

APPENDIX N

ABOVEGROUND CULTURAL RESOURCES SUPPLEMENTAL MDOT S106 APPLICATION INFORMATION MEMORANDUM



Project name:
Beck Road Corridor Improvement
Project

Date: January 9, 2025

Project ref:
MDOT JN 219309

To: Brian Grennell, MDOT

From:
Trina Meiser, Senior Architectural Historian
Chanen Hanson, Architectural Historian
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Memo

Subject: Aboveground Cultural Resources Supplemental MDOT S106 Application Information for the Beck Road Corridor Improvement Project, from South of 9 Mile Road to Pontiac Trail, City of Novi and City of Wixom, Oakland County, Michigan

Introduction

This memo provides additional information for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Local Agency Program (LAP) Section 106 Application for the Beck Road Corridor Improvement Project (JN 219309) (Project). At MDOT's request, AECOM conducted a windshield survey of the Project vicinity to identify aboveground cultural resources that may be historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). AECOM conducted background research and survey that identified 26 properties with aboveground resources more than 40 years old in the survey area. Of the 26 properties, three buildings located at 23893 Beck Road and 29250 Beck Road were further evaluated for potential NRHP eligibility and recorded on Michigan SHPO Architectural Properties Identification Forms (attached). The NRHP evaluation concluded that none of the resources are eligible for NRHP listing and are not considered historic properties.

Existing Conditions

Historic Context

The community of Novi was initially developed in 1825 by Erastus Ingersoll, his wife, Sally, and his nine children. By 1832, the population increased to "between 90 and 100 voters" sufficient to incorporate as a township (Seeley 1912). Over the course of the nineteenth century, Novi grew at a relatively slow pace and was smaller than neighboring Northville and other Oakland County municipalities. The first town hall was built in 1872, and the township developed around the intersection of the Walled Lake, Detroit, and Howell roads. Construction of the Holly, Wayne, and Monroe Railway in 1872 provided farmers and merchants a new and easy means of transportation to ship their product and facilitated growth of the township (Seeley 1912). In the first half of the twentieth century, the area was characterized by scattered houses and agricultural development. Development of Novi continued at a slow pace until post-World War II suburban growth. In the early 1950s, fruit orchards became one of the primary agricultural products produced in Novi. However, by the mid-1960s, many of these fruit farms were divided into smaller lots for residential development. In 1969, Novi residents voted to incorporate as a city. Between 1969 and 1983, residential and commercial development in Novi skyrocketed, and what was once a largely rural and agricultural township was quickly becoming a large suburb. In 1970, the City of Novi had less than 10,000 citizens. The City grew by over 10,000 residents for five consecutive decades (U.S. Census Bureau). The trend of suburban development has continued with hundreds of houses constructed between 2019 and 2024.

Historical maps illustrate early development in the Project area along the entire length of Beck Road by 1872. Development was largely limited to agricultural properties and Detroit Turnpike toll stations. Maps produced between 1902 and 1953 show

small growth in the number of houses and the fruit industry growth in the Project area. However, by 1969, many of these properties were subdivided into postwar suburban residential developments. In 1957, parts of Novi and nearby unincorporated territories were incorporated into the village of Wixom, which encompasses the property at 29250 Beck Rd. By 1983, the Project area's once rural setting was characterized by single-family residences in the south and commercial properties in the north, with several clusters of mid-century houses, one mid-nineteenth century residence (26270 Beck Road), and one late nineteenth-century residence (29250 Beck Road).

Desktop and Survey

AECOM conducted background research and a windshield/reconnaissance survey to identify potential historic properties in the survey area. Historical maps, archival records, and local histories were reviewed. An on-site cultural resources windshield survey was conducted September 09, 2024.

As a result of research and survey, 26 aboveground cultural resources more than 40 years old were identified in the survey area (Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of Aboveground Cultural Resources in the APE

Resource Name (Parcel #)	Address	Architectural Style	Built Date	NRHP Evaluation
50-22-33-100-024	22126 Beck Rd, Northville MI, 48167	Millenium Mansion	1954	Not eligible
50-22-32-200-028	22135 Beck Rd, Northville MI, 48167	Not Visible	1979	Not eligible
50-22-33-100-032	22250 Beck Rd, Northville MI, 48167	Ranch	1966	Not eligible
50-22-29-400-016	22955 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1977	Not eligible
50-22-29-400-014	23055 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1978	Not eligible
50-22-29-400-018	23075 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1978	Not eligible
50-22-29-226-045	23893 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch, Gothic Revival	1956, 1875	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-016	25300 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1964	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-015	25320 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1967	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-004	25670 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Minimal Traditional	1957	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-003	25670 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1957	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-002	25684 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1957	Not eligible
50-22-21-152-001	25696 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1968	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-011	25714 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1971	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-010	25726 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1958	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-009	25738 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1971	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-008	25750 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1969	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-006	25774 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1965	Not eligible

