

**DESIGN REASSESSMENT OF
BELLA VISTA-PINEVILLE, MO
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
HIGHWAY 71 IN BENTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS
FROM BELLA VISTA, ARKANSAS TO THE
ARKANSAS/MISSOURI STATE LINE**

Federal Highway Administration-Arkansas Division

FHWA-AR-EIS-98-01-F

Federal Project: DPR-00551(1)

State Project: 009969

APPROVED



Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration

Date: 11/08/07

November 2007

The Bella Vista Bypass (Bypass) project, as shown in Figure 1, was initially evaluated as part of FAP DRP-0051(1), Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) Job Number 009969, *U.S. 71, Bella Vista to Pineville, Missouri*, for which a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was prepared by the HNTB Corporation. The FEIS was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on December 22, 1999, and the Record of Decision was issued April 19, 2000. A Design Reassessment that reflects changes made to the 1998 Conceptual Design following a Location Public Hearing (LPH) held in Bella Vista, Arkansas on May 21, 1998, was approved by FHWA on June 7, 2007.

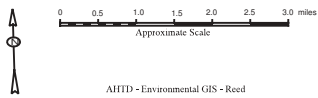
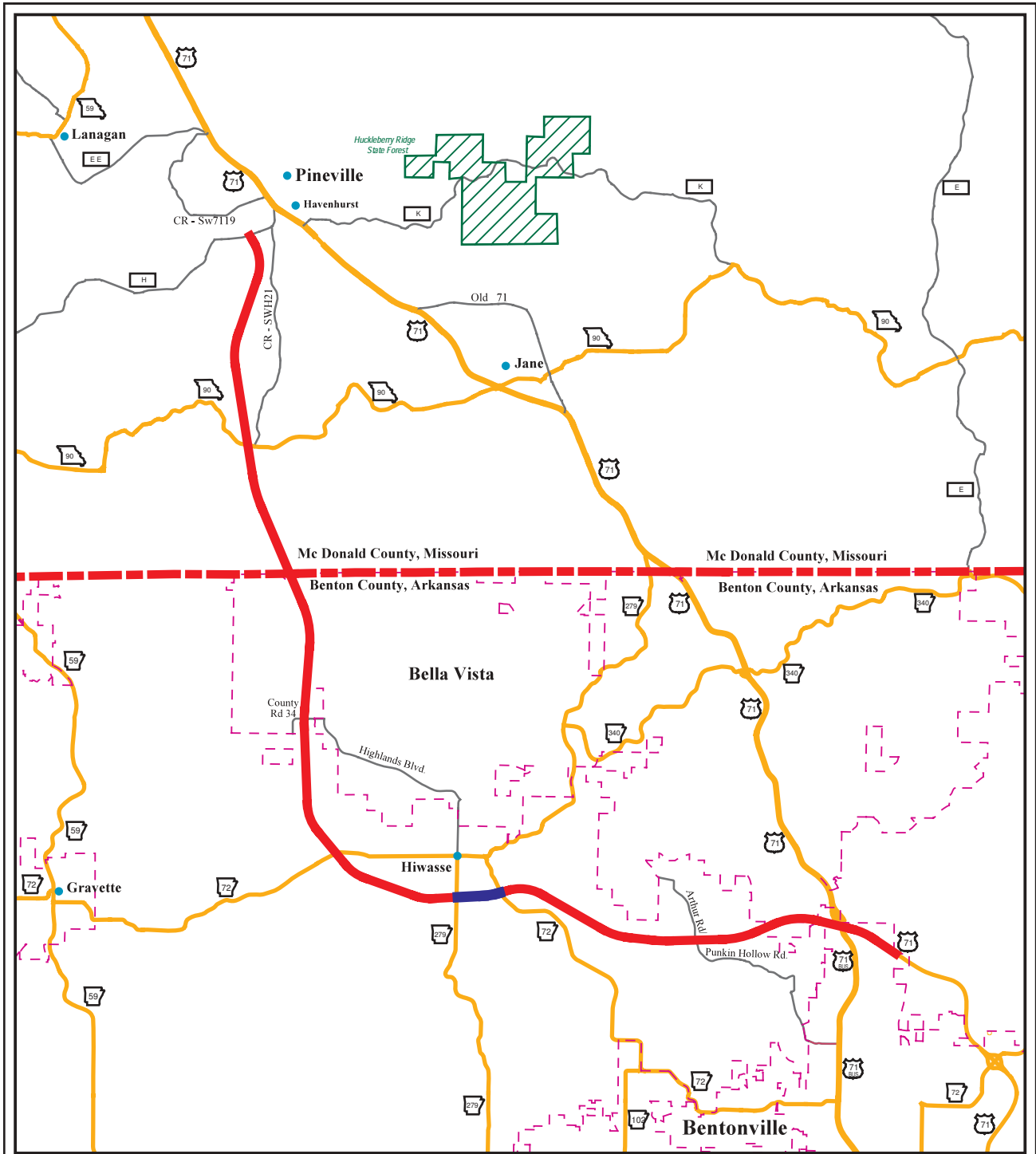
Design work within Arkansas was initiated with HNTB Corporation in August 2001 under AHTD Job Number 090115. Due to funding conflicts and transportation priorities, work on the project was suspended between April 2004 and May 2005. Design modifications that have occurred since the LPH were presented to the public at Design Public Hearings (DPH) held in Gravette and Bella Vista on November 15 and November 16, 2006, respectively.

