

**CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT**  
**SOUTHEAST TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS**



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## **Abstract**

Preservation Central, Inc. (Preservation Central), under contract to the Travis County Historical Commission, completed historic and architectural investigations in southeast Travis County in accordance with the Travis County Request for Services (RFS) #1309-003. The project area encompassed a largely rural or semi-rural part of Travis County lying south of the Colorado River, east of the Austin city limits, west of the Bastrop and Caldwell county lines, and north of the Hays County line.

Preservation Central conducted a cultural resources survey to provide the necessary identification, documentation, and framework for future preservation efforts for southeast Travis County, Texas. The survey has resulted in a complete inventory of the historic-age resources (50 years old or older) within the project area and Texas Historical Sites Survey Forms for all of these properties, regardless of condition.

All major tasks were performed by Preservation Central. The cultural resources survey was conducted in compliance with applicable THC and U.S. Department of the Interior standards. The survey followed the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation* for intensive level surveys.

This project was funded in part through a Certified Local Government Grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as administered by the Texas Historical Commission. The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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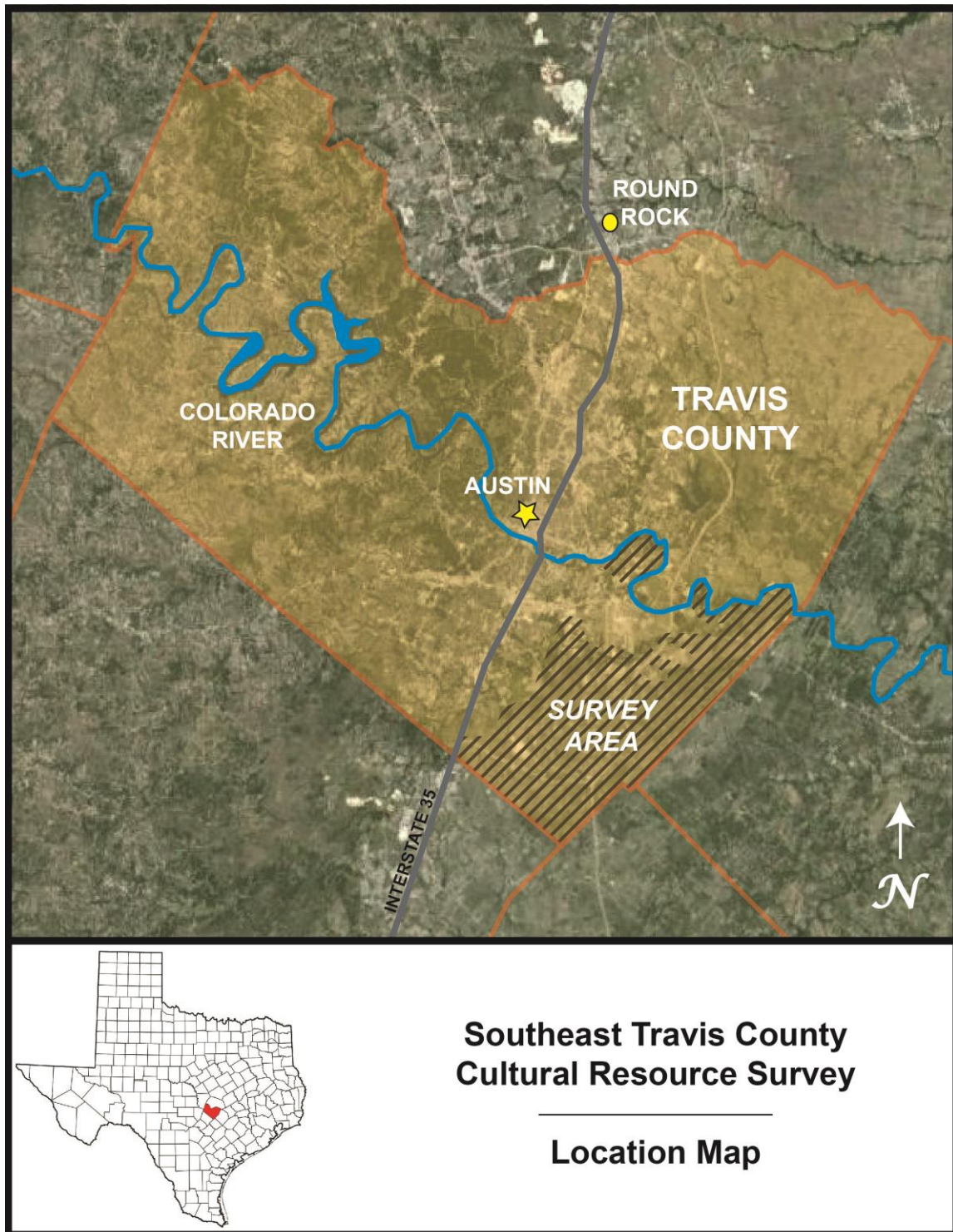


Figure 1: Map of Travis County showing Southeast Quadrant

## INTRODUCTION

The Southeast Travis County Cultural Resources Survey and Assessment project documented every historic-age (50-years old or older) building, structure, object, and above-ground site in southeast Travis County, an area bounded on the north by the Colorado River, on the west by the Austin city limits, on the east by the Bastrop and Caldwell county lines, and on the south by the Hays County line (Figure 1). The project area is a largely rural and contains numerous farmsteads with multiple resources that were minimally discussed as part of the overall site. Historic farming communities, such as Elroy, Garfield, and Moore's Crossing, were documented, along with several historic-age subdivisions. Survey efforts were conducted by project director, Terri Myers, and volunteer members of the Travis County Historical Commission. The survey consisted of systematically driving the roads in the project area, identifying historic-age properties, documenting their physical characteristics by completing a Texas Historical Commission survey form, and taking color digital photographs of each property. Volunteers plotted the location of these resources on a county map.

The project director also assigned preservation priorities to each surveyed property. These priorities were based on age, the relative significance of the type or style of the architecture as found in the project area, alterations if any, and known historic associations. Resources were labeled as High, Medium, or Low preservation priorities, according to their physical integrity and how well they conveyed a sense of history. In general, High priority properties retain their historic architectural fabric to an exceptional degree and are often associated with historical events, people, or trends in the survey area. Medium priority properties are historic-age resources that are good or typical examples of an architectural type or style and retain sufficient historic physical attributes to be recognizable to the area's period of significance. Low priority properties have been significantly altered and no longer convey a good sense of history.

The survey yielded 505 properties. That number was reduced somewhat when some were found to be nonhistoric and others were surveyed twice. Ultimately, 499 historic-age properties were surveyed with 42 High priority properties with considerable architectural significance. High priority properties may be eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Another 271 were determined to be Medium priorities, i.e., good or typical examples of their architectural type and Contributing elements in a potential historic district. Finally, 180 resources were determined to be Low priorities due to severe alteration. Low priority properties would be considered Noncontributing elements of any potential historic district. There were 6 resources that were not categorized as they were not visible from the public right-of-way. Preservation Central also identified four potential historic districts – distinct areas with concentrations of good, relatively unaltered resources dating to the historic period. They include clusters of late nineteenth/early twentieth century resources in Elroy and Garfield, a block

consisting primarily of bungalows on Nuckols Crossing, and postwar subdivisions in the Pilot Knob and Martin Shaw additions.

This document is a report of the survey activity and results. It contains a discussion of the methodology, a brief historic context, and an examination of the property types found in the region. It discusses the survey results, offers recommendations, and includes a bibliography. Deliverables include this report, electronic versions of the database, individual survey forms, and labeled photographs for each historic-age property regardless of priority or condition.

## Research, Survey, and Report Methods

On November 7, 2013, Travis County informed Terri Myers, principal of Preservation Central, Inc., that the firm had been selected to conduct a cultural resources survey of southeast Travis County. Upon Notice-to-Proceed, Ms. Myers met with members of the Certified Local Government Committee of the Travis County Historical Commission. Those present at the meeting of January 10, 2014, were Bob Ward, Bill Hamilton, and Barry Hutchinson. The group met to discuss the research and survey methodology for the project. The survey area was pre-determined to include the southeastern portion of Travis County outside the Austin City limits, with the Colorado River as the northern boundary, the city limits as the western boundary, Bastrop and Caldwell county lines as the eastern boundary and Hays County as the southern limit.

### *Research Methodology*

From her previous survey and National Register experience in the project area, Ms. Myers had a large collection of relevant primary and secondary research materials in her possession. Ms. Myers reviewed these files, records, and reports and concluded that they would provide a good foundation for studying the historic and architectural development of the current project. Such resources included the *Manor Historic Resources Survey* (Myers, et. al., 2007), the *Historic Context for Southeast Travis County and Cultural Resources Survey and Assessment for the New Austin Airport* (Myers, et. al., Hardy Heck Moore, 1996), the *Ernest and Anna Gustafson Farmstead* National Register nomination (Myers et. al., Hardy Heck Moore & Associates, 1996), and *Historic and Architectural Resources of Southeast Travis County, Texas*, Multiple Property National Register nomination (Myers et. al., Hardy Heck Moore & Associates, 1996).

Ms. Myers also encountered people during field investigations who provided valuable information about particular resources and the area in general. In addition, Ms. Myers conducted minimal census and tax appraisal district research to identify early families and occupations in the project area and to assist in dating the cultural resources.

Little information was found on the families who settled in the project area except for Thomas F. McKinney, Horton Duval, and Sebron G. Sneed, whose properties are either gone or lie just inside the Austin city limits. These men made considerable contributions to the history and physical development of southeast Travis County and are mentioned in the Context and Property Types sections of this report. With these exceptions, most of the area's early settlers were farmers or stock raisers whose contributions were limited to their families and immediate communities. As a result, little archival information was found about their lives. Their physical contributions to the southeast quadrant of Travis County, in the



form of farmhouses, agricultural resources, commercial buildings, schools, churches, and cemeteries, remain to speak for them.

### ***Survey Methodology***

At their January 10, 2014 meeting, Ms. Myers and members of the Certified Local Government Committee discussed a methodology for field work as proposed in the Scope of Work devised for the project and as amended during the meeting. As agreed, Ms. Myers would conduct the survey accompanied in the field by a volunteer of the Travis County Historical Commission who would assist her. The committee had a cadre of volunteers ready to perform field work. They included Bob Ward, Bill Hamilton, Barry Hutchinson, May Schmidt, Margie Alford, Bonnie Wilson, Teri Fleck, and Emma Couhig, an intern with Travis County. In addition, historical architect Karen McGraw accompanied Ms. Myers on days when no volunteers were available. In most cases, the volunteers met Ms. Myers at her office in the morning and the spent most of the day in the field.

### ***Reconnaissance Survey***

On February 18, 2014, Ms. Myers and volunteer May Schmidt conducted a reconnaissance survey in the territory to identify distinct communities and the variety of property types to be found. Communities included Carl, Creedmoor, Garfield, Elroy, and Moore's Crossing. In Pilot's Knob, they discovered a historic-period (pre-1965) subdivision. They took color digital photographs of good or typical property types throughout the reconnaissance area to use in planning the rest of the survey. Because the project area was so large, the reconnaissance survey was limited to driving the main roads and planning the routes for the intensive level survey.

### ***Intensive Level Survey***

Inclement weather hampered the start of the comprehensive level survey. Work commenced on February 24, 2014, and continued through late February, March, April, and into May. In all, it took 25 work days to complete the survey of southeast Travis County.

Ms. Myers used current county roads maps to identify survey areas and to plot resources. The project director attempted to survey properties on roads following North-South/East-West coordinates, but main roads in the survey area tended to follow topographical lines, skirting waterways, and traversing hills along terraces. Because of this and the distances between resources, it was determined that the survey would be a vehicular one conducted in zones marked by major roads, distinct communities, and subdivisions rather than in a strict grid. In areas where historic-age properties were more concentrated, the field team conducted a pedestrian survey.

Within these zones, the teams conducted a vehicular survey proceeding along the roads within the area, mapping and recording salient features of resources or groups of resources on either side of the roads. Once all public roads within the given zone were covered, the zone was surveyed until the entire project area was covered. Sites were plotted on roads throughout the area. Roads were color-coded to make sure that all areas were surveyed.

The survey consisted of Ms. Myers identifying historic-age properties according to their plan, style, use, and her experience in the field, and the volunteer recording that information on a Texas Historical Commission's Historic Resource Form. Basic information was dictated to the assigned volunteer for each property or group of property that have achieved the recommended 50-year mark for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Recorded information included the property address (when known), the property type, subtype, style if any, age, and materials used. In addition, Ms. Myers narrated a brief property description to the volunteer who copied it onto the form.

At the same time, Ms. Myers photographed the resource or resources. Where possible, the photographs were taken as oblique views to capture the front and at least one side elevation. Additional photographs were taken to portray unique or interesting features of the property such as decorative architectural details. In some cases, photographs were taken to show the property within its physical context. The volunteer plotted the location of the resource on a field map prepared for that purpose.

Field investigations included assigning a Preservation Priority to each surveyed property denoted as High, Medium, or Low priorities. High level properties are almost always excellent examples of a recognized type or style of architecture or are associated with historic events, trends, or people who were significant in the settlement, development, and growth of the project area. Such properties may be eligible for individual listing in the National Register.

Medium preservation priorities are good or typical examples of their architectural type or style and, while perhaps not individually eligible for listing in the National Register, may be considered Contributing elements in a potential historic district. Low preservation priorities are properties that are either nonhistoric or are historic-age properties that have been severely altered such that they are no longer recognizable to their period of significance. Such properties would be considered Noncontributing elements of a historic district.

Though Low preservation priorities were technically exempt from the survey, the Preservation Central teams documented all historic period properties due to the potential for several historic districts for

which this information would be required. Nonhistoric properties were not surveyed unless they were found to be within a few years of the recommended 50-year age.

Ms. Myers took all photographs in the project area. She made every effort to take two images of each resource to show the maximum number of facades. Because many resources were set back far from the public right-of-way, it was difficult to capture two different photographs and in those cases, photographs were taken of the same image with a slightly different exposure. All High priority properties were photographed in color digital JPEG format at 300 dpi resolution. Digital photographs are 1200 x 1800 in size and are submitted on DVD-R. Images were renamed according to address and property number. Myers also photographed each streetscape and clusters of related resources to illustrate the historic context and identify potential historic districts.

An overview map and four quadrant maps were made that show the location of each surveyed resource. A USGS 7.5 series map was used as a base map. Site numbers are keyed to a tabular inventory form. In the case of building complexes containing a large number of individual resources, “inset” maps were prepared showing the relationship of buildings within the complex.

Upon completion of the field work, all survey data was entered into a Microsoft Access database compatible with that of the Texas Historical Commission and the Travis County Commissioner’s office. At the same time, research and writing for the Historic Context and Survey Results sections of the report commenced.

### ***Report Methodology***

Upon completion of the survey, this report was written to discuss the results of the survey. It contains an Abstract and Introduction that briefly describe the project and its purpose, a discussion of the project Methodology, a Historic Context for Southeast Travis County, and an analysis of Property Types found in the project area. The narrative context is based on both primary and secondary sources, including documents on file at the Austin History Center and Manor Public Library, resources available at the Center for American History (University of Texas at Austin), and information gathered from local citizens and other knowledgeable sources. It also draws upon Ms. Myers’ previous work in writing a Multiple Property nomination for southeastern Travis County. It includes a bibliography and internal citations. The narrative will be organized chronologically and provide information on the settlement of the area, its economic and social history, and the factors that influenced its physical development

The Property Types section identifies the types of cultural resources in the project area and outlines the basis for their assessment as High, Medium, or Low Preservation Priorities as well as the criteria required for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Results section of the report includes the total number of historic resources recorded, and the numbers of High and Medium (Contributing) and Low (Noncontributing) priority historic resources in the survey area. It also discusses the potential for historic districts in the project area.