50-22-21-101-005	25788 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Split-level	1978	Not eligible
50-22-21-101-004	25872 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1964	Not eligible
50-22-21-103-009	47296 Sierra Dr, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1963	Not eligible
50-22-16-300-011	47250 11 Mile Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Eclectic Revival	1952	Not eligible
50-22-16-300-009	26140 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Minimal Traditional	1954	Not eligible
50-22-16-300-046	26250 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	Ranch	1953	Not eligible
50-22-16-300-006	26270 Beck Rd, Novi MI, 48374	National Folk	1850	Not eligible
50-22-09-101-002	29250 Beck Rd, Wixom MI, 48393	Greek Revival	1857-1872	Not eligible

Based on the survey, three of the 26 resources demonstrated historical or architectural potential for NRHP eligibility and were further evaluated and recorded on Michigan SHPO Architectural Properties Identification Forms.

Oakland Baptist Church (23893 Beck Road, Novi, MI 48374)

Oakland Baptist Church was built by its original congregation in 1875 and was home to the Methodist Church of Novi, the first established worship group in the city for nearly 100 years. In 1969, the Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The Methodist Church of Novi merged with the Willowbrook Evangelic United Brethren Church and moved to its building on 10 Mile Road. The congregation still practices at the 10 Mile Road location today. The church was a center of worship until the 1970s when it became a daycare center. The property is not associated with any non-religious events or trends at the local, state, or national level, nor did research establish a connection between the resource and any person important or significant in local, state, or national events. The building features Gothic Revival architectural elements such as a steeply pitched roof, ornate paired brackets in the eaves, and label mold window surrounds. However, the property has been substantially altered since its construction, such as the removal of its steeple in 1997, as well as replacement siding, windows, doors, and front stoop elements. Due to these changes, the building has a diminished integrity of design, materials and workmanship and does not convey distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Additionally, research does not indicate that the building is the work of a master. Furthermore, the building was moved in 1997 to its current location on the site of the Oakland Baptist Church (Novi Historical Commission). The property does not retain integrity of location because it has been moved. The church's original location near downtown Novi is drastically different from the suburban setting it currently occupies on Beck Road. Therefore, it does not retain integrity of setting. Therefore, the property is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, B, or C, and does not qualify under NRHP Criteria considerations. The property does not retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, or feeling, and is not eligible for the NRHP.

23893 Beck Road, Novi, MI 48374

The house at 23893 Beck Road was built in 1951 and is an example of the Stylized Ranch style, including its attached garage, tripartite picture window, horizontal form, and wide chimney. However, it is a mundane example of a Ranch house, a ubiquitous property type throughout Novi, Michigan, and the United States. The subject property does not possess high artistic value and features alterations, such as a 1983 addition to its west elevation, as well as replacement siding, windows, doors and front stoop elements, which have diminished its integrity under design, materials, and workmanship. Further, research did not indicate that the subject property is the work of a master. Although the property is associated with mid-century residential development in Novi, research did not indicate that the property is associated with any significant historical events, nor did it identify any historically significant individuals associated with the resource. Therefore, the property is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, B, or C. The property does not retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, or association, and is not eligible for the NRHP.

29250 Beck Road, Wixom, MI 48393

The house at 29250 Beck Road was built between 1857 and 1872 and is an example of Greek Revival rural architecture; however, it does not possess high artistic value and features significant alterations, including multiple additions, replacement

siding and roof materials such as soffit, fascia and shingles, a modified front porch, and replacement windows and doors. All alterations have substantially diminished the building's ability to reflect the characteristics of a mid- to late-nineteenth century Greek Revival residence. The property was originally purchased by the Sandford family in the 1830s and remained in the family until at least 1908, and though it is generally associated with community development of Wixom in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, research did not indicate that the subject property is associated with any events or trends significant to the history of Wixom, Michigan, or the United States, nor did the Sandford family or later residents make any significant contributions to the history of Wixom, Michigan, or the United States. Therefore, the property is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, B, or C. The property does not retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, or feeling, and not eligible for the NRHP.

Summary

The aboveground cultural resources review and NRHP evaluation of properties within the survey area did not identify any resources listed in or eligible for the NRHP. No historic properties were identified in the survey area; therefore, the Project would not impact historic properties and would not require mitigation for impacts on historic properties.

References

Durant, S. W. (1877). *History of Oakland County Michigan*. L.H. Everts Co.; Internet Archive. Accessed at: <https://archive.org/details/afk0725.0001.001.umich.edu/page/n1/mode/2up>

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U.S. Census Bureau. (1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020). *Population and Housing Data*.