Comments received at the DPH supported an interchange located at Highway 279, or located at both Highway 279 and Highway 72 East. These comments stated that Highway 279 provided the most direct connection from the Bypass to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport area, and has been proposed as a future four-lane arterial route by the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC).

Currently, both highways are designated as collector routes. Highway 279 and Highway 72 East are located too close together for Bypass interchanges to be provided at both locations. From overpass to overpass, the main lanes will be 0.75 mile (1.2 kilometers) in length.

A planning study was performed that provided information to determine the best location of an interchange, at either Highway 279 or Highway 72 East. Highway 279 currently carries approximately 2,100 vehicles per day (vpd), and Highway 72 East carries approximately 7,000 vpd, where traversed by the Bypass. Traffic projections that were made for the planning period, Year 2026, predicted 7,100 vpd for Highway 279. Forecasts for Highway 72 anticipated 23,000 vpd north of the interchange and 15,200 vpd south of the interchange. The study recommended that an interchange be constructed at Highway 72 East because it is projected to carry more traffic during the planning period.

As a result of the comments, the Bypass design has been modified to include a frontage road in order to shorten travel time from Highway 279 to the interchange at Highway 72 East, as shown in Figure 2. No traffic projections have been made for the proposed frontage road. The facility and the frontage road have been designed so that a "split" interchange with collector/distributor roads can be built in the future if and when traffic warrants the construction. The frontage road will be located along the south side of the Bypass and the design includes relocating a portion of County Road 553. The decision was made to place the frontage road on the south because travelers coming down



AHTD - Environmental GIS - Reed
January 24, 2007

Figure 1
Project Location Map
Highway 71 Relocation
Bella Vista, Arkansas to Pineville, Missouri
AHTD Job No. 009969

| Legend | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| — | Project Location |
| — | Area of Frontage Road |