Recommendations include observations on the state of historic preservation in southeast Travis County and provide some strategies on how to preserve resources that reflect the history and architecture. Such recommendations include nominating outstanding resources to the National Register of Historic Places and pursuing the designation of historic districts in the area.

Final products include four bound copies and one unbound copy of the survey report containing the inventory of properties and maps. It is recommended that one bound copy of the report be submitted to the Austin History Center. The Travis County Historical Commission should retain the unbound report for reproduction. Digital versions of the report, database, and photographs will be submitted to the Texas Historical Commission and the Travis County Historical Commission on CD or DVD-R.

The survey report complies with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and State Historic Preservation Officer's (SHPO) directives and shall be consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation*. All activities and deliverables will conform to the requirements of RFS #1309-003.

### ***Appendices***

In addition to the Survey Report, Preservation Central shall present the Travis County Historical Commission with the following work products as appendices:

- Historic Resources Inventory
- Project Area Maps with each Surveyed Site noted by Site Number
- Texas Historical Resources Survey Forms for all historic-age sites.
- Report, Maps, and Digital Photographs on DVD-R

A Historic Resources Inventory follows the report as Appendix A. The inventory lists each site and its components and their essential qualities, such as plan type, roof form, materials, fenestration, and porch details. Preservation priorities are also included in the inventory. A survey map identifying all historic resources and sites in the project area is included as an appendix to this report. Potential districts are outlined on the map. All data has been input in a Microsoft Access database and copied onto a DVD-R

to as a work product along with the report. The database includes a Texas Historical Commission Historic Resources Survey Form for each surveyed resource.

### ***Photographs***

Color digital photographs were taken of all historic-age properties and are presented to the Travis County Historical Commission and the THC on DVD-R. The digital photographs are 300 dpi JPEG or TIFF files, 1200 x 1800 in size and saved to CD.

### ***Site Map***

All surveyed sites are located on a USGS 7.5-series base map. Maps are of sufficient size to readily identify surveyed sites. All surveyed properties are indicated on the map by site numbers keyed to a tabular inventory. Significant building complexes, if necessary, will have smaller “inset” maps showing the placement of individual resources within the cluster.

### ***Computer Data***

Preservation Central, Inc. has submitted digital copies of the maps, inventory, historic sites forms, report, and color photographs on a DVD-R.

All designations and codes set forth by the SHPO are used in the forms, inventory, and project report. Architectural styles and terminology conform to those developed by Virginia and Lee McAlester, John J.G. Blumenson, and Steven J. Phillips. The inventory will be reviewed by the Travis County Historical Commission designee and SHPO. Preservation Central will make appropriate changes for final submittal.

## Historic and Architectural Resources in Southeast Travis County, Texas: 1820-1965

Spanish *entradas* likely passed through Travis County on exploratory missions as early as the late seventeenth century. Spanish explorer Domingo Terán crossed the Colorado River a few miles south of present Austin in 1671; his is the first known European expedition through present Travis County. Similar expeditions brought Spanish explorers through the territory in the early eighteenth century, and in 1730, three short-lived missions were established near Austin's Barton Springs. In 1721, the Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo crossed Onion Creek at what would become known as McKinney Falls in southeast Travis County (Masson et al., 1993:15). These tentative expeditions were typical of Spanish occupation in present Travis County before the nineteenth century.

Finally, in 1820, *empresario* Stephen F. Austin negotiated with Spain and, later, with Mexico, to allow Anglo settlement in present Texas. Some would-be settlers rushed into the open land in southeast Travis County before Austin's plans were finalized. When settlement arrangements were finally made in 1830, Austin traveled to present southeast Travis County on the banks of the Colorado River. He was accompanied by a survey crew including Reuben Hornsby, John F. Webber, Martin Wells, William Barton, and Jesse Tannehill. This expedition opened the door to legal settlement in eastern Travis County. Webber and Hornsby were among the first of Austin's colonists to settle in northeast Travis County. Both obtained Mexican land grants about 1832. Barton settled at Barton Springs in present Austin about 1837. Tannehill obtained a league of land about three miles east of present downtown Austin in southeast Travis County (Brown, various dates: 11.21 in Robinson and Utley, 1992:15). Thomas F. McKinney obtained land southeast of present Austin in 1839, but did not occupy his homestead for another decade.

More settlers came to southeast Travis County in the 1840s. Some original grantees like Santiago Del Valle and Jose Antonio Navarro never occupied their grants and ultimately sold their lands in adjacent Bastrop and Travis counties to Anglo farmers. The southeastern quadrant of the county drew settlers who were attracted to the black loamy soil watered by the Colorado River and Onion Creek. They cleared the land for subsistence farming and hunted wild game for food. Though limestone was plentiful, most of the early farmers built log houses and outbuildings, such as pig pens, corn cribs, corrals and simple barns. Slave ownership was widespread among both wealthy landowners and subsistence farmers despite its prohibition by Mexican law.

During the early years under Mexican rule, few trading stations emerged in Travis County. A single Indian trading post – Comanche – lay just south of the Colorado River and north of present Highway 71. It also served as a "fort" against Indian raids, which continued through the 1840s and later. By 1835,

*palisado* forts built of vertical timbers sprang up across the county to protect settlers from potential Mexican invasion rather than Indian incursions. Rebellious Texans had broken away from Mexican rule and struggled to establish the Republic of Texas. One such fort, Fort Coleman, was built east of present Montopolis, at the northwest corner of Jesse Tannehill's league in southeast Travis County. It consisted of several cabins and a stockade (Barkley, 1963: 7). Tannehill reportedly built his house from logs used to build Fort Coleman, by then abandoned.

John Caldwell was one of the first to settle south of the Colorado River near the mouth of Onion Creek. His home lay in the vicinity of Comanche. Other early settlers in southeast Travis County were John McGehee, who came to the area in 1837; John Burleson; Thomas A. Moore, whose son would later establish Moore's Crossing; and James Gilleland, for whom Gilleland Creek is named (Peterson, n.d.: 5). Jesse Tannehill may have been the most ambitious of the early settlers. In 1839, he laid out the town of Montopolis on his 800-acre grant, but the newly platted county seat and Republic capital of Austin attracted most of the area's business trade and Montopolis failed to thrive against the competition.

Nevertheless, the land was considered desirable for its scenic beautiful and proximity to the new Texas capital and county seat. It was described by one local observer as follows:

To the south the scenery becomes more graceful and harmonious; hill beyond hill, and mound beyond mound, continuing in gradual succession, interspersed with verdant prairie, and beautifully diversified green groves of all shapes and various dimension, lie spread out to view (*Texas Sentinel*, 15 January 1840, in Hardy, 1938: 14-15).

Some early land grantees obtained their property as investments. One instance involved three separate land sales on Onion Creek before 1850. Ultimately, the land at present Moore's Crossing sold to William S. Wallace who was the first known occupant in 1847 (Travis County Deed Records, Vol. B: 336, in Jones, n.d.).

In 1840, after Travis County was established, commissioners ordered roads, bridges, and ferries throughout the county. That year, county officials and local citizens began to improve the Bastrop to Austin road and ordered ferry crossings and bridges to make the capital more accessible for those living outside Austin. County commissioners regulated ferry rates for men and horses (WPA Historical Records Survey, Travis County Commissioners Court Minutes, Vol. A: March 6, 1946-51). The county also established mail routes. One of the first was at Col. Harvey Jines' property near Comanche, just south of the Colorado River and north of present Highway 71. Designated in 1839, it was the first known official postal station in southeast Travis County (Barkley, 1963: 251).

***Moore's Crossing: Wallace-Burleson-Moore Homestead on Onion Creek 1842-1848***

Three pioneer families, the Wallaces, Burlesons, and Moores, came to southeastern Travis County between 1831 and 1842. They occupied the same homestead at different times and represent separate eras in the development of southeast Travis County. The Wallace-Burleson-Moore farmstead on the south side of Onion Creek represents development in southeast Travis County from 1842 to about 1925.

William S. Wallace's homestead and early improvements stem from the earliest pioneer period, c. 1842-1848. Wallace moved from his home state of Tennessee to Bastrop County in 1836 where he was appointed county surveyor the following year. His career was short-lived as he enlisted under General Edward Burleson during the Cordova Rebellion of 1837. Wallace conducted himself well, reportedly killing Manuel Flores in hand-to-hand combat on May 14, 1837. For his bravery, Texas President Mirabeau B. Lamar promoted Wallace to lieutenant colonel and rewarded him with Flores' rifle (Jenkins, 1958:268).

Wallace returned to Bastrop where he married Mary Ann O'Connell in 1841. The couple may have moved to Travis County as early as 1842 when Wallace appears in the tax rolls as owning 20 head of cattle in the county. It is not known whether Wallace actually occupied his Travis County land or if he merely paid taxes on his livestock there. By 1846, however, it is almost certain that Wallace had moved from Bastrop to Travis County. His 1846 tax assessment indicated that he owned three slaves worth \$1,500, four horses or mules valued at \$200, 20 head of cattle totaling \$100, and a wagon valued at \$25. All were listed as Travis County assets. These items and values show considerable increase from previous years, suggesting that he and his family occupied the land by 1846.

It is likely that the Wallace family lived in a small log shelter near Onion Creek but within a few years, the family occupied a much larger, three-room log house. The original one-room log house may have been used as a slave house once the Wallaces moved into the more substantial dwelling. In a cultural resources survey conducted in 1996, both buildings were still standing on the Wallace homestead site. The c. 1846 one-room log house (Site 36) is pictured below as it appeared in a photograph taken by Architectural Historian Diane Williams during that survey. It was inaccessible to the surveyors in the present project and its condition is not known. The later three-room log dwelling (Site 36) can be seen from FM 973 but the site is cordoned off by a 10' chain link fence.





William and Mary Ann Wallace log house c. 1846. Photo by Diane Williams, 1996.

By 1848, Wallace claimed six slaves and personal property worth \$5,064 (Travis County Tax Rolls, 1842-1848). From these records and his 1848 will, it appears that Wallace owned the spacious three-room dwelling, at least one slave house, privies, a shelter for his horses, pens for his hogs, and, most likely, a corral or other fences.

Family accounts compiled by Joanna Steger in the 1950s described the Wallace house as consisting of three large rooms built of hand-hewn cedar with hand-cut cedar shingles. The large center bay measured 22' by 24' with a 14' ceiling. The center bay was adjacent to a room measuring 23' by 16' with a 12' ceiling and a second room measuring 22' by 18' also with a 12' ceiling. Each of the rooms was outfitted with fireplaces. Windows were hinged, solid wood panels that could close tight in case of attack. Doors were of thick wood. According to Steger, the Wallaces built slave quarters, a corn crib, and a cooking shed behind the main house. They also built a corral and animal shelter. Steger also reported that the creek provided water for people and animals and made no mention of a well (Steger, n.d.).

According to family lore, Wallace was returning from a trip to Tennessee when he contracted a fever along the way and died in Houston. Mary Ann Wallace reportedly traveled to Houston where she had the body exhumed and reburied on the family homestead in Travis County (Steger n.d.). Archeologists have found no evidence of the grave on the property.

After William Wallace died, his widow, Mary Ann, kept the homestead running. According to the 1850 census, she had three children, six slaves, and a hired man living on the farm. She had 125 acres in cultivation and valued the place at \$6,600. She also owned considerable livestock: 14 horses, seven milch cows, 22 working oxen, 30 “other” cattle, and 100 swine. Her total worth was given as \$12,000 in 1850, a goodly sum for a widow with three young children in the territory. In comparison, neighbor John Burleson listed the value of his property and possessions at \$5,672 and Thomas McKinney claimed his property at \$10,000 worth of real estate. On November 10, 1851, Mary Ann Wallace married John Burleson, a widower of 45 years with five children (Travis County Marriage Records, Vol. 1: 93). In addition to Mary Ann’s children by William Wallace, she and Burleson had a daughter, Rebecca. Mary Ann died in 1853 and the Wallace farm was divided among the three Wallace children and Mary Ann’s daughter by Burleson. John and William Wallace lived on their share of the farm on the banks of Onion Creek.

Mary Ann Wallace and John Burleson’s brief union on the Wallace farmstead represents a more stable and prosperous agricultural era dependent on slave labor in the years preceding the Civil War. Martha Jane Burleson and Robert James Moore typified the post-Civil War transition to landlord/tenant and share cropping practices that became the mainstay of the agricultural enterprise in central Texas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### ***Antebellum Prosperity: 1848-1860***

While the earliest European settlers in southeast Travis County broke ground in a virtual wilderness, built their own log houses, and battled roving bands of Comanche Indians, those who came after about 1848 enjoyed relative prosperity and safety. By then, Texas was part of the United States and settlers achieved a degree of economic and political stability previously unknown to them. Many who came to the area in the 1840s and 1850s shared political and social values. They tended to be Southerners, members of the Democratic Party, and slave holders.

Among them was Thomas F. McKinney who had first claimed his land in the Del Valle League in 1839 but apparently did not occupy it until about 1849. In that year, he established a substantial mill complex near present SH 71 and Terry Lane, just south of the Colorado River (Site 505). Remains of this early construction project in the project area consist of a mill, a large quarried stone mechanical structure, and

at least two quarried dams over a spring-fed creek. The name “T. F. McKinney” and the date “1849” are carved into one of the large limestone blocks used in the mill’s construction. This complex is several miles north and a few years earlier than McKinney’s homestead.

About the same time, McKinney’s slaves built him a stately two-story limestone house. In addition to the house, McKinney’s slaves built a house for his horse trainer, a smoke house, an outdoor fireplace, a shed, and a hog pen out of limestone. Ruins of his homestead are among the oldest cultural resources in southeast Travis County and can be seen in McKinney Falls State Park immediately west of the project area. Though he was a slave owner, McKinney was a Unionist who opposed secession. Once the Civil War broke out, however, he supported the Confederate cause for the duration of the conflict.

Sebron G. Sneed was another Southern emigrant to southeast Travis County. Born in Kentucky, Sneed took a circuitous route to southeast Travis County, moving to Missouri, then Arkansas, he finally landed in Texas in 1848. Like McKinney, Sneed bought land in the Santiago Del Valle grant where he built a two-story limestone house. Sneed’s slaves quarried stone near the house site. A man named Sims served as the stone mason and Miles Byrne and Christian Wilhelm worked as carpenters on the house. The exterior walls were 24” thick and the house featured eight fireplaces. The house was documented by the Historic American Building Survey in the 1930s as a significant example of its type. It remained intact until 1991 when a fire reduced it to ruins. The site is protected as a City of Austin Landmark and lies in South Austin, just west of the project area boundaries on the east side of IH-35.

Thomas H. Duval built a stone house near the Sneed residence. The stone was reportedly quarried from the same source as the Sneed house. It lay adjacent to the road from Lockhart to Austin and was a popular watering stop for travelers. It had two rooms separated by a spacious central hall, of a type known as a “dog-trot” – a common type found in Texas before the Civil War. Duval built a log barn southwest of the house and later built an addition onto the original house, giving it an L-shape (Texas Historical Commission, Local History Programs, Horton-Duval House Marker Files). A later owner, James B. Thaxton, built a separate kitchen behind the house about 1855.

In addition to individual farmsteads, early settlers in southeast Travis County established schools, churches, Masonic lodges, and other civic buildings. Sebron and Marinda Sneed were among the first members of the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, one of the first churches in the area (Lemke, 1958:12). Other early churches in the vicinity included the Methodist Church, the Old School Presbyterian Church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Baptist Church (probably the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church). The Pleasant Hill School held classes on the first floor of the Baptist Church and a Masonic

Lodge met on the second floor (Texas Historical Commission, Local History Programs, Sneed House Marker file).

On the eve of the Civil War, southeast Travis County claimed some of the most productive agricultural land in central Texas. The county supported 470 farmers, 46 stock raisers, four herders, three ranchers, and three shepherds (Barkley, 1963: 258), many of whom lived and worked in southeast Travis County. Some of the county's wealthiest agriculturalists with large slave holdings lived in precincts three and four, which encompassed southeast Travis County: Thomas F. McKinney, Sebron Sneed, Thomas P. Washington, and Aaron Burleson were among them (Gentry and Gracy, 1967: 65). Still, of the county's 1,363,556 acres, only 44,609 were "improved" or under cultivation (Barkley, 1963: 258).

At the outset of the Civil War, Travis County voted by a narrow margin to remain in the Union rather than secede and join the Confederacy. The vote did little to allay the fears of either party as it revealed there were nearly as many Southern sympathizers as there were Northern supporters. Tensions played out in partisan newspapers, public debates, and sporadic street fights throughout Austin. In contrast, farmers and stock raisers in rural segments of the county tended to favor the Confederacy. Early settlers in Southeast Travis County, like Burleson, McKinney, Wallace, and the Moores, were almost all from the South and shared southern values including the supremacy of states' rights and slave ownership. Like their southern kin, they depended on an agricultural economy, one made easier by the use of slaves. From the first, they relied on slave labor to build their houses, dig their wells, till their fields, and dredge their roads from what had been a virtual wilderness.

Once the war erupted, Confederate infantry and cavalry camps cropped up across the Texan landscape. By the spring of 1862, Camp Terry was established near the mouth of Onion Creek, across from Thomas F. McKinney's 1849 mill. Its primary purpose was to train a "home guard" to protect this still-frontier region from lawlessness and Indian attack while most of the able-bodied men were at war in the southeast.

### ***Post-Civil War Period in Southeast Travis County***

The end of the Civil War marked enormous changes in agricultural methods, land ownership, demographic composition, and ultimately, the way of life in southeast Travis County. Most wealthy farmers grew cotton, a labor-intensive crop, and the loss of their slaves left them bereft of workers. Major antebellum property owners, like Thomas P. Washington, Aaron Burleson, and Thomas F. McKinney for instance, discovered that they were "land poor" after the war and many had incurred extensive debt to support the Confederate cause. One of the wealthiest men in southeast Travis County before the war, McKinney was overwhelmed by financial obligations. His grand house fell into ruin and

he was unable to secure the credit to repair it. Large land holdings were divided into smaller tracts and sold off piecemeal. The cash value of land, livestock, crops, and agricultural implements decreased. Some landowners were able to keep their farms through a combination of tenant farming and sharecropping (Travis County Census Records, 1870-1880).

One family is noteworthy for remaining in southeast Travis County since the earliest settlement of the area. Robert James Moore and Martha Burleson, both children of southeast Travis County pioneers, married and ultimately settled at the Wallace homestead (Lewis Publishing Company, 1893-321; Travis County marriage records, Vol. 1: 162). Their efforts led to the development of Moore's Crossing as the local hub of an agricultural community south of Onion Creek in the postwar period. They purchased 654 acres of land on Onion Creek, including a 200-acre tract of land from Martha Jane's stepsister, Mary Elizabeth Wallace Cooper, the daughter of Mary Ann and William S. Wallace. The purchase included the former Wallace family house where the Moores raised nine children (Lewis Publishing Company, 1893: 321).

Other members of the extended Wallace-Burleson-Moore family lived nearby. Mary Ann Wallace Cooper and her husband Christopher sold her portion to her stepsister, Martha Burleson Moore, but John and William Wallace remained on the 1,500-acre tract from the Navarro tract and began farming about 1868. In the 1870 agricultural census, John Wallace stated that he had 130 acres of land out of his parents' grant in cultivation. He claimed the value of the farm at \$3,000 and reported that he harvested 1,000 bushels of Indian corn, 40 bales of cotton, and 85 bushels of sweet potatoes (U.S. Bureau of the Census, agricultural census, 1870).

Despite hardships suffered in the war and its aftermath, both rural and urban population increased in Travis County between 1870 and 1880. Many of the newcomers had left the war-torn Southern states for a new start in Texas, which saw little of the ravages of the war. Refugees from Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Carolinas were particularly noticeable (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1870).

By 1880, more than 305,000 acres of land in Travis County were considered farmland. Of that number, 139,804 acres of land – nearly 46 percent – were improved or under cultivation. Cotton remained the county's principal crop. Nearly half of the county's farmland, about 66,000 acres, was devoted to its cultivation. Twenty-eight percent of the improved land was planted in grain with 31,000 acres in corn and the remaining grains in wheat, rye, and oats (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880).

A handful of foreign immigrants found their way to southeast Travis County after the Civil War. Notable among them were Scotsmen Donald and James McKenzie who settled in the Pilot Knob area by 1866, immediately after the war (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880).

Lack of good roads hampered development in southeast Travis County into the first decades of the twentieth century. The county focused largely on building and maintaining roads that connected Austin to other population centers, such as Georgetown to the north, Fredericksburg to the west, and San Antonio to the south. Rural roads in southeast Travis County during this period followed grant and property lines and remained unpaved well into the twentieth century. In 1898, the county charged William Wallace of Moore's Crossing with surveying many of its rural roads, including the Austin-to-Lockhart Road (the Old Lockhart Road) in the southern part of the quadrant and the Austin-to-Bastrop Road (the Old Bastrop Road) in the northern part of the quadrant. The County Commissioners Court dedicated some money for their maintenance but local farmers were charged with building and maintaining their section of the road, tasks generally passed on to laborers or tenant farmers. These were generally disorganized efforts with little official oversight. As a result, many roads in southeast Travis County stayed little more than trails between nearby neighbors or the small community centers that were beginning to emerge in the area.

After years of speculation, and stalled by the Civil War, the Houston and Texas Central Railroad (H&TC) was the first railroad line to arrive in downtown Austin, in December of 1871. It was the westernmost railroad terminus of Texas and its presence spawned tremendous growth in the capital city and its surrounding territory. Within five years, four competing railroads found their way to Austin and the city became the major trading venue of central Texas. The railroads passed through several small communities in Travis County, including Round Rock north of Austin and Manor in the northeast quadrant of the county. They bypassed southeast Travis County, however. The closest shipping points for farmers in the southernmost region of the county were in Buda, Neiderwald, and Uhland, all in Hays County to the southwest.

### ***German and Swedish Immigrants***

Large land owners continued to divide their grants into smaller farms through the 1880s, a trend that encouraged the growth of more but smaller farms in southeast Travis County. During the 1880s, the first wave of Swedish immigrants and a renewed influx of German immigrants moved into southeast Travis County. Typically, they purchased farms adjoining those of their countrymen, creating little Swedish or German communities. They brought their own social, educational, and religious traditions to the area. While some of the "old timers" may have disparaged the "foreigners," the newly arrived settlers infused the region with renewed vigor and ambitions. In the first decade after their arrival, for instance, Swedish immigrants established a small but thriving community at Elroy with a public school, Lutheran and Baptist churches, and a post office by 1894. German immigrants, the Kieke and Sassman families, also built a school and post office in the area in the 1880s (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880; Travis County Superintendent of Schools, 1905; Kieke, 1995).

Swedish immigrants, in particular, came to dominate cultural practices in parts of southeast Travis County in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In 1860, Swedish-born Texans numbered 153, but by 1870, that number more than doubled to 364. During the 1870s, their numbers increased until there were 1,293 Swedish-born Texans in 1880 and 2,806 in 1890. The abolition of slavery contributed to the increase in Swedish immigration in the postbellum era. Swedes as a whole disdained slavery and hesitated to settle in Southern states before emancipation. As with many immigrant surges in Texas, Swedes were recruited as farm laborers with the promise of eventually owning their own land. Johan Swenson recruited young Swedish men and women to work off their passage to Houston. From Houston, they traveled by train to Brenham and from there cross-country to Austin and the blackland prairie.

The first wave of Swedish immigrants in Travis County generally settled in the northeastern quadrant of the county where they founded communities in Manor, New Sweden, and Palm Valley. As land became scarce with increased immigration, new Swedish communities like Lund and Manda emerged. Finally, the Swedish community of Elroy sprang up south of the Colorado River. R.E. Stomberg of Austin purchased land for the new settlement about 1890 (Nelson, 1943: 304). A. Molund, Olof and William Palmquist, Andrew Johnson, Olaus Nelson, and August and John Lundell were among the late nineteenth century Swedish settlers in southeast Travis County. Lundell opened a store and built the community's first gin at the turn of the twentieth century (Severin et al., 1919:708). In fact, Elroy was shown on county road maps (1898-1902) as "Lundell's gin and store" (Wallace, 1898-1902).

Lundell became something of a real estate broker to prospective Swedish farmers but Elroy's fertile soil was the real attraction. By 1918, 70 Swedish families lived in the village and surrounding farms. By that time, Elroy boasted two stores, four cotton gins, a three-room school, and Lutheran, Baptist, and Free churches, all of which conducted services in the Swedish language (Severin et al, 1919:708). Second-generation Swedish and German farmers moved beyond Elroy to farmland vacated by earlier settlers. Although they clung to their religious beliefs and cultural traditions, they readily adopted American farming and building customs. Houses, barns, other outbuildings, and civic institutions like schools and churches followed Texan/American styles. A handful of American-style Folk Victorian and Queen Anne dwellings and, later, bungalows, characterized domestic construction in the Elroy area from this period. These housing styles were identical to most built in Austin at the same time. The three-room brick school built in Elroy in 1917 was indistinguishable from other county schools of the time.

### ***Moore's Crossing: 1890s***

As the Swedish village at Elroy began to take root, other communities emerged across southeast Travis County. Service nodes began to appear at the intersections of county roads; they usually consisted of a grammar school, a general store with postal agent, a blacksmith shop, and a gin. Schools appeared in Creedmoor in 1880 and in Bluff Springs in 1882. Moore's Crossing reflects the pattern of community-building in southeast Travis County in the last decades of the nineteenth century. As early as February 1881, the Moore family at the Wallace-Burleson-Moore homestead sold a half-acre parcel of land on Onion Creek at the low water crossing to Travis County in exchange for a school building (Travis County deed records, Vol. 48: 573-574). The county built a simple frame building on the south bank of Onion Creek. It served the community for nearly 30 years before it was torn down and the land reverted back to the Moores in 1909 (Travis County Superintendent of Schools, 1905:63; Travis County Deed records, Vol. 238:405-406). In 1890 or 1891, descendants of the original settlers, Robert J. Moore and his son Andrew Bell Moore joined their neighbor T.M. Berry – husband of Robert's sister – and John Burleson, established the mercantile firm of Berry & Moore Brothers. By 1896, the USGS map shows a store on the northwest side of Onion Creek. At the same time, the Moores built a substantial Victorian style house on the southwest side of the creek. Eventually, the small community featured several houses, a school, a mercantile store, cotton gin, and a bridge across Onion Creek. Communities with similar amenities more or less emerged throughout Travis County with those at Comanche, Garfield, Moore's Crossing, Creedmoor, and Elroy lying in the southeastern sector.

### ***Demographic Trends in Southeast Travis County in the Early Twentieth Century***

Life in southeast Travis County during the early years of the twentieth century continued very much as it had in the late nineteenth century; the area was divided into numerous family farms with small development clusters consisting of schools, churches, gins, mercantile stores, and a few houses interspersed among them. Farm building complexes generally consisted of a primary family dwelling, privy, cistern or well, smokehouse, hot water house for laundry, implement barns or sheds, animal barns, vehicle barns, hen houses, hog pens, water tanks, and windmills. Some farmers built small frame houses for long-term tenants or other non-related hired help. Larger operations occasionally had buildings with numerous rooms or cribs to shelter seasonal workers. In areas where large numbers of African Americans worked as sharecroppers or tenant farmers, separate schools were built to serve the children. After the Mexican Revolution in 1910, separate Mexican schools and churches appeared to serve refugees who also worked in the countryside.

In 1900, the census recorded a total population of 346 households and 2,074 individuals living in the enumeration district that included Moore's Crossing. Nearly as many African American households (144) as native-born white households (154) lived in the district. Most European-born households in the



district were from Germany (16) and Sweden (10), but two hailed from Ireland and one each came from Switzerland, England, Scotland, and France. Where only five Mexicans were counted in the area in the 1880 census, 16 households appeared in the 1900 record; that number would increase dramatically by the 1910 census reflecting the impact of the Mexican Revolution on Texas immigration (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1880-1900, 1910).

Farmers continued to grow cotton and corn and to raise livestock for personal use and for sale. Land ownership in the district around Moore's Crossing at the turn of the century is very informative in telling the history of the area as a whole. Of the total 186 white farmers (native and foreign-born), 88 households either owned their farms outright or were paying on a mortgage. Ninety-eight rented their home or farm. In stark contrast, only 22 of the 144 African American farmers owned their homes while 122 rented their home and land, and none of the Mexican-born farmers owned property. One Mexican family lived in a tent. In total, 47 percent of white householders owned their own homes or farms while only 15 percent of African American householders in the same area owned theirs. It is noteworthy that 56 percent of German-born immigrants owned their own property, suggesting that they may have had some financial advantage or valued land ownership to a greater degree than others in the same vicinity (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900).

The 1900 census also reveals the extent to which southeast Travis County had remained almost entirely rural since the first settlers claimed the land in the early nineteenth century. Of the 154 native born whites, 116, or 75 percent, claimed their occupations as "farmer." Of these, seven were listed as dairymen, one was a stock raiser, one was a cattle dealer, and three claimed to be farm laborers. Still, a number of heads of household claimed non-farm occupations. Among them were three physicians, two school teachers, one preacher, a ferryman, a stone cutter, a photographer, and a tax collector (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900). First-generation immigrants in the district were most often occupied as farmers but one was a saloon keeper, one was a carpenter, and one ran a general store. Two German women claimed occupations: one was a landlady and the other was a housekeeper. All of the Swedish householders were farmers, with the exception of a man who ran a cotton gin. The French, Swiss, and Irish immigrants were farmers, but the Scot was a blacksmith and the Englishman was a general merchant (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900).

African American residents of the district were likely to be farmers. Of the African American heads of household, 104, or 72 percent, were farmers. Another 31 were laborers with 13 listed as farm laborers, 17 as day laborers, and one as a home laborer. One man who owned his own farm listed his occupation as a "farm manager." Other occupations claimed by African American heads of household were sick nurse, wash woman, housekeeper, blacksmith, and teamster. Of the Mexican-born residents of the

district, nine were farmers, four were day laborers, and three were farm laborers (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900).

From census records, it is clear that agriculture dominated the lives of southeast Travis County residents. Native-born whites and, to a lesser extent, foreign-born whites had greater occupational variety than African American and Mexican residents. Although whites, African Americans, and Mexicans lived in close proximity to one another throughout the region, there were enormous differences in their living conditions. Many of the Mexican family members could neither read nor write in any language and none of their children attended school in 1900. Children of all ethnicity worked as farm laborers, but African American and Mexican children worked at younger ages – some as young as nine years old – than white children. In general, families that owned their own farms did not put their children to work on the farms until they were in their mid to late teen years (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900).

### ***Rural Schools in Southeast Travis County***

Schools were among the most important buildings of any community in southeast Travis County at the turn of the twentieth century. Sometimes classes were held in churches and at other times, church services were held in school buildings. Such buildings often doubled as Masonic Lodges, polling places, and community meeting halls. By 1905, however, the school established at Moore's Crossing in the early 1880s was condemned by the Travis County Superintendent who said:

The children will continue to shiver in the cold when the board shutters are opened to let in the light or to ruin their eyes in the semi-darkness when the shutters are closed to keep out the cold (Travis County Superintendent, School Annual, 1905:63).

In contrast, other schools in southeast Travis County were lauded. Elroy was described as “one of the prettiest schoolhouses in the county,” and the building at Pilot Knob was considered “a credit to any district” (Travis County School Annual, 1905: 70).

There were separate schools for African American and white children scattered throughout the southeast quadrant of the county. According to the Travis County Annual of 1905, “Colored schools” at Garfield, Creedmoor, and Maha were considered to be superior schools for African American students. The School Annual praised the Maha Colored school as “a new building . . . the patrons are interested and liberal . . .” (Travis County School Annual 1905:74-75). Though there were a number of school-aged African American children near Moore's Crossing, there was no school house to accommodate them. Students had to walk to Garfield or Maha, both considerable distances from Moore's Crossing, to attend school.

***Community Development in Southeast Travis County: 1910s***

Community development in rural areas such as southeast Travis County followed certain patterns to best serve their clientele. Typically, such communities grew up at the crossroads of county roads accessible to the greatest number of local users (Texas Applied Economics Club, 1916: var.). Moore's Crossing had the added advantage of being at a major ford on Onion Creek, receiving more than the standard share of regional traffic for such community centers. In nearly all cases, communities in southeast Travis County had a church, a school, a general or dry goods store, a cotton gin, and a butcher. Prosperous villages with multiple services tended to be at the center of homogenous communities comprised of families who shared similar ethnic heritage or religious beliefs. Elroy and Creedmoor were good examples at the turn of the twentieth century. Both were at the center of Swedish colonies and supported doctors, ministers, and teachers. By 1910, Elroy boasted three churches, several stores, a shoemaker, two cotton gins, a pharmacist, a doctor, and a blacksmith.

The 1910 census shows information on 440 households and 2,269 individuals in southeast Travis County. White households predominated with 201 families compared with 135 African American families. Twenty-nine households were identified as "mulatto" in 1910. Perhaps the most significant change in the area demographics from 1900 to 1910 was the increase in Mexican families. The 1910 census shows 75 Mexican families living in the area, probably the result of the Mexican Revolution, which sent many immigrants across the border to avoid the dangers associated with it. European immigration paled in comparison with the influx of homesteaders from Mexico.

Home and farm ownership in southeastern Travis County also declined between 1900 and 1910. White home ownership was reduced to 35 percent, with nearly twice as many (65 percent) renting farms. European-born residents continued to own their own places compared with native-born whites. The disparity between white and African American property ownership was astounding. A mere 10 percent of African American families in the area owned their own homes with fully 90 percent consigned to sharecropping or tenant farming. Even so, Mexican natives had less investment in the land with only one family owning their own farm in 1910 and the remaining 74 families reduced to sharecropping or tenant farming (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900, 1910).

Agriculture continued to dominate the economic climate of the area in 1910. Seventy-three percent of the working population was farmers with 13 percent performing day labor or odd jobs. European immigrants in the area typically held agriculture-related occupations such as farmer, dairy owner, gardener, and manager of the St. Edward's University farm. There was more variety in non-agricultural jobs than was evident in 1900. Five men worked as mail carriers, five as merchants, one as a constable

and one as a professional baseball player. Carpenters and plumbers lived throughout the area. A noteworthy addition to the workforce was the role played by St. Edward's University; 36 residents of southeast Travis County were employed as university staff or faculty (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1910).

This last may be attributed to the enumeration boundaries changing somewhat to include St. Edward's University from the previous census year.

### ***Rise of Mexican and Mexican American Farm Workers in Travis County***

According to a 1915 social sciences study conducted by the University of Texas, Mexican and Mexican American laborers performed 40 percent of all farm work in southern Travis County that year. Although there were fewer Mexican and Mexican American households than white or African American in southeast Travis County at that time, they tended to have greater numbers of adult workers and child laborers than other groups. Households often consisted of multiple families and various relatives and in-laws. Another phenomenon that added to the Hispanic labor force was that households comprised entirely of unrelated men who formed work gangs. They were generally organized by an English-speaking manager who mediated between the workers and land owners. In such cases, five to ten men in the "household" might work as farm laborers (Watkins, 1916: 130). In the period between 1900 and 1920, most Hispanic families were renters. Many were migrant farm workers who traveled in wagons following the cotton harvests from one agricultural region to the next. Many did not speak English after many years' residency in Texas and few could read or write in any language. As migrants, it was difficult for Hispanic children to attend school even though separate "Mexican" schools were built in southeast Travis County (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1900, 1910, and 1920).

Another factor in the rise of Mexican and Mexican American farm workers was the abandonment of farms by the original white families. By 1915, many of the farms in southeast Travis County were no longer occupied by early settlers or their descendants. The Moores, who had occupied their land since the earliest land parcels were granted, left their farm and moved to Austin. They continued to own their store but rented it to tenants. Their relatives and neighbors, the Burlesons, Wallaces, and Berrys followed. German and Swedish families were exceptions to the trend. While native-born whites tended to abandon their farms for work in Austin and elsewhere, second- and third-generation German and Swedish farmers held onto their farms well into the twentieth century.

### ***1920s and the Boll Weevil***

It is difficult to compare census figures in 1920 with those of earlier decades because the enumeration districts were dramatically changed. The area including Moore's Crossing, for instance, shrank in size from 1910. Some measures are useful however; white families (144) outnumbered African American households (88) by almost a two to one margin. Forty Mexican or Mexican American households lived

in the area. The staying power of immigrant whites was clearly evident in the 1920 census. First- and second-generation European immigrants accounted for the majority of white households in the district. In 1920, first-generation Germans who had immigrated before 1910 headed 19 households while second- or third-generation Germans headed another 29 families. Swedish immigration outnumbered all other European groups. In 1920, 40 Swedes headed their households. Second-generation Swedes led another 14 households.

As in previous census years, the great majority of householders were engaged in agriculture of some type, whether as farmer, tenants, sharecroppers, or farm laborers. A few residents in the region worked as salesmen, clerks, truck drivers, shoemaker, and blacksmith. At least one woman took in boarders. Several teachers and school principals lived in southeast Travis County (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920).

Trends set decades before continued to 1920. Whites were more likely than others to own their own land. Of considerable note, two-thirds of foreign-born Europeans, particularly Germans and Swedes, owned their own land. This figure is much greater than that of native-born whites. Of African American households, only six of 88 householders owned their own land. Interestingly, four of the six landowners were identified by the enumerator as “mulatto.” Of the 40 Mexican or Mexican American households, only one was slated as “owner-occupied.”

Disparities in the type of occupation also existed between different ethnic groups. The lack of occupational opportunity among non-whites was profound. Ninety-three percent of African American heads of household were listed as farmers in the 1920 census. Five were farm laborers and one was listed as a day laborer. The only professional job was that of the single African American school teacher in the area. Not only were jobs for African Americans labor-intensive, more than 30 percent of their children between the ages of nine and twelve worked as farm or day laborers. By working instead of going to school, these children faced a dismal future. All of the Hispanic heads of household were recorded as farmers or farm laborers. Their children were essential to the economic livelihoods of their families, but only about 20 percent worked at agricultural labor as compared with the 30 percent of African Americans. At the same time, virtually all white children under the age of thirteen went to school and some of the older students even attended high school in Austin (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920).

Some women in southeast Travis County in 1920 had principal occupations outside the home. Four white and four black female heads of household were identified as farmers. Four other African American women were listed as farm laborers. Another African American woman was a school teacher.

One Mexican American worked as a farm laborer. Again, white women had more opportunities and greater variety in work. One was a nurse, one a housekeeper, and one a high school principal. Some white women ran boarding houses or rented out rooms for income (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920).

One factor that adversely affected farmers across racial and income lines in the area was the spread of the boll weevil into the blackland prairie cotton belt in the 1920s. The destructive pest had come north from Mexico as early as 1894, but its impact was not fully appreciated in southeast Travis County until the early 1920s, when it wreaked havoc on area cotton farms. It was estimated that the boll weevil caused a 6 percent yield reduction in 1910, but that figure skyrocketed to 34 percent by 1921 (Wagner, “Boll Weevil” in the *Handbook of Texas Online*, 2010). Cotton farmers left their fields in droves during the 1920s, a phenomenon that gave rise to observations that the Depression started early for the American farmer.

The exact cause is not known but by 1925, all of the descendants of the original settlers at Moore’s Crossing had left the area. J.B. Moore still leased out his store buildings to in-laws Jim and Alma Smith who finally purchased the buildings in 1936. Alma Smith operated the store until 1973 when she sold it to Reuben Michalk who still owned it as late as 1995 (Kieke interview, 1995; Stolle interview 1995; Travis County deed records, var.). Despite its early twentieth century significance, Moore’s Crossing had declined in importance by 1925. Better roads and bridges gave local residents with cars better and cheaper shopping venues in Austin and Del Valle. Ultimately, the store catered primarily to tenant farmers and sharecroppers who did not have the means to go to town. The store offered a line of credit to entice them to continue shopping at the community store. At the same time, the old gin on the site was abandoned as newer and more efficient gins in Pilot Knob and Elroy attracted most of the farmers (Stolle interview, 1995). The school was long gone and by the 1930s, there was little activity at the once-thriving community center.

### ***The Great Depression: 1929-1939***

Southeast Travis County suffered through the Great Depression along with the rest of the country. Agricultural areas in Texas were particularly hard-hit and southeast Travis County was almost entirely rural in nature. Federal programs intended to help out farmers led to the collapse of sharecropping and tenant farming that had been a mainstay of farms in the area. In theory, the New Deal’s farm subsidy program paid farmers to let their fields lie fallow, thus increasing the value of remaining crops. In practice, the program discouraged both resident and absentee farm owners from renting or sharing crops grown on the land, a longstanding system that had been beneficial to both land owners and renters. The demise of tenant farming and sharecropping left many families in southeast Travis County both homeless and penniless (Masson et al., 1994:33). Government officials recognized the problem and

tried to alleviate it by issuing “relief” checks to unemployed farm workers. The practice tended to discourage them from seeking jobs, however, since they were being paid not to work. Government regulations also had a deleterious effect on Mexican-born farm workers as they were not eligible for relief and many moved back to Mexico as a result (Masson et al., 1994: 33).

The Depression marked the end of the Wallace-Burleson-Moore occupation of the original farmstead. J.B. and Elizabeth Moore sold their part of the family farm in 1936 and Jim and Alma Eilers Smith were forced to sell the old Wallace homestead at Moore’s Crossing in 1937. Several German families obtained the properties and ventured into new agricultural endeavors. Arthur and Hannah Olson bought the Wallace-Burleson-Moore property and established a profitable dairy on the site. They implemented modern dairy practices and equipment and had sufficient grasslands to pasture the cattle (Maier, 1981: n.p.).

Farmers of German and Swedish descent, like the Stolle, Eilers, Ollie, Reinhardt, and Kieke families, managed to hold onto their farms in the Moore’s Crossing area for the most part. According to Walter Kieke who grew up on his family farm near Pilot Knob, all family members, including children, worked long, hard hours to make the farm succeed. They grew or made nearly all the food the family required. They raised and slaughtered their own beef and hogs, grew their own fruits and vegetables, and made most of their clothing. Mr. Kieke remarked that farm life was superior to that in the city because of the abundance of food. Cousins and family friends would trek to the country for fresh fruits, vegetables and meats from their farm (Kieke interview, 1995).

The farmers who managed to retain their farms in southeast Travis County during the Depression enjoyed relatively good crop production during the decade. Cotton remained the region’s principal cash crop and in good years, the two gins at Pilot Knob operated both day and night. Area farmers also grew corn and sorghum to fatten cattle and hogs and to feed plow mules. Few, however, were able to purchase tractors and continued to use mules to plow their fields well into the 1930s. About 1935, farmers throughout the region grew more milo maize than either cotton or cane. They also started growing Sudan grass and oats to feed cattle (Kieke interview, 1995).

Most African American farm workers in the area during the Depression were sharecroppers and many Hispanic workers were day laborers on larger farms. A number of white farmers worked as tenants or sharecroppers, as well. Farmers hired extra hands during cotton harvest season and wagonloads – later carloads – of white, African American, and Mexican transient laborers would converge on the farming communities in southeast Travis County for the duration of the season. Though many were transient, some returned to the same farms year after year. In some cases, children worked as tenants on their

parents' farms until they could afford to buy their own properties or inherit their parents' farms (Kieke interview, 1995).

Community life during the Depression centered on church and school activities. People celebrated common religious and national holidays but different ethnic groups observed their own cultural holidays. Though September 16 was the Mexican Independence Day, everyone in the region looked forward to the holiday. Mexican and Mexican American families put on a big celebration with music, dancing, and a carnival at Moore's Crossing and people of all backgrounds attended the events (Kieke interview, 1995).

School events drew neighbors together. White children generally attended school at Pilot Knob or Elroy. A number of schools for African American students were scattered around southeast Travis County, the largest of which was located in Pilot Knob. One school for Mexican children was in the Maha community. African American and Mexican schools generally ran through sixth grade, while white students typically attended school through the eighth grade with some traveling to Austin for high school. The quality of school buildings and equipment followed racial lines. Rural schools for white children were typically two- or three-room frame buildings but they were well-lighted and well-ventilated as a rule. The federal government built two new schools – one at Maha and one at Creedmoor – during the Depression. The 1917 brick school at Elroy for white children was one of the area's best. Segregated schools, on the other hand, were generally one- or two-room frame hand-me-downs from white communities.

### ***World War II: Bergstrom Air Force Base***

At the end of the Great Depression, southeastern Travis County remained largely rural with agriculture as its economic base. Tenant farming and sharecropping persisted, but on a smaller scale than previously known. Pockets of stable family farms persisted around community centers like Elroy and Creedmoor, and by 1940, life had improved for farmers and their families in southeast Travis County. The United States' entry into World War II, however, would permanently change the rural character in the area.

First and foremost, virtually every able-bodied man, who was not the sole support of his family, was drafted or enlisted into the military. Farms were left short-handed and money for hired labor nonexistent. At the same time, war production and military training programs supplied an entire generation of young farm laborers with skills that enabled them to leave the back-breaking toil of the farm after the war. Upon their return, veterans took advantage of the G.I. Bill to further their educations. They abandoned their farms in droves.



Walter Kieke, who had worked on his father's farm from the time he graduated eighth grade until he was twenty-three years old, is an example of the nationwide phenomenon. As part of his basic training in San Diego, Kieke learned skills that allowed him to open his own air conditioning business in Austin. Neither he nor any of his brothers ever returned to the farm. At the same time, the sons and daughters of sharecroppers and tenant farmers, including African Americans, also learned non-farm related skills in war industries and military training. When the war was over, they tended to move to cities for work in industries rather than return to rent farming. In southeast Travis County, only the Mexican and Mexican American occupation increased and finally grew to comprise the majority ethnic group in the area.

After war erupted in Europe and Asia, the United States was drawn into the fray and the government began acquiring land throughout the country for war-related industries and services. Military projects boosted local economies with construction and operations jobs and community leaders lobbied fiercely for military bases and munitions plants in their territories. On November 29, 1941, the U.S. Army contacted the Austin Chamber of Commerce to negotiate for the sale of some 3,000 acres of land in southeastern Travis County for a military installation. Mayor Tom Miller tried to divert their attention away from the prime agricultural land to no avail; the Army wanted land in the Del Valle region. Ultimately, the issue was settled by a bond election in which Austin citizens voted overwhelmingly in favor of buying the land and renting it to the Army for one dollar per year. On March 15, 1942, the Austin Chamber of Commerce notified the Army of the election results. The Army agreed to turn the property over to the city when it had no further use for it (Bergstrom Public Relations Office, 1944: 17-18).

Construction on the base began on May 23, 1942. The project had an immediate and profound effect on the countryside and its infrastructure. The Army hired the local firm of Montgomery-Page-Hemphill-Page as the general contractor and within weeks, the company hired 1,600 civilian workers for the project. They scraped the landscape, demolishing more than 30 single-family houses and innumerable tenant dwellings. An African American school and a Mexican school were destroyed and Baptist and Methodist churches were consumed. Along with them went windmills, cisterns, barns, hundreds of outbuildings, and miles of fencing. They moved other schools, chapels, cotton gins, and a private telephone exchange. Many whose families had lived in the area for generations were forced to relocate (Bergstrom Public Relations Office 1944: 18-19).

On September 24, 1942, the first plane landed at the still incomplete Del Valle Army Air Base. The Army originally planned to use the base for photographic and observation training but it became an Air Support Command Base instead. Ultimately, it became a station for the 316<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Command.

On September 29, 1942, the carrier group, comprised of 50 transports, flew from Georgia to the air base in the largest and longest mass flight of transport planes in the history of aviation to that time. The convoy passed over the city of Austin and landed in three second intervals on the newly commissioned base (Bergstrom Public Relations Office, 1944:21-22).

The Army opened the base to the public for the first time on January 10, 1943. Local interest in the undertaking could be gauged by the estimated 30,000 visitors who toured the installation that day. Buildings including a recreation hall, a post exchange, a base theater, a library, a station hospital, and an officers' club were on display to the public in addition to a repair hangar, a machine shop, a parachute building, Air Corps warehouses, and gasoline storage depots. The original barracks buildings were tarpaper structures of a temporary nature that were later replaced by more permanent frame dormitories with asbestos siding. The Women's Army Corps arrived at the base on April 19, 1943, with 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer Beverly Stickney in charge of 24 female auxiliaries (Bergstrom Public Relations Office, 1944: 31-33).

On March 3, 1943, Del Valle Army Air Base was renamed Bergstrom Army Air Field in honor of Captain John August Earl Bergstrom, the first Travis County resident killed in service during World War II. Part of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Bergstrom was killed on December 8, 1941 in a Japanese attack on Clark Field in the Philippines (Bergstrom Public Relations Office, 1944: 21). In many ways, Bergstrom reflected the community surrounding the air base. Born on August 26, 1907 on a farm in southeast Travis County, Captain Bergstrom was the son of John and Mabel Bergstrom. John Bergstrom Sr. was a first-generation Swedish immigrant who traveled from Sweden to Travis County with his brothers Charlie and Swen. Like so many Swedish immigrants in the area, the brothers purchased farms near one another. Unfortunately, Mabel Bergstrom passed away in 1912 and John moved his family to Austin where they attended city schools. John Jr. went on to study at Texas A & M University where he graduated in 1929 with a degree in Agricultural Administration. The economic realities of the Great Depression dashed his hopes to re-establish the family farm in southeast Travis County and he went to work for the Austin National Bank instead. An Army Reservist, Bergstrom was called to active duty in 1941. News of his death arrived in Austin on December 12, 1941 (Austin American Statesman in Center for American History "Bergstrom" files, n.d.).

While many war-time bases were closed at the end of World War II, the government saw fit to designate Bergstrom Air Force Base a permanent military installation following the conflagration. It went on to support military actions in Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. With the unification of Germany and the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the federal government embarked on a program to close or consolidate missions of its military bases. Dubbed BRAC, or Base Realignment and Closure, the effort

led to the demise of many bases, air stations, and numerous other military facilities throughout the country. Bergstrom was one of the bases slated for closure and was closed in 1993.

At the same time, the city of Austin was actively seeking possible locations for a new airport to serve its ever-increasing population. One potential site lay in northeastern Travis County near Manor. Bergstrom, however, had the advantage of existing infrastructure. An even greater incentive was the fact that the city of Austin actually owned the land as part of its original rental agreement with the Army. In the end, Bergstrom was selected for improvement as the new Austin airport and opened in 1999.

### ***Postwar Development in Southeast Travis County***

The combined forces of the Great Depression and World War II drew many former residents away from the rural communities of southeast Travis County. Grandchildren of original settlers, children of Swedish and German immigrants, and young people of African American and Mexican descent found cleaner, less physically demanding, and more stable jobs in towns and cities of central Texas. Most left the farms of southeast Travis County for these opportunities and never returned.

In the postwar era, however, a new wave of semi-rural development evolved in southeast Travis County. Improved county roads and better linkage to Austin made it easier to live in the country but work in the city. Several new subdivisions begun in the late 1950s and early 1960s lie just beyond the city limits in areas that are still largely rural but close to city amenities. The Pilot Knob subdivisions, which are built out with Minimal Traditional and Ranch style houses, are good examples of this trend. Individual Ranch style and Minimal Traditional houses from this period are also found throughout the southeast quadrant between and among historic farmsteads.

As the city of Austin grows out to encompass this area, greater changes are in store. Already a number of chain convenience store has sprung up at crossroads and new pre-manufactured houses outnumber traditional types. The new Formula One complex in Elroy with its race track, stadiums, and parking lots has had a deleterious effect on the rural character of the area and its historic resources. In April 2014, Elroy's iconic hundred-year-old general store was moved off its site for the construction of a shopping center.

### ***Conclusion***

Permanent Anglo American settlement in Travis County first occurred in the fertile blackland prairie of its southeast quadrant where agricultural potential appeared most promising. After the Mexican government approved Stephen F. Austin's request for a third Texas colony in the 1820s, pioneers began to build small, fortified agricultural settlements to protect themselves against Indian attack. As more

people entered the colony, danger from attack decreased and families settled on large, widely dispersed tracts of uncleared land throughout the region. Near streams or reliable springs, they constructed small farmsteads with log shelters for their families, servants, and livestock. Dating to the early settlement and antebellum periods, these are among the oldest cultural resources in southeast Travis County. The Wallace-Burleson-Moore log house, built as early as 1846, is the oldest known log dwelling in the southeast Travis County project area.

Exceptions to the pioneer log tradition included substantial houses built of quarried limestone for wealthy landowners like Thomas McKinney and Sebron G. Sneed. They had the land, the money, and the slave labor to undertake such building campaigns. In fact, McKinney only dabbled in agriculture and focused his attention on horse breeding and mill operations. As early as 1850, a stone mason was listed as living in southeast Travis County. He may have guided the slaves of McKinney and Sneed in quarrying and building their stone houses and outbuildings. Although ruins of the Sneed house and remnants of McKinney's compound are in southeast Travis County, they lie within the city of Austin limits and were not documented as part of this project. The remains of a mill built by McKinney near present Highway 71, however, were counted among the Southeast Travis County resources (Site 505).

The absence of good roads and reliable low water crossings on the Colorado River and creeks made transportation through the quadrant difficult. Two main roads developed through the area by the mid-nineteenth century. One connected Austin and Bastrop at the northern extent of the project area and the other linked Austin to Lockhart along the southern portion of the area. Bastrop and Lockhart were the largest settlements to the east of the project area. The Old Bastrop Road followed a fairly straight east-west route that roughly paralleled the Colorado River to the north and closely approximated present SH 71. The other road zig-zagged across Travis County in a southeasterly route, passing through Creedmoor and present Mustang Ridge. Though these roads were fairly stable throughout the nineteenth century, travel to and between them was an arduous task. As a result, area farms remained isolated from one another and far from regional hubs until the advent of all-weather roads and stable bridges in the mid-twentieth century. This pattern of dispersed, largely self-sufficient farmsteads characterized development in southeast Travis County well into the twentieth century.

As time passed and more people moved into the region, the agricultural economy evolved from a subsistence level endeavor to one based on cotton production and slave labor. The outcome of the Civil War and emancipation of slaves reversed this trend as large landowners lost their labor and ultimately their homes. By the late nineteenth century, many of the large farms changed hands or were broken up into smaller parcels. At that time, Texas saw an influx of German and Swedish immigrant farmers who took advantage of the situation to create new farms and communities. Sharecropping and tenant farming

rose during this period as well. By the late nineteenth century, landowners counted on a cadre of sharecroppers and tenants to tend their fields. Many lived in small frame houses consisting of only two or three rooms on the farmer's property. Numerous tenant houses survive throughout the project area.

Significant demographic changes occurred in the area toward the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The region's earliest settlers had been Anglo American subsistence farmers with African American slaves. After the Civil War, many former slaves stayed in the area where they worked as tenant farmers, sharecroppers, or farm laborers, as did the majority of Anglo residents. Home and farm ownership dropped across all ethnic lines sharecroppers in the postwar period. This trend changed dramatically with the influx of German and Swedish immigrants who began moving into southeast Travis County in the 1880s. These immigrants highly valued land ownership and worked to achieve and maintain that goal. Because they relied on family members and hired labor, African Americans found fewer jobs in the area and began to move to Austin or other towns and cities. An exception to this trend was the increase in Mexican and Mexican American farm laborers who tended to be transient workers working on a seasonal basis.

By the end of the nineteenth century, small community centers sprang up, largely at the intersections of county roads or at river or creek crossings. Elroy, Creedmoor, Garfield, and Moore's Crossing were prominent among these nodes. They typically consisted of a school or church, at least one general store, a blacksmith shop, a gin, and a few dwellings owned by the store or gin owner. They typically established cemeteries on the outskirts of the community hub or next to a local church. A few historic commercial buildings including one at Moore's Crossing, one on the old Lockhart Road, and one in Garfield mark the community centers. By the turn of the twentieth century, rural residents identified with these small community hubs, most of which served as postal stations for the surrounding region. The most noteworthy general mercantile store in the entire project area was moved from Elroy during the survey project to accommodate the development of the Formula One race tract complex.

The influx of Swedish and German farmers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries resulted in dramatic changes in the architectural landscape of southeast Travis County. These families adopted the house plans and ornamentation associated with Victorian, Queen Anne, and Classical Revival styles. Those built in southeast Travis County were virtually all of frame construction. Simple houses of this era, known as Folk Victorian houses, tended to be L-plan (wing and gable) houses with decorative milled woodwork such as turned porch posts and pilasters, a spindle frieze, and patterned gable shingles. More substantial houses of this period often featured high-pitched hipped roofs with projecting front-gabled wings and patterned shingles in the gables. They sometimes possessed wraparound porches supported by Classical columns, multiple gables, and transoms and sidelights. The

Swedish community of Elroy and its associated farms possess the largest number of these frame L-plan houses with decorative wood details.

Several decades passed before domestic architectural styles changed in the area. By the 1920s, second generation German and Swedish farmers left their family homes and struck out on their own, building popular bungalows on their new farms. From the mid-1920s to the outbreak of World War II, scores of bungalows, many featuring Craftsman stylistic ornament, appeared throughout the quadrant. In fact, no other definable style was built in southeast Travis County during this time.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the area gained better roads, new schools, and more general stores, but the overall climate of the region remained rural in character until the construction of Bergstrom Army Airfield in 1943. The creation of a large, modern air force base with its attendant commercial businesses had an enormous impact on the surrounding countryside. Construction of the base obliterated the core of the Del Valle community and new and newly-aligned roads, such as Highway 71 and Highway 183, drew businesses to the area. Out-zoned businesses and those catering to the military population extended toward the base along the roads.

After World War II, many family farms broke up as young people moved to cities and their parents retired from farming. Today, some of those farms and homesteads lie vacant while others were consumed in large agri-business operations. Suburban and semi-rural developments in the postwar period, particularly in areas accessible by the major highways, have also altered the former exclusively rural landscape. Still, some surviving historic farmsteads, most with frame dwellings, pole barns, and other wood-sided outbuildings, continue to provide a tangible link to the area's agrarian past.

Early brick and frame Ranch Style houses dominated domestic construction in the post-World War II era. At first, individual Ranch Style houses appeared on farms or large lot. By the mid-1950s, however, the first planned subdivision appeared in Southeast Travis County. Two Pilot Knob additions were planned and built out by the mid-1960s. Most of the early houses in the additions can be classified as Ranch Style houses though a few more had Minimal Traditional attributes. In recent years, some of the houses have been enlarged by two-story additions and garage enclosures. Some have been "redesigned" such that they no longer resemble their original appearance. Another subdivision, platted as the Martin Shaw Addition and including part of South Burleson Road, is more recent with the earliest houses dating to 1965. Most lots, however, were built out by 1968. They are comprised almost entirely of Ranch Style houses with brick or stone veneer. The Martin Shaw Addition is very intact and will be eligible for National Register listing within a few years.

## **Associated Property Types in Southeast Travis County**

### ***Overview***

Southeast Travis County, an area defined in this project by the eastern edge of the Austin City limits, south of the Colorado River, north of the Hays County line, and west of Bastrop and Caldwell counties (Figure 1), has been characterized as a rural or semi-rural quadrant of Travis County since the first Anglo settlers arrived in the early nineteenth century. Although Austin's suburban growth has spread into the quadrant since the 1950s, the region retains much of its historic agricultural flavor including independent farmsteads set on large expanses of crop land and surviving community hubs where a few churches and general stores still serve the surrounding farm country. Since the end of World War II, southeast Travis County has experienced a rise in the construction of "country houses" scattered throughout the region. These are generally single-family dwellings set on sites of between two to ten acres of native grasses, rocks, and trees. They are usually situated on a hill or rise that provides inhabitants with vistas of the surrounding landscape.

Although southeast Travis County was one of the first areas of the county to be settled by Anglo pioneers starting in the 1840s, the small communities that grew up along the Colorado River, Onion Creek, and other area streams were eclipsed by the capital city of Austin from the very first. Among the earliest Anglo residents of southeast Travis County were farmers who built modest homes of log or limestone construction and plowed fields watered by rivers and creeks that coursed through the region. From rudimentary dwellings and agricultural buildings, farmers eventually constructed frame houses in vernacular modes and nationally popular styles and types like Victorian L-plan houses and Craftsman bungalows in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They also built wooden barns and sheds, cisterns, privies, tenant houses, and other resources that contributed to farm operations. Few large scale changes in the regional character occurred until World War II, when the Federal government acquired some 3,000 acres of land in the Santiago Del Valle grant for the construction of Bergstrom Air Force Base. Though many old farmsteads on the Del Valle grant were lost to base construction, much of the surrounding landscape has remained vacant or in crop production to the present.

Major trends in southeast Travis County during the postwar era include the advent of single family non-agricultural "country homes" and planned suburban development on the outskirts of Austin. Both trends attest to the abiding appeal of the rural or semi-rural lifestyle. Two noteworthy postwar subdivisions in the project area are the Pilot Knob and Martin Shaw additions, both of which feature side- or cross-gabled stone or brick Ranch Style houses. More recently, the arrival of the Formula One racecar track complex is having a profound effect on the historic character of the Elroy community and its associated farmland. Several hundred-year-old buildings, including the town's iconic general store, have been

removed or abandoned for new construction, including parking lots for the racetrack. The store will be replaced by a five-acre shopping center. Many other properties in the southeast quadrant, some dating to the earliest period of Swedish and German settlement, are owned by Formula One developers, Circuit of the Americas. Several noteworthy properties are already vacant and are likely targeted for redevelopment (Travis County Appraisal District, 2014).

At the same time, a number of cultural resources in the county's southeast quadrant have received historic designations including archeological sites, properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL). Cemeteries in the area have been identified and recorded as Historic Texas Cemeteries. Sites of historic events, developments, and people are identified by State of Texas subject markers. The following properties and sites in the project area currently hold historic designations.

***Designated Historic Sites in Southeast Travis County***

<b>Historic Designations</b>	<b>NRHP</b>	<b>RTHL</b>	<b>Texas Subject Markers</b>	<b>Texas Historic Cemeteries</b>
Moore's Crossing (district)	#96001091 (1996)			
Moore's Crossing Bridge		#14007 (1980)		
McKinney Homestead	#74002093 (1974)			
Haynie Chapel Methodist Church		#14127 (1964)		
Dr. Joseph Wilhite			#14660 (1991)	
Elroy			#15117 (1991)	
Pilot Knob			#16145 (1963)	
Carl Cemetery				TV-C191
Comanche cemeteries				TV-C027, TV-C162
Creedmoor Cemetery				TV-C094
Elroy Swedish Baptist Cemetery				TV-C099
Evelyn Cemetery				TV-C095
Garfield Fowler Cemetery				TV-C026
Nuckols Crossing Cemetery				TV-C161
Salem Lutheran Church Cemetery				TV-C107
Vasquez Cemetery				TV-C093



Such designations help educate people about the historic sites and cultural resources in their midst. In the course of this survey, others were found to be potential National Register or Texas Historic Landmark candidates.

### ***Property Types in the Survey Area***

Southeast Travis County is a sprawling rural/semi-rural landscape connected to Austin by several improved farm-to-market and county roads such as FM 973 and SH 71. These paved roads are lined with small businesses, numerous auto salvage yards, and the occasional modern convenience store and gas station. Beyond the major arterial roads that pass through the county's southeast quadrant, however, the countryside is dotted with scattered farmsteads, rural homes on several acres of land, several 1950s and 1960s subdivisions, and the remnants of small communities that once provided schools, churches, and general stores for the surrounding area.

An analysis of Property Types surveyed in the project area reveals the variety of cultural resources (buildings, structures, objects, and sites) in southeast Travis County and discusses how those resources reflect the region's historic land uses. The 504 surveyed sites and discrete resources reflect the history of southeast Travis County as a predominantly rural region since the beginning of Anglo settlement in the early nineteenth century. It is within this context that the project area's resources can be assessed. Cultural resources surveyed in the southeast Travis County project area are organized into the following general functions: domestic, agricultural, commercial, social, educational, religious, and funerary. To a lesser extent, properties associated with recreation, industry, and transportation are found in the region.

Domestic resources are most common properties surveyed in the project area. Resources in this category include single family and multi-family dwellings and auxiliary buildings such as privies, wells, water cisterns and garages. Only a few historic commercial resources survive in the area; one is the Michalk Store at Moore's Crossing. It is a frame retail store with a false front stepped parapet wall widely associated with frontier settlement throughout the nineteenth century. Social properties include meeting halls, clubhouses, and civic buildings. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall in Pilot Knob is the only example of a Social property in the project area. Several historic Educational resources survive in southeast Travis County, including one- to two-room frame schools and a three-room brick school in Elroy. Religious properties in the project area include a number of small churches and several church schools. Funerary properties are represented by designated cemeteries or single graves. Agricultural resources are abundant across the rural landscape and include barns, sheds, and agricultural processing and support buildings such as cotton gins and blacksmith shops; a substantial multi-story gin still stands in the community of Elroy, just off FM 812. Infrastructure elements include culverts and bridges like the three-span metal bridge at Moore's Crossing.

Subtypes, based on use, plan, and stylistic features, are identified within each of the broader property types to further distinguish and evaluate the resources. The following table shows the number and types of resources surveyed in southeast Travis County during this effort. This classification system is based primarily on the original or intended use of the resource and is consistent with terms and definitions used in the statewide historic context “Community and Regional Development in Texas 1690-1945” and *National Register Bulletin 16a*. Photographs of selected resources in the survey area depict good examples of property types and styles.

**Table of Surveyed Resources Organized by Property Types**

Property Type	Plan, Style, or Function	Examples
Domestic: Vernacular	Log houses, two-room houses	Site 36: Wallace-Burleson-Moore House, c. 1845
Domestic: Popular Plan	Classical Box, Bungalow, L-plan	Sites 15 (Classical Box), Site: 497 (Bungalow), Site 19a (Folk Victorian – L-plan)
Domestic: High and Revival Styles	Queen Anne/Classical Revival, Colonial Revival	Sites 28a (Queen Anne/ Classical), 276 (Colonial Ranch)
Domestic: Postwar	Minimal Traditional & Ranch Style	Sites 466 (Minimal Traditional), 267 (Ranch Style)
Domestic: Auxiliary	Garages, privies, cisterns, etc.	
Agricultural	Barns, sheds, gins	2-story hay barns, pole barns
Commercial	Retail	Site 36: Michalk Store
Institutional		
Social	Fraternal, meeting halls	Site 99: VFW Hall, Pilot Knob
Education	All Public Schools	Site 17: Elroy School
Religion	All Churches & Church Schools	Sites 93: Salem Church, 196: San Francisco Xavier Church
Funerary	All Cemeteries	Site 292: Haynie Chapel
Transportation	Bridges, Roads, Ferry, Culverts	Site 39a: Moore’s Crossing
Recreation & Culture	Parks, Playgrounds, Halls	Site 72: Rodeo Grounds

## Selected Property Types

The following photographs depict the variety of properties found in Southeast Travis County.



Site 36: 5820 FM 973, Wallace-Burleson-Moore House, central log section c. 1845, additions c. 1900 and 1930





Site 55: 11500 block Carl Road at Old Lockhart Road, Carl Cemetery, c. 1881  
(oldest known grave dates to 1881)





Site 19: 9034 Elroy Road, Folk Victorian cottage in Elroy, built c. 1900





Site 28: 13903 FM 812, Victorian house with Queen Anne and Classical features, Elroy, c. 1898



Site 36: 5820 FM 973, Moore & Berry Store (later, Michalk Store), c. 1893





Site 331: 13809 Hokanson Road, two-story hay barn common in southeast Travis County, c. 1910





Site 27: 14000 block FM 812, Elroy Cotton Gin, c. 1900





Site 39a: 104 Moore's Bridge Road, Moore's Crossing Bridge, placed over Onion Creek in 1922





Site 497: 9040 Nuckols Crossing Road, Craftsman Bungalow, c. 1925





Site 196: 8619 US 183 South, San Francisco Javier Catholic Church, 1941





Site 450: 7407 Southgate Lane, Ranch Style House in Martin Shaw Addition, c. 1968

### ***Domestic Properties***

Domestic properties are the most common property type found in southeast Travis County and account for 417 surveyed resources or 84 percent of the total. Domestic properties can be buildings, structures, objects, and sites most commonly associated with domestic life. This category includes single family residences, duplexes, especially in the Pilot Knob and Martin Shaw additions, and domestic auxiliary resources. No multi-family buildings were identified except for duplexes. In the auxiliary subcategory are privies, wells or cisterns, noteworthy garages, and sheds. Examples of domestic properties can be found in every part of the survey area. Most of these resources are one-story wood frame buildings with gabled roofs but many, especially those dating from the postwar era, feature brick or stone veneer. Privies and cisterns or wells are most likely found on domestic sites dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Dwellings are the most significant resources in the project area as they are most closely associated with the property owners and their settlement patterns. Most nineteenth and early twentieth century houses are one-story wood frame buildings with gable roofs. A few log buildings survive in the project area. Limestone block dwellings such as those found just outside the project area on the McKinney and Sebron Sneed properties were not found, though some may still exist off the public roads. By the late nineteenth century and into first decades of the twentieth century, frame houses dominated the rural landscape from modest Victorian-era dwellings to the popular bungalows of the 1920s and 1930s. By the mid-twentieth century, Minimal Traditional and Ranch Style houses replaced earlier styles and types; some represented the presence of second- or third-generation property owners in the rural countryside.

Dwellings of the historic period (1840-1968) can be divided into four major categories: Vernacular Houses, Popular Plan Houses, High Style and Revival Style Houses, and Postwar Houses, primarily Minimal Traditional and Ranch Style houses. Vernacular and Popular Plan type houses are distinctive architectural forms that typically are modestly scaled and have minimal architectural detailing. High Style and Revival Style houses feature architectural features found in historic architectural styles as well as innovative architectural styles and broad movements that influenced architects, contractors and homeowners. Minimal Traditional and Ranch Style houses began to appear in southeast Travis County after World War II. Ranch Style houses in particular appealed to a broad base of homeowners throughout the second half of the twentieth century and many good examples are found in southeast Travis County, both as individual dwellings and as elements in subdivisions.

In evaluating domestic properties, it is important to understand the original form and style and to identify and assess the impact of alterations on the modified properties. Common alterations to the dwellings

include changes to porch supports and the enclosure of porches to create additional interior living space, replacement of original wood frame windows with metal frame types, and the construction of large additions. Other alterations include the enclosure of older domestic forms, such as a mid-nineteenth century log cabin, within a larger late-nineteenth century domicile. Alterations to auxiliary resources, such as sheds, garages, and cisterns, are few.

### *Vernacular Houses*

The first houses built in the survey area were modest one- or two-room shelters. These vernacular houses were buildings typically constructed for and by ordinary people, many of whom came to Texas from the Upper South where log dwellings were common. Log houses were among the first dwellings occupied by Anglo settlers from their earliest appearance in Texas in the 1820s. They are identifiable by their materials and floor plans. Brought to Texas by the first Anglo pioneers, the form persisted in the state for another 100 years. During that time, log houses remained remarkably stable in form and material, utilizing hand hewn logs and native stone as primary building materials.

The hallowed log cabin of pioneer lore is a variant of the log-built vernacular house. Built of hand hewn logs and chinked with mud and rock, the log cabin typically consists of between one and four rectangular rooms or “pens.” Most often they featured front- or side-gabled roofs with end-wall stone chimneys. Such cabins generally had a single door and only a few window openings that were covered by heavy shutters for security. Several log structures were identified in the project area but their construction dates are unknown. An exception is the Wallace-Burleson-Moore House which may contain a c. 1842 log dwelling as well as a later, possibly 1850s, two-story log house.

Texas is especially renowned for its pioneer “dog trot cabins.” Typically, dog trot cabins consist of between one and four pens separated by an open-sided breezeway or “dog trot.” The form likely developed as an escape from the Texas summer heat. All manner of work was conducted in the open breezeway but it is most associated with women who preferred to cook outside with the benefit of a small breeze rather than inside one of the stifling closed rooms.

When the railroads came to nearby Austin in the 1870s, local residents could purchase milled woodwork and decorative building elements to the area, including southeast Travis County. Farmers continued to build vernacular houses throughout the century, but their younger counterparts, and especially Swedish and German immigrants, tended to adopt the popular L-plan house type and with decorative embellishment especially on the front porch.

Like its name suggests, the L-plan house consists of two intersecting wings that form an L-shaped plan or footprint. Generally it appears as a side-gabled rear wing pierced by a front-gabled wing extending forward alongside the porch and to the side of the front door. The type is also called a “wing and gable” plan for its distinctive form. The door opens to a central hall or passage with several rooms in tandem on one side and one or two rooms on the opposite side. The front projecting wing usually consists of one to two rooms in tandem, with the rear room serving as a rudimentary kitchen and dining room. The L-plan’s popularity coincided with the arrival of several railroads that imported architectural details such as spindle work, decorative brackets, and turned porch posts to buyers in Austin. As a result, country folk were able to adorn their homes in much the same way as their city counterparts. Numerous L-plan houses from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century are found throughout the project area and are particularly common in communities including Elroy, Garfield, and Creedmoor. Several in Elroy, in particular, have been maintained to an excellent degree since their construction about 1910.

Several other vernacular plans occur in the project area. One is the Center Passage house, or hall and parlor, a type common throughout post-railroad Central Texas from the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century. It is one room deep and two rooms wide with a central passage or doorway between the rooms. Like the L-plan, the Center Passage house was often detailed with decorative embellishments generally associated with more “high-style” housing types. An example of a center passage house is found at 11717 McAngus Road. Another is the Side Gabled Massed plan, a rectangular dwelling of two or three rooms wide and two or three rooms deep. They possess a full façade front porch. Like other post-railroad types, they utilize milled woodwork and decorative detailing.

### *Popular Plan Types*

Although traditional vernacular plan buildings retained popularity well into the twentieth century when the American psyche was captured by new housing types and styles touted in magazines, newspapers, and novels. By far the most famous and enduring of these “popular plan” type houses was the American bungalow. Although the word “bungalow” is often thought of as a building style, it is actually a plan or building type finished in one of many – sometimes exotic – styles. Bungalows typically are one-story frame, brick, or stucco single-family dwellings containing two parallel rows of in-tandem rooms; one row is reserved for privacy (bedrooms and bathrooms) and the other contains the public rooms (living room, dining room, kitchen).

Bungalows generally feature overarching roof forms that shelter deep half- to full-façade front porches. Although the roof is an important part of the bungalow design, it can be manifest in numerous ways. Most are front gabled houses with front gabled porches, while some are side gabled and others hipped with intersecting gables. The style often informs the roof design; Tudor Revival bungalows usually



feature steeply pitched central roofs, while Mission Revival bungalows often have stucco-covered parapet walls. Gabled bungalows are often supported by decorative brackets. Craftsman influenced bungalows typically included a variety of decorative elements including tapered porch posts on brick piers, triangle knee braces, and half- or full-façade porches.

Bungalows were immensely popular throughout the United States as a whole from as early as 1905 until the close of the Great Depression about 1940. In southeast Travis County, however, the bungalow did not appear until about 1925. Its late arrival on the landscape is typical of conservative building trends in rural central Texas at that time. In fact, throughout its history in southeast Travis County, the bungalow followed fairly simple lines. Most were front-gabled frame houses with two bedrooms and a single bathroom on one side of a central hall. A small living room, dining room, and kitchen, lined up front to back on the other side of the hall. Generally, the front door opened directly into the living room. Few country bungalows adopted the exotic trends of their city cousins, such as Craftsman elements, high-pitched Tudor rooflines and Mission or Spanish Colonial stucco finish with clay tile rooflines. Most rural bungalows were simple front-gabled frame dwellings with front-gabled porches, tapered or squared porch posts extending from the porch floor to roof, and, possibly, showing triangle knee braces and exposed rafter ends. As it was late in arriving, the bungalow was also slow in leaving southeast Travis County; new examples were built in the project area as late as 1950.

A number of bungalows were found throughout the project area. Some were nondescript but 48 had sufficient ornamentation to be considered “Craftsman” bungalows, one of the most common domestic/designs in southeast Travis County in the early twentieth century.. As discussed, most bungalows in the area are simple frame houses with modest decorative features. A few can be classified as Craftsman bungalows because they possess some of the hallmarks of the style such as triangle knee braces, tapered porch posts, and decorative roof details. Good examples include the front-gabled frame bungalow at 9040 Nuckols Crossing. Next to that house is a large bungalow at 9100 Nuckols, with more distinctive Craftsman features. Several are diminutive variants recognizable by their floor plan and wooden details like the small bungalows at 9110 Nuckols and 9110 Nuckols.

### *High and Revival Style Houses*

Most of the domestic architecture in southeast Travis County can be understood as vernacular or popular plan type resources. Few possess the elements of High Style or Revival Style architecture. This is due, in part, to the resource’s role as part of a working landscape rather than as the hub of a social community. Vernacular or popular plan architecture in a rural setting is first and foremost the center of a live-work environment. Inexpensive, mass-produced decorative elements associated with High and Revival styles sometimes managed to find their way to domestic properties in southeast Travis County.

In the 1850s, large landowners like Thomas McKinney and Sebron Sneed had their slaves build substantial homes of quarried limestone. Their homes mimicked the Georgian and Greek Revival styles of their home states in the South and these might be considered the first “high style” dwellings of the region. Reconstruction fostered little architectural innovation in the project area until the arrival of the railroad, which allowed for the application of inexpensive porch, window, and siding trim to L-plan and other popular plan dwellings. Toward the close of the nineteenth century, new construction borrowed from the Queen Anne Style palette, which included asymmetrical porches, corner turrets, and steeply pitched conical, pyramidal and hipped roofs.

#### *Minimal Traditional and Ranch Style Houses*

The Minimal Traditional style is a term given after-the-fact to small, usually frame dwellings that appeared throughout the country from the late 1930s to the immediate postwar period. Their size and lack of ornament may have been a response to the vagaries imposed by the economic hardships of the Great Depression. The frame houses were rarely more than 1,300 square feet in size. They had low- to medium-pitched side- or cross-gabled roofs with enclosed eaves and little or no overhang. They often adopted traditional details that harkened to Early American stylistic ethic such as Colonial or Tudor Revival elements.

The Ranch Style became one of the most copied architectural palettes in American building history. Though some Ranch Style variants appeared before World War II, the “true” Ranch with its long, low form, low-pitched gable or hipped roof, and minimal porch took the country by storm after 1950. Such houses required wider lots than their earlier counterparts. Rooms were arranged side to side along a narrow hall with public rooms on one side of the house and private rooms on the other side, off the hall. As the front porch lost its social importance, the Ranch House typically featured patios or other outdoor “rooms” out of sight, at the rear of the house. Picture windows and sliding glass doors were often placed on less visible elevations. Integral carports or garages are commonly found on Ranch Houses and their placement as an extension of the dwelling further attenuated the long, low profile of the dwelling.

#### *Domestic Auxiliary Resources*

Domestic Auxiliary Resources include outbuildings closely associated with and necessary to domestic uses in rural and small town locations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These include features such as privies, wells, cisterns, and sheds. Cisterns lay close to the house to capture rain water and were often lined with brick or stone and sheathed in concrete. Most auxiliary domestic resources made for human use consist of a one-story, wood or metal building of one or two rooms. Included among domestic auxiliary resources are storage and tool sheds used for domestic rather than agricultural work. From the nineteenth century through the postwar period, most rural homesites in the project area

included small privies set close to the rear of the house. Built of plank wood, they had fairly steep shed roofs. During the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration sent workers through the area to replace existing privies with concrete “Sanitary Sewer” systems. They are marked as such and several were discovered in the project area.

### ***Agricultural Properties***

Agricultural Properties in southeast Travis County warrant their discussion as a distinct Property Type because of their high numbers and significance in the rural history of the area. Such properties were essential to a local economy that depended almost entirely on agriculture. As a result, many agricultural properties such as barns, sheds, pens, coops and other resources associated with crop cultivation and animal husbandry are found in the project area. They are usually grouped together relatively close to but behind the associated house. Their permanence on the rural landscape can be seen in the many abandoned farmsteads where the primary domestic building has fallen to ruin, but the barns and or sheds remain to mark the site.

Agriculture formed the base of the local economy in southeast Travis County during much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cotton thrived in the black gumbo soil of the region and its cultivation was the mainstay of area crop production from the antebellum period through the early twentieth century. The successful cash crop provided a good lifestyle for many local farmers, allowing them to build substantial houses and acquire adjacent farms. Dairy farming rose in importance beginning in the late nineteenth century when dairies closer to Austin were subdivided for new housing starts on the city’s periphery. Farmers in the area also grew corn and other grains. In addition, they usually kept large vegetable gardens and orchards whose products were canned and stored in root cellars or free-standing pantries.

Barns and sheds were built in proximity to the farmer’s house for protection against fire or theft as well as convenience for the farmer. The farmer’s house was usually set facing the closest road. The agricultural buildings generally lay behind the house in two rows with the doors facing a central work space. Barns sheltered seed, crops, horses, and milk cows. Pens or fenced areas held hogs, and wood and wire coops housed chickens. Some farmers stored hay in the upper loft sections of large barns to keep it from getting wet and moldy. Some sheds or sections of barns were used for agricultural work space, such as butchering livestock and repairing equipment and tools. Secondary agricultural properties include cattle chutes and corrals.

Some agricultural properties were also commercial in nature. They include the cotton gin, blacksmith’s shop or shed, and livestock scales. These properties are usually found in community centers and, in fact,

helped to establish communities as surrounding farmers would all be drawn to their services at one time or another. As a rule, gins served farmers close enough to haul cotton to the site, have it weighed, and return home in one day. As a result, gins were spaced as necessary throughout the southeast Travis County project area. Few survive in the project area, however; a concrete foundation is still in evidence at Moore's Crossing, but a substantial three-story metal gin remains intact in Elroy. Blacksmith's shops were found both on individual farms and in community centers, but only one is known to have been extant in the project area as late as 1996. The forge at the Wallace-Burleson-Moore farm has been dismantled, but the wood and corrugated metal building that housed it still stands.

### ***Commercial Properties***

Few properties in the survey area can be categorized as commercial resources, although more existed in the past when nearly all discrete communities featured at least general or dry goods store. Isolated communities historically gave rise to one or two commercial buildings that also served as the local post office. Such stores appeared in the area about 1870 or 1880 and began to disappear in the early twentieth century when better roads allowed residents easy access to Austin and other shopping venues.

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial resources in the project area are typically one-story frame buildings with a rectangular plan, wood siding, and a false front or stepped parapet on the primary façade. This form is typical of small retail stores in rural communities and frontier settlements throughout the country at that time. By the mid-twentieth century, flat-roofed gas stations began to appear at the crossroads of county and state roads in the rural countryside. In southeast Travis County, commercial buildings are notable for their lack of excessive stylistic detail; they are primarily recognizable by their false front parapets and awnings. The Moore & Berry Store at Moore's Crossing, the Elroy Store on FM 812, and a small frame store on Old Lockhart Road all feature a parapet wall. The Moore & Berry and the Old Lockhart Road stores also have wide awnings supported by wooden posts. Only a small stone-faced store in Garfield features a modicum of style with a rustic shaped stone parapet above the entrance.

### ***Institutional Properties (Social, Educational, Religious, Funerary)***

Institutional Properties are linked together by virtue of their function and historical associations with settlement and development in the Project Area. Included in this category are schools, churches, government, fraternal and social buildings, and cemeteries. They occur wherever people congregate in groups and they tend to represent the people of a community as a whole. Resources in this category generally convey a sense of pride, growth, and respect, and they are among the largest resources found in a given community.

### *Social*

The only specific social building in the project area is the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) hall on FM 812 in Pilot Knob. It is a voluminous one-story front-gabled metal building with a stone veneer front façade. A parking lot stretches from the building's entrance to FM 812 where it is highly-visible to passing vehicles on the busy county road. Inside is a roomy bar where patrons meet and relax with one another. TCAD has it listed as being built in 1976, but members stated that it was built in the 1960s.

### *Educational*

Like churches, schools were among the earliest and most important institutional resources built in the rural project area. Educational Properties include resources whose function is directly related to educational efforts. However, they often served other institutional uses as early churches, post offices, and polling places until separate buildings could be erected for those activities. Most late nineteenth and early twentieth century schools in urban settings are roughly rectilinear in shape, have block massing and symmetrical facades. Schools in rural areas are more modestly scaled and typically are one-story, one-to two-room wood frame buildings with gabled or hipped roofs. An exception to the trend in southeast Travis County schools is the 1917 load-bearing red brick school in Elroy. It features two intersecting hipped-roof wings with room for two classrooms and a multi-purpose room that served primarily as a cafeteria. Two other identified school buildings in the project area are of frame construction; one is a two-room side-gabled board-and-batten building in Creedmoor and the other is a one-room frame building at Bluff's Springs. At least two other buildings that are now used as domestic properties may have originally been built as schools; they are two- to three-room side-gabled frame buildings that follow the physical profile of Educational Properties in southeast Travis County.

### *Religious*

Despite their relative importance in a community, Religious Properties in a rural setting such as southeast Travis County are relatively modest. Most in the project area are wood frame buildings with little architectural ornamentation. Creedmoor Union Church (Site 40) and Garfield's Haynie Chapel (Site 290) are good examples of rural churches in this area. Haynie Chapel is a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL). Two churches in the project area display greater architectural ornamentation; they are Salem Lutheran Church (Site 93) and San Francisco Xavier Catholic Church (Site 196). Site 93 is built of cut limestone and features an asymmetrical bell tower and Site 196 is built of flagstone on the side elevations and native stone on the primary façade. It has a rustic appearance with its decorative stone and fossil ornament. A large *niche* housing a statue of the Virgin Mary is made out of the same type of stone and stands to one side of the church entry.

### *Funerary*

Related to Religious Properties, Funerary Properties are found throughout the project area and range in size from a single grave in more isolated sections of the region to hundreds of graves near larger communities like Garfield and Elroy. They are often found at the outer edges of communities where there is less traffic and activity to disturb mourners. In general, cemeteries are defined by the organization and orientation of the graves, the type and design of grave markers, and landscaping features such as low concrete grave borders or swept cemeteries that are kept free of grass. Some cemeteries, like the Garfield Cemetery, are enclosed by wrought iron or wire fences.

Tombstones indicate that cemeteries in the project area date from the mid-nineteenth century to the present and reflect settlement dates of their associated communities and farms. Monuments and markers are typically of granite or marble, though a few are denoted by simple wood or metal crosses. Early settlers often buried their dead on their own property and most have been lost to history. An exception is the Vasquez burial in the southernmost point of the project area. A small piece of wrought iron fence and a live rose bush mark the spot of at least one, and reportedly more, graves.

### *Transportation Properties*

One reason southeast Travis County remained largely rural throughout the historic period was likely due to the absence of good roads through the region. The blackland prairie soil, while good for cotton cultivation, greatly impeded road development as the thick clay soil sucked at the hooves of horses and wheels of wagons as they attempted to traverse the landscape. Road construction was mandated by the Travis County Commissioners Court, but local residents were compelled to supply the manpower to build and maintain the roads. The time and labor-consuming work were disincentives to road building, and well-off property owners like Thomas McKinney and Sebron Sneed lobbied to keep the county from taking their land for such projects.

Among the first roads through the region connected the city of Austin to communities lying east of the capital. Among the first county roads in the area were the Webberville Road, which passed through the northeastern section of the county above the Colorado River, and the Bastrop-to-Austin road, which ran through the survey area. Both roads were in place by the 1830s. A mail route from Austin to the southeast Travis County community of Comanche was established by 1838. The Austin-to-Lockhart road was established some years later.

As settlement in the area grew, other, smaller roads connected farmsteads to one another. These roads were hard-packed dirt tracked sometimes paved with limestone shards. Typically, these roads were laid out along property boundaries to keep cultivated fields and livestock pastures intact. Travel along such

roads usually involved several modes of transportation due to river and stream crossings; businessmen traveling from Austin to Bastrop, for instance, might ride their horses to a ferry on Onion Creek, ford the creek via ferry, and rent a horse or wagon on the other side to complete that leg of the trip. Numerous low-water crossings connected Austin to the southeastern part of the county, but the effort involved in traveling in this manner discouraged all but agricultural development in the region through the nineteenth century.

The arrival of the first and subsequent railroads in Travis County did little to ease transportation in the southeast quadrant. In 1871, the Houston & Texas Central (H&TC) Railway passed through James Manor's land on its way to Austin. Manor struck a deal with the railroad company that led him to plat the city of Manor, an 80-block townsite fronting on the railroad. Manor became something of a boomtown almost immediately. Merchants flocked to the new townsite with its railroad access and town lots along the railroad tracks were quickly lined with commercial buildings. Within a decade, Manor built a public school, three churches, six general stores, and boasted 125 residents (Smyrl 2007). No community in southeast Travis County, which was completely bypassed by the railroad, could compare. The railroad's appearance in Austin was beneficial to area farmers, but they still had to load their crops on wagons and trek to the capital city of Austin to ship them to market.

By that time, however, an influx of immigrant farmers in the area helped spur better transportation within the quadrant. They built farmsteads, schools and churches, and the roads necessary to connect them to one another. Small communities grew up at the ferries and intersections of important roads. As early as 1881, a school was established at Moore's Crossing on Onion Creek, and by 1893, A. B. Moore built a store on the east side of the creek and later, a gin, blacksmith shop, and meat market at the site. In 1898, John E. Wallace, son of pioneer settler William Wallace, was appointed county road surveyor and over the next four years, he plotted out routes of existing county roads, such as the one from Austin to Bastrop, recorded the names of adjacent property owners, and prepared maps for future improvements. When he was finished in 1902, the county used his maps and citations to improve existing roads and plan new ones.

Area residents continued to suffer from flooding and washed out roads. Although Moore's Crossing was established at a low-water crossing, Onion Creek was prone to flooding and in 1915, the county bought three trusses of a former Colorado River bridge and erected them over Onion Creek. That year, the creek flooded and washed out the bridge; it took seven years to rebuild the bridge which opened in 1922 (Texas Historical Commission, Local History Programs, Moore's Crossing Bridge Marker Files). Moore's Crossing Bridge is a designated Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL).

As the region's population increased in the twentieth century, more and better roads were needed to connect the communities with one another and with cities like Austin, Bastrop, and Lockhart. Improved roads and automobile ownership went hand-in-hand and rural families were linked to better and less expensive shopping venues and services in nearby towns. Ironically, the roads built to serve the rural communities helped bring about their demise as local groceries, dry goods stores, and even schools and churches, were abandoned for better bargains and services in nearby Austin.

Among the historic-period transportation-related resources in southeast Travis County are Moore's Crossing Bridge, concrete culverts and low-water crossings along various roads, and a portion of the Old Bastrop Highway near FM 71. Many smaller roads through the region carry the names of early pioneers and settlers, including the Caldwell and Nuckols families, and for immigrant families who contributed to its late nineteenth and early twentieth century development, such as the Hokanson and Von Quintas families.

### ***Recreation***

Located on FM 812, the old Travis County Rodeo facility is identifiable by its stadium, arena, and fenced and gated grounds. This is the only known historic period recreational resource in the project area. It was reportedly built to showcase the skills of young rodeo participants in the years just after World War II. The large tract associated with the rodeo attests to the sport's popularity in rural southeast Travis County and to the continued importance of agricultural in the lives of its inhabitants. The site was abandoned about 1954 when a larger venue was secured for the rodeo.

## **Resource Analysis**

Field work, including property descriptions and photographs, and research, consisting of primary and secondary source materials, formed the basis for determining the relative significance of each historic-age resource and the potential for historic districts in the project area. The 1996 historic context, *Historic and Architectural Resources of Southeast Travis County: 1820-1945*, was used to identify and evaluate important resources in the project area. This section of the report identifies the process by which significance is determined and assessed for properties in southeast Travis County. It discusses the seven aspects of historic and architectural integrity and provides a context for understanding the relative merits of the surveyed properties.

### ***Property Significance***

Domestic properties comprise the largest percentage of southeast Travis County's historic cultural resources. As such, they are an important link to the area's physical development. Domestic properties were judged according to their significance and integrity in the field and again, upon collecting all data



in the project area, in comparison with others of their type. A domestic property can be significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its associations with historic events or trends (Criterion A), its association with a person or persons who made contributions to an area's historical development (Criterion B), its noteworthy physical characteristics, its craftsmanship or design, or an architect or builder's work (Criterion C). Finally, a domestic property can be considered significant and eligible for National Register listing under Criterion D (archeology), if its age and surviving features contribute to our understanding of the area's history.

A resource determined eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A will likely be a residence built as early as the early nineteenth century and as late as the mid- to late 1960s. It will be associated with seminal themes such as pioneer settlement, growth and prosperity during the height of the antebellum cotton culture, the tenant farms of the immediate post-Civil War period, into the increasing agricultural well-being of the early twentieth century and the introduction of new cash crops and advances in agricultural equipment and techniques. In the postwar era, potentially significant domestic properties in the area tended to adopt the popular Ranch style of that period. In fact, several planned subdivisions with largely Ranch style houses appeared in the project area. Examples of significant domestic properties in southeast Travis County might be a log house associated with the earliest period of Anglo American settlement or an architect-designed Ranch style house of the postwar period.

Because of the area's rural character, historically significant properties will be scattered throughout the project area and likely nominated to the National Register individually or as part of a thematic group. Buildings associated with the development of small crossroads communities like Moore's Crossing, Creedmoor, or Elroy might be eligible under Criterion A. In fact, if these resources survive in a small and well-defined area, they may be significant as a historic district. Such a district could be nominated to the National Register if it can be shown how the area and the mix of commercial, residential and institutional buildings in it are representative of the community's early architectural influences. The individual components of such a district do not have to be stellar examples of type but they should retain sufficient integrity to be recognizable to the period in which the district achieved its significance.

Historical significance can also be made for individuals who were important in the history of the area (Criterion B). In such cases, the eligible property is almost always the home in which the person lived when he or she achieved their accomplishments. The property would be related to the historic context for the region and date to the period of significance, which extends from ca. 1820 to 1965. An example might be the house of a rural businessman who contributed to his community and made a lasting impact on its well-being.

Domestic resources may also be nominated to the National Register under Criterion C as a noteworthy example of an architectural style, type or form identified in Domestic Properties above. If nominated under Criterion C, the property would be evaluated for its architectural significance. The building would be assessed for qualities such as craftsmanship or design relative to other domestic properties of its type. Resources might also be eligible for their overall architectural merits, as an example of a specific type or method of construction, or because they are rare examples of a type.

Domestic properties can also be nominated to the National Register under Criterion C as components of a historic district comprised of similarly intact historic properties within a well-defined area. Individual domestic properties within a historic district need not possess exceptional characteristics but, rather, they should together contribute to the overall quality of the district by virtue of their relatively intact architectural features and their ability to convey a sense of history.

Finally, properties may be nominated to the National Register under Criterion D (archeology) when they have yielded or are likely to yield information important to our understanding of building technology. Examples may include an abandoned farmstead or site of skirmish between Anglo settlers and Native Americans. These sites may be associated with events or individuals that were associated with the economic or social history of the community. Another example might be an early twentieth century house that was the home of a merchant or trader. Such a dwelling has the potential to yield information about local construction methods and materials for a dwelling associated with an important person in the project area.

### ***Registration Requirements of Properties***

#### ***Individual Properties***

Domestic properties can be considered for nomination to the National Register if they are at least 50 years old and retain a significant amount of their architectural integrity. They should be recognizable to their period of significance, which under Criterion C and D is the date of construction. To be listed in the National Register, a domestic resource also must meet at least one of the four official Criteria for Evaluation (Criteria A, B, C, or D). Properties may be listed individually or as a Contributing element of a historic district. To be listed in either case, a domestic property must be strongly associated with and related to the associated historic or architectural context. The Statement of Significance within the nomination should discuss how the property or district meet the National Register Criteria and how they relate to the historic context under which they are nominated.

Because domestic resources nominated under Criterion A or B are those recognized for their strong historical associations, they do not necessarily have to be pristine or even noteworthy examples of an

architectural style, type or form. They should, however, retain sufficient integrity to be recognizable from their period of significance and be closely related to important trends or events in the past as articulated in the historic context (Criterion A) or with persons who made significant contributions to the area's history (Criterion B). A National Register nomination prepared under Criteria A or B must make a strong argument to the effect that the trend, event, or person is a significant factor in the historic development of southeast Travis County.

A number of individual historic dwellings and associated outbuildings survive in southeast Travis County and several are good candidates for listing under Criterion C as good examples of an architectural style or type or method of construction. None are known to be noteworthy commissions of an architect or master builder. Such resources must possess a high degree of physical integrity and be closely associated with the historic context of southeast Travis County. Under Criterion C, a domestic property must appear very much as it did when it was originally built, or when it was sympathetically altered 50 or more years ago. The introduction of anachronistic or incongruous physical elements can detract from the resource's integrity and thus make it ineligible for listing in the National Register. Removal and replacement of original elements, such as wood sash windows, porch posts, siding, and decorative feature, can compromise the property's historic integrity.

#### *Aspects of Integrity for Individual Properties*

Domestic properties under consideration for listing in the National Register under any criteria must maintain high levels of integrity as defined by *National Park Service Bulletin 13*. The bulletin identifies the seven aspects of integrity necessary for listing in the National Register. They are integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, association, and feeling.

To retain integrity of location, a resource must be on its original site or moved to its present site during the established period of significance. Exceptions may be made if a resource and its auxiliary buildings are moved to a similar site with similar landscaping. The resources should maintain their spatial relationships to one another and be set back and arranged in a manner similar to the original. Few historic resources in southeast Travis County have been moved so nearly all retain integrity of location. To be considered eligible under Criterion C, resources should retain landscaping and other environmental features present during the period of significance in order to maintain integrity of setting. The introduction of walkways and driveways are considered minor changes and should not reduce integrity of setting.

Integrity of design and materials are closely related. Historic resources should retain integrity of architectural design whether they are simple vernacular buildings or elaborate High Style dwellings.

Perhaps more than any other aspect of integrity, design conveys the property's historic context. Design informs us of its age, period of significance, economic and social status, and level of sophistication of its inhabitants. Original materials are also important aspects of integrity. If a log house has been covered in siding like milled lumber or asbestos, it will not adequately portray the history and significance of the property. Under Criterion C, a property must retain evidence of original craftsmanship and distinguishing design features such as original exterior siding, original windows, and architectural embellishment in the form of decorative trim, moldings, and roof treatments.

With the exception of log houses and quarried limestone houses built in the early years of settlement in southeast Travis County, most extant domestic buildings through the first half of the twentieth century were of frame construction sheathed with milled siding. Following World War II, brick became a popular construction material on the many Ranch Style houses in the project area. Common alterations found in southeast Travis County are the replacement of original wood siding with asbestos or aluminum siding, the replacement of original wood sash windows with aluminum sash, the removal of windows and doors altogether, and the alteration of character-defining front porches by their whole or part enclosure or removal.

The same principles of integrity apply to all domestic properties, though to differing degrees. Properties nominated under Criteria A and B, for historic associations, should be recognizable to their period of significance. They may be good or typical examples of their type and style. Properties nominated under Criterion C, for architectural merit, must adhere to a higher standard and appear very much as they did during their period of significance.

#### *Aspects of Integrity for Historic Districts*

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a historic district must be a well-defined area that contains a significant concentration of historic (pre-ca. 1965) resources that retain their architectural integrity to a high degree. It is recommended that at least 50 percent of all identified resources in the proposed district be classified as Contributing, a designation that indicates that the property retains sufficient integrity to be recognizable to the district's period of significance. Individual properties should contribute to the significance of the district as a whole.

Contributing properties in historic districts should retain their most important materials and design features to convey a sense of history as a collection. Ideally, they should retain their original roof forms, window and door configuration, and original porch design and materials. The exterior walls should be sheathed with their original siding materials. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century domestic buildings in southeast Travis County were typically frame houses with wood siding. Toward the end of

the nineteenth century, they featured jigsawn porch braces, lathe-turned or chamfered porch posts, spindle friezes and other decorative wood elements. By the 1920s, when Craftsman bungalows appeared on the landscape, they often displayed wooden knee braces, exposed rafter ends, and tapered porch posts. Southeast Travis County has at least two potential postwar districts where Ranch Style houses predominate. They are typically long, low, brick or stone houses with side-gabled or hipped roofs set horizontally on their lots.

These are all character-defining features of the historic properties. Common alterations include the application of vinyl, aluminum, or asbestos siding to exterior siding, the replacement of original wooden windows and doors. Many original wood sash windows in southeast Travis County have been replaced by aluminum sash or sliding windows. Many casement windows found on early Ranch Style houses have been replaced by fixed picture windows or aluminum sash windows. A domestic property can sustain a certain amount of alteration and still be considered a Contributing element of a historic district if it remains recognizable to its period of significance. Superficial alterations, such as the application of nonhistoric paint colors or the replacement of original roofing material when the overall roof form is intact, do not render a resource Noncontributing in the proposed historic district. Districts nominated under Criterion C, architectural merit, must possess a higher level of integrity than those listed under Criteria A or B.

Historic outbuildings and structures can be considered Contributing elements if they display physical detailing that is in keeping with the overall form of the resources with which they are associated. Such outbuildings and structures may include one-story sheds and storage buildings, garages, and cisterns that incorporate historic elements similar to those found elsewhere in the district. Such auxiliary resources rarely convey an architectural style but they should conform to recognizable forms. For instance, typical auxiliary resources in southeast Travis County include cisterns that stand about three feet above the ground and retain their lips and concrete sheathing; privies that are narrow wooden buildings with a shed-roof and vents cut into the upper section of the door; and hay barns with front gabled or gambrel roofs, an upper level for hay storage, and doors that open from the hay loft to the barn yard below. Such resources may be considered Contributing elements in a potential historic district.

Noncontributing properties detract from a historic district's character. Nonhistoric properties – those built outside the period of significance – are considered Noncontributing resources. Noncontributing resources also include historic properties that have lost their integrity by virtue of severe or multiple alterations. Just as a district should possess at least 50 percent Contributing properties, it should have fewer than 50 percent Noncontributing properties. Exceptions can be made for properties with

documented significance, but they are rare. It is important that a historic district exhibit a sufficient degree of Contributing fabric to convey a strong sense of its heritage.

Though a handful of churches remain open on their historic sites, most students attend large centralized schools and their parents patronize stores in Austin. Cemeteries endure as the main common resource for these rural communities.

Despite the new construction near the Austin city limits, southeast Travis County remains largely characterized by a rural landscape of scattered farms, ranches and small, rural communities, with intermittent suburban development and a regional airport. One of the oldest known properties in the area is the ca. 1843 Wallace-Burleson-Moore Farmstead on the bank of Onion Creek. The center-passage house is one of the most elaborate log structures in the region and dates to the earliest period of Anglo settlement in southeast Travis County. Though not as wealthy as some of his neighbors, William Wallace owned several slaves who probably built or assisted in the construction of the large log house.

## Recommendations

In order to preserve and protect the remaining historic resources of southeast Travis County, Preservation Central recommends that the Travis County Historical Commission undertake National Register nominations for the most significant High priority property properties and for four historic districts. The consultants identified 42 High priority properties in the survey area, though some may be ineligible for listing, as cemeteries and churches are generally excluded from consideration. However, cemeteries and churches can be eligible for listing if they meet special requirements called Criteria Considerations in addition to meeting the regular requirements. Four potential historic districts were identified in the survey. One is found in a cluster of late nineteenth/early twentieth century buildings and sites in Elroy. Another consists of a handful of early twentieth century domestic buildings on Nuckols Crossing. Two are the earliest postwar subdivisions in Southeast Travis County, one in Pilot Knob and the other near the intersection of McKinney Falls Parkway and Burleson Road. Both consist largely of Ranch Style homes and possess good to excellent integrity. Whether individual or historic district nominations, the recognition may highlight the cultural value of the properties to central Texas and encourage property owners and community leaders to seek ways in which to rehabilitate and put them to good use.

Individual candidates for National Register listing are found throughout the project. Among them are some of the earliest and most important historic and architectural resources in the region. They include:

- Wallace-Burleson-Moore farmstead at 5820 FM 973
- Queen Anne Style House at 15011 Hokanson Road
- Folk Victorian House at 9035 Elroy Road
- High Style Victorian House unknown address off of FM 812
- 1917 Elroy School, 9019 Elroy Road
- Victorian/Queen Anne at 14003 FM 812
- Turn of the century cotton gin in the 14000 block FM 812
- Rodeo Grounds 10449 FM 812
- San Francisco Javier Catholic Church at 8619 FM 183
- Late 19<sup>th</sup> century frame building, possibly an early school, at 4200 block Caldwell Drive
- Rustic dwelling attached to a log house, 17800 River Timbers Road
- Farmstead with multiple barns, tenant houses, privy, cistern, 13809 Hokanson Road
- One-room school (Bluff Springs) 1008 Polk Shelton Road

In most cases, religious properties are ineligible for National Register listing. Although they are often the most important buildings to members of a community, they must possess unique or significant architectural or historic associations to qualify for listing. Haynie Chapel Methodist Church, in Garfield, is a designated Texas Historic Landmark, but it is not listed in the National Register. Another church that is significant for its architecture is the San Francisco Javier Catholic Church at 8619 US 183. Its unique rustic construction sets it apart from other churches in the area that are generally modest Gothic Revival in design.

In addition to individual properties, southeast Travis County has several good concentrations of historic resources that together may be eligible for listing in the National Register as districts. They range in age from late nineteenth to early twentieth century Folk Victorian town and Queen Anne style houses within the community of Elroy, to a small cluster of early twentieth century properties along Nuckols Crossing road, and two mid-century suburban subdivisions dating to the 1950s and 1960s.

The potential Nuckols Crossing district consists of six early twentieth century frame bungalows and an early Ranch style house clustered together on the country road. The collection includes several Craftsman-influenced bungalows, a Classical Box type house, and an early Ranch Style house. Although newer homes are also situated on Nuckols Crossing, this group is distinguished from later homes by their small scale, original materials and design, communal setting, and proximity to one another.

The potential Elroy Historic District is comprised of a scattering of Folk Victorian and Queen Anne houses, some modest bungalows, a 1917 brick school building, a cemetery and a c. 1900 cotton gin. The collection represents Elroy's role as the center of the Swedish community that began settling in the area in the late nineteenth century. They are laid out along two intersecting roads – FM 812 and Elroy Road – that defined a townsite type cluster in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The removal of Elroy's iconic general store at the center of the community has lessened the viability of the district but efforts should be made to preserve and protect the remaining resources.

The community of Pilot Knob, near Austin's eastern limits, contains a very intact subdivision of mostly Ranch style houses dating from c. 1955 through the early 1970s. Two Pilot Knob Additions were platted in the 1950s and 1960s and a postwar growth spurt in the region led to their quick build out. Unlike scattered farmsteads and loosely affiliated properties in older communities in the region, the Pilot Knob streets were densely developed with consistent setbacks, lot sizes, and a large number of side-gabled brick Ranch style houses. It is one of the most cohesive neighborhoods in the area to the present. Changes in the additions include large second stories but few new tear-downs.



Another postwar subdivision, the Martin Shaw Addition along Burleson Road, is a little later, dating to the end of the historic period, but also filled with c. 1960s side-gabled Ranch Style houses. Dwellings in the addition are both single-family and duplexes. They are clad in brick or stone veneer and feature carports or garages. The Martin Shaw Addition is the most intact and architecturally consistent of the four potential historic districts. It represents the rise of subdivision planning in southeast Travis County in the mid-1960s. Because a number of properties in the subdivision were built in the late 1960s, the neighborhood is not yet eligible for listing in the National Register, but should be considered in the next several years.

In addition to nominating individual properties and historic districts to the National Register of Historic Places, the Travis County Historical Commission should apply for Official Texas Historical Markers for other significant buildings identified in the survey.

Finally, the survey found the area around and including the community of Elroy to have some of the most intact and significant historic resources in the survey area. Unfortunately, it also appears to be the most endangered segment of southeast Travis County due largely to the development associated with the Formula One racetrack. The Commission should consider holding town-hall meetings or workshops to educate historic building owners, developers, and realtors about the importance of the resources. Topics should include the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits available to income-producing properties eligible for the National Register or constructed before 1965.

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## **Appendices**

**APPENDIX A: Inventory of Properties**

**APPENDIX B: Historic Resources Survey Forms**

**APPENDIX C: Labeled Digital Photographs**

**APPENDIX D: Project Area Maps**

**APPENDIX A: Inventory of Properties**



**APPENDIX B: Historic Resources Survey Forms**  
**(Organized Local ID Number)**

## **APPENDIX C: Labeled Digital Photographs**

## **APPENDIX D: Project Area Maps**