and secondarily address a portion of the storm sewer surface runoff. All edges of the brick street will be contained by either a newly installed concrete curb and gutter, newly installed concrete pavement, or an abutting existing street. In combination with the street pavement improvements, various off-street parking areas around the square will either be

installed or replaced with concrete pavement. Additionally, all existing walkways installed between the back of curb and the front of the existing buildings around the outside perimeter of the courthouse square will be replaced with concrete complying with current ADA regulations. Concrete walks along both sides of the streets extending radially one block away from the main courthouse square will also be replaced with concrete sidewalks that maintain both a consistent location and width.

From visible reviews and records research, coal chutes exist below the walkways at several of the buildings surrounding the courthouse square. These coal chutes are no longer in use and have been filled in or abandoned over time by their respective building owners. During the walkway improvement process, each of the coal chutes will be exposed, observed for existing conditions, and then properly abandoned prior to placement of the new concrete walkways.

Similar to the coal chutes there is a series of underground storage vaults along one of the businesses at the northwest corner of 4th & Broadway Streets. These storage vaults are no longer in use and are in poor condition. During the walkway improvements process, each of the underground storage vaults will be exposed, observed for existing conditions, and then properly abandoned prior to placement of the new concrete walkway.

To properly address the significant elevation difference between the street and sidewalk along the west side of 3rd Street, South of Clay Street a newly installed retaining wall is planned. A similar situation exists in front of the City office building, which will be corrected by a combination ramp and retaining wall system complying with current ADA regulations. Along with all of the surface pavement improvements, utility infrastructure improvements are planned due to their deteriorating condition and location under pavement. Replacement of the existing cobra style street lights, installed in the late 1980s located along the outside perimeter of the square, with period correct energy efficient street lighting will complement and match the lights currently located on the inside perimeter of the courthouse square. The proposed historic style lighting will both enhance the historic character of the district and reference (but not exactly replicate) the types of lights historically used in the square as identified through historic photographs. New storm sewer inlets will be placed at the southern end of both 3rd Street and 4th Street so the storm water surface drainage from the streets can be collected and directed into the existing buried storm sewer system. The network of existing water pipes around the perimeter of the courthouse square will be replaced and located under the new pavement. All utility improvements, excluding the water system, are considered participating. Although the water system improvements will not be funded by the project, they will be included during construction of the pavement improvements due to the proposed installation location.

Temporary pedestrian access will be required to maintain business access during construction. Construction will be phased so only one street at a time will be under construction. During this time, one street will be closed and a detour route posted that would avoid the historic square. The detour route will be north on 2nd St. and 5th St. to Jackson St. However, access to the square will be maintained via the other three streets that will not be under construction at that time.

Project ENH-49(46), CN 13214, Tecumseh Historic Square Preservation, City of Tecumseh, Johnson County

Description of Historic Properties

As previously concurred upon by NESHPO, there are two historic properties located within the APE considered for this project. The Tecumseh Architectural District encompasses 50 square blocks of the City of Tecumseh and was listed in the NRHP in 1975 under Criteria A and C. The brick streets are considered to be a contributing structure to the Architectural District NHRP nomination. The Johnson County Courthouse Square was listed under Criteria A and C in 1989.

Discussion of Project Effects

Archeological Resources

During archeological investigations completed for this project, no archeological historic properties were identified; therefore, FHWA recommends that no archeological historic properties would be affected by the project as proposed.

Due to the previous development around the historic square, there is low potential for intact significant archeological properties to be present. However, the topographic setting is typical of those settings that contain burials and other important site types in southeast Nebraska. Given the prominent landform, there is some potential to discover buried archeological sites during construction. As a precaution, the NDOR project manager would coordinate with the NDOR Section 106 Specialist to ensure that a Nebraska Highway Archeology Program (NHAP) archeologist is on site to monitor construction activities during trenching for the waterlines after removal of the brick streets.

Above Ground Resources

The proposed project, Tecumseh Historic Square Preservation, has the potential to affect the NRHP listed Tecumseh Architectural District and associated brick streets and the NRHP listed Johnson County Courthouse Square. Melissa Dirr Gengler of Historic Resources Group (HRG) has reviewed the proposed project and has determined that the project activities described above, and further detailed in Enclosure 3 meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and do not rise to the level of adverse effect. Stacy Stupka-Burda, NDOR Section 106 Specialist has reviewed the HRG report and concurs with the project effects recommendations summarized below.

The brick on the streets will be removed to accommodate a new water line and new subsurface to stabilize the bricks. The brick will be removed by mechanical means, and all existing brick that is structurally intact will be cleaned and stacked on moving pallets. All existing brick designated for re-use in the project will be temporarily stored within a secure area owned by the City of Tecumseh. The temporary brick storage area is located within the APE limits as defined by the project. Upon completion of the roadway subgrade and brick support structure, the existing bricks will be reinstalled. Where existing brick is not stable for re-use, salvage brick from the side streets within the APE will be relocated to the courthouse square. New brick that matches the color and configuration of the old brick will be interspersed as needed throughout the project. An emphasis will be placed on utilizing as much historic brick as possible at the streets surrounding the courthouse square. This activity meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation (Enclosure 3).

New crosswalks will be installed to meet current design standards. These crosswalks will be concrete with a colored pigment to blend with the existing brick. These concrete crosswalks will meet design standards and will provide a safe crossing throughout the downtown core.

Project activities would include removing and rebuilding the existing concrete sidewalks to meet current design standards. An historic exterior light well with its railing and grate and an exterior stair with railing at the Ellsworth Building (398 Broadway) would be retained and re-used as part of this project. The new sidewalk would maintain the same physical relationship and transition between the termination of the sidewalk and the brick walls of the buildings. This activity would not rise to the level of an adverse effect.

Storage areas located under the sidewalk will be filled in as appropriate to maintain structural stability of the new sidewalk. The underground storage areas are not historic, but are adjacent to historic buildings. These vaults would be filled in using flowable fill. This sand and cement mixture will fill the void without mechanically compacting the material, maintaining the structural stability of the adjacent buildings. During the design process, if the flowable fill method is determined to be an additional loading that cannot be supported by the current wall condition; supplemental supports/bracing would be permanently installed. This activity would not rise to the level of an adverse effect.

The project as proposed would install new roadway lighting that would match the historically appropriate lighting already in use at the historic Courthouse Square. This activity would not rise to the level of an adverse effect.

There are no project activities proposed within the boundaries of the Johnson County Courthouse Square, and there would be no improvements to the detour route for use as a detour. Construction would be phased and the detour route would not experience an increase in the amount and type of traffic that would warrant concern regarding vibratory or auditory affects to the historic properties.

Project Effects Recommendation and Section 4(f) Recommendations

While these activities would affect the historic properties, the affect does not rise to the level of an adverse effect because the activities would not diminish the integrity or the characteristics that make this property eligible for listing in the NRHP. The project activities meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and will help ensure continued use of these historic properties.

FHWA recommends a finding of "no adverse effect" under Section 106

The following conservation conditions would be employed:

- The NDOR project manager will ensure that archeologists from the Nebraska Highway Archeology Program (NHAP) are invited to the pre-construction meetings. The NDOR project manager will coordinate with the NDOR Section 106 Specialist to ensure that a Nebraska Highway Archeology Program (NHAP) archeologist is on site to monitor construction activities during trenching for the waterlines after removal of the brick streets. If previously unidentified historic properties, or unanticipated effects, are discovered after project construction begins, that portion of the project will stop

immediately, in accordance with NDOR Standard Specification 107.10. No further work in the area of discovery will proceed until FHWA determines that the requirements of 36 CFR 800.13 have been satisfied, including consultation with Tribes that may attach traditional religious and cultural significance to the discovered property.

The brick in the existing brick streets will be removed by the contractor using mechanical means. The on-site construction phase representative will provide aid to the contractor for determination of structurally sound bricks. All existing brick that is structurally intact will be cleaned and stacked on wooden pallets. All existing brick designated for re-use in the project will be temporarily stored within a secure area owned by the City of Tecumseh. Where existing brick is not stable for re-use, salvage brick from the side streets within the APE will be relocated to the courthouse square. New brick that matches the color and configuration of the old brick will be interspersed as needed throughout the project. An emphasis will be placed on utilizing as much historic brick as possible at the streets surrounding the courthouse square.

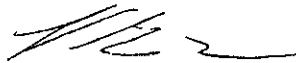
The light well and the exterior stair at the Ellsworth Building (398 Broadway) shall be retained and re-used as part of the sidewalk reconstruction. The light well with its railing and grate, as well as the exterior stair and its railing would be carefully removed by the contractor prior to construction and safely stored within a secure area owned by the City of Tecumseh. These items would be clearly labeled "Do Not Dispose". The contractor would be responsible for reinstallation of these elements.

The contractor shall be responsible for filling each void discovered during the construction process using flowable fill. A sand and cement mixture, the flowable fill will fill the void without mechanically compacting the material. During the design process, if the flowable fill method is determined to be an additional loading that cannot be supported by the current wall condition; supplemental supports/bracing would be permanently installed.

The Federal Highway Administration respectfully requests NeSHPO concurrence with these Section 106 effect determination of effects, and is providing notification of the Section 4(f) use determination.

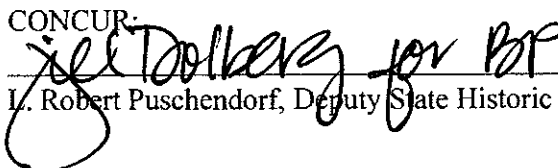
If you have any questions regarding this information, do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,



Melissa Maiefski
Program Delivery Team Lead

CONCUR:

 for BP

L. Robert Puschendorf, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

4-7-15

Date