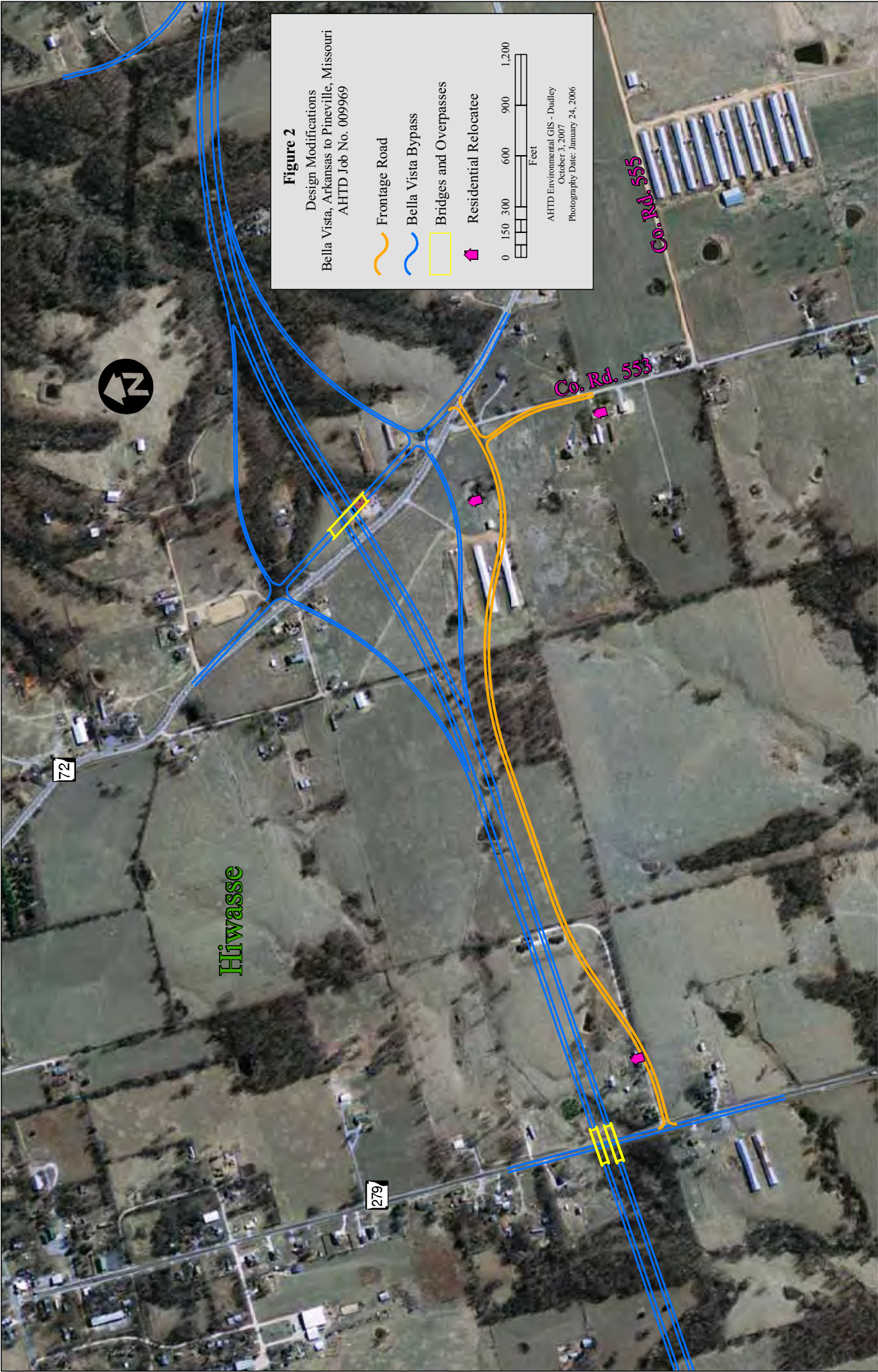


Figure 2

Design Modifications
 Bella Vista, Arkansas to Pineville, Missouri
 AHTD Job No. 009969

- Frontage Road
- Bella Vista Bypass
- Bridges and Overpasses
- ➡ Residential Relocate



AHTD Environmental GIS - Dudley
 October 3, 2007
 Photography Date: January 24, 2006



Hiwasse

72

279

Co. Rd. 553

Co. Rd. 555

Highway 279 from the north would use the closer Highway 72 interchange, and that the higher vpd traffic would be coming from the south on Highway 279.

The previous Bypass design that did not include the frontage road resulted in a loss of access to parcels of land. These land-locked parcels were absorbed in the overall project cost as damaged property. Construction of the frontage road will provide access to 25.8 acres (10.4 hectares) of previously land-locked parcels and minimize impacts to these landowners by restoring their access. Due to the re-established access, the addition of the frontage road will result in a reduction of the overall right of way cost, despite three additional residential relocations and the additional right of way required for the frontage road. Information on the modifications necessary for the frontage road and changes to County Road 553 is shown in Table 1.

| Table 1 | | | |
|---|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Frontage Road Length Mile (Kilometers) | Frontage Road Right of Way Acres (Hectares) | Relocation Cost | Total Estimated Cost* |
| 0.9 (1.4) | 18.2 (7.4) | \$99,000 | \$14,000 |

*Reflects estimated cost of right of way reduction, relocation, and construction.

Addition of the frontage road and the relocated portion of County Road 553 will result in the impacts shown in Table 2.

| Table 2 | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Relocations | Prime Farm Land Acres (Hectares) | Farm Land of Statewide Importance Acres (Hectares) |
| 3 Residences | 3.8 (1.5) | 1.2 (0.5) |

The area containing the proposed frontage road was assessed during the initial Phase I Cultural Resources survey. One historic standing structure was identified near the western end of the proposed frontage road and was determined potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Subsequent study and documentation revealed that significant alterations had been made to the structure. Because of the alterations, a reassessment was conducted and resulted in a reversal of the previous eligibility determination (see attached correspondence). The proposed access road will cause destruction of the structure. Further assessment of the 20th century archeological

component associated with the structure will be handled according to the Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Officer dated July 2, 2002.

In July 2004, HNTB Corporation conducted a *Traffic, Revenue and Toll Feasibility Study*, (2004 Study) for the US 71 Bella Vista Bypass Project. In the 2004 Study, the AHTD and MoDOT considered the feasibility of constructing the Bypass using toll financing. The 2004 Study was conducted as an investment-grade toll study to determine the potential toll financing feasibility of the bypass project.

A Bella Vista Bypass Toll Study Update (2006 Study) was conducted by HNTB Corporation to examine the feasibility of tolling only the Arkansas portion of the project, from the Arkansas-Missouri state line to the Highway 71/Highway 71 Business interchange north of Bentonville.

The 2006 Study determined the estimated capital cost of the Bypass and recommended an appropriate tolling solution that would require a commitment by the AHTD for road operation and maintenance but would fully fund the construction costs of the project with no additional funds necessary.

On April 12, 2006, the Arkansas State Highway Commission authorized the AHTD to construct and fund the Bypass as a toll facility, based on the combined findings of the 2004 Study and 2006 Study. Carter & Burgess, Inc. (C&B), an engineering consulting firm, was hired to design the toll facility and to reassess the toll feasibility.

The toll feasibility reassessment provided by C&B estimated a toll income that was substantially less than that which was previously suggested in the HNTB 2004 Study. Due to the results of the C&B toll reassessment, at this time the AHTD has decided to forego constructing the Bypass as a toll facility. Should this proposed roadway be converted to a toll facility in the future, the social, economic and environmental impacts associated with the conversion will be fully evaluated as a design reassessment or a separate National Environmental Policy Act document.

Toll booths located at both the Hiawasse interchange and the Highway 72 West interchange (shown on Figures 3 and 4, respectively), and a Main Lane Toll Plaza (Plaza) located east of Hiwasse (see Figure 3 Inset) have been eliminated from the design. The elimination of the interchange toll booths resulted in no significant change to the design. However, the elimination of the Plaza resulted in a reduction of right of way as shown in the Figure 3 Inset. Right of way will be reduced by 15.7 acres (6.4 hectare) in the Plaza area.

The elimination of the Toll Plaza will result in the estimated cost savings shown in Table 3.

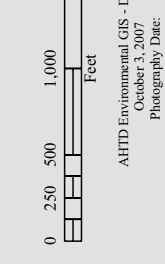
This reevaluation of the environmental impacts resulting from design modifications was conducted through document review, site visits, and evaluation of the Design Public Hearing comments. The additional and/or revised impacts detailed in this design reassessment are not deemed significant.

| Table 3 | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Right of Way | Relocation | Construction & Design* |
| \$180,000 | \$7,000 | \$20,360,000 |

*Includes estimated costs for the Toll Booths and Plaza.

Figure 3
Design Modifications
Bella Vista, Arkansas to Pineville, Missouri
AHTD Job No. 009969

-  Bella Vista Bypass
-  Bridges and Overpasses
-  Frontage Road
-  Eliminated Main Lane Toll Plaza
-  Eliminated Toll Booth



AHTD Environmental GIS - Dudley
October 3, 2007
Photography Date:

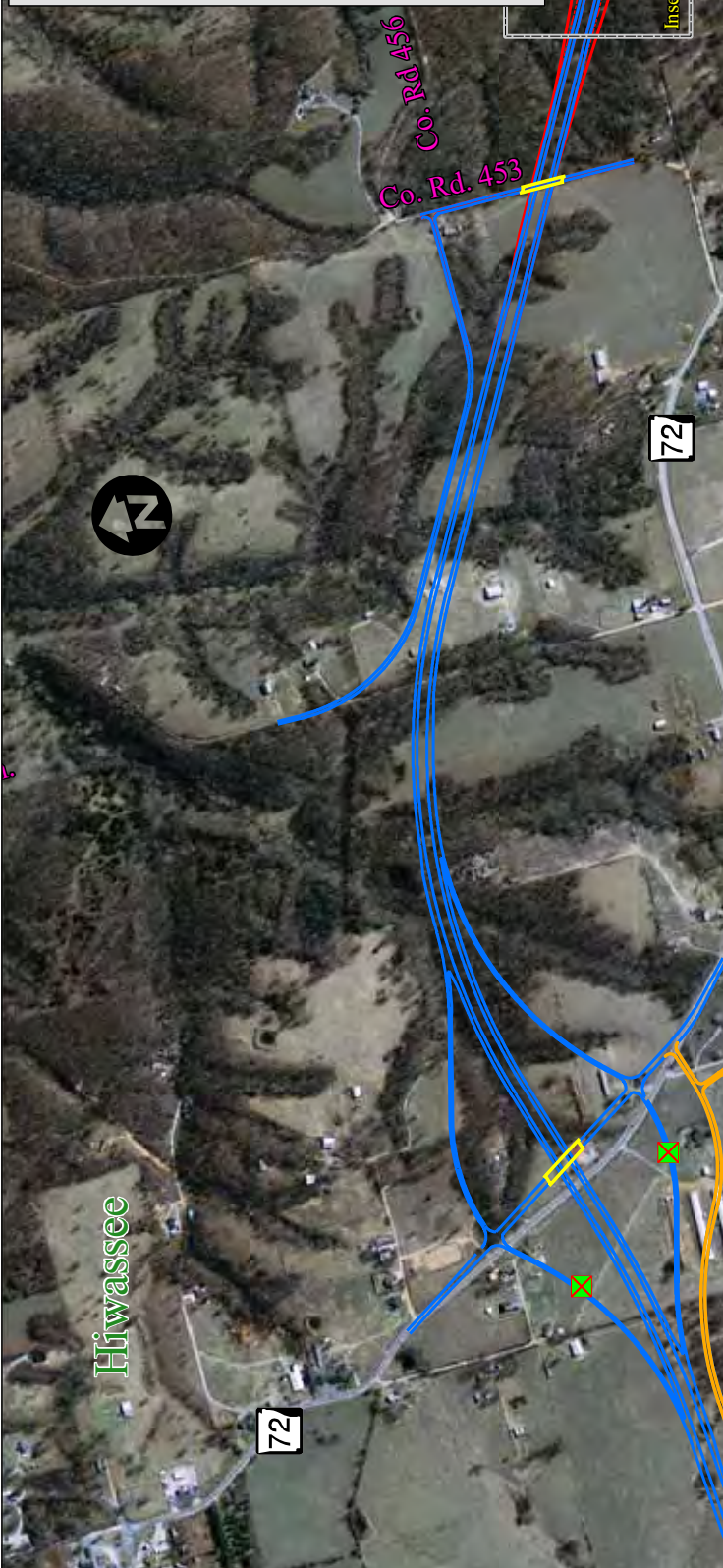


Figure 3 Inset
Showing ROW Differences in Toll Plaza Area

-  Bella Vista Bypass
-  Bella Vista Bypass Right of Way
-  Toll Plaza Right of Way



AHTD Environmental GIS - Dudley
October 3, 2007
Photography Date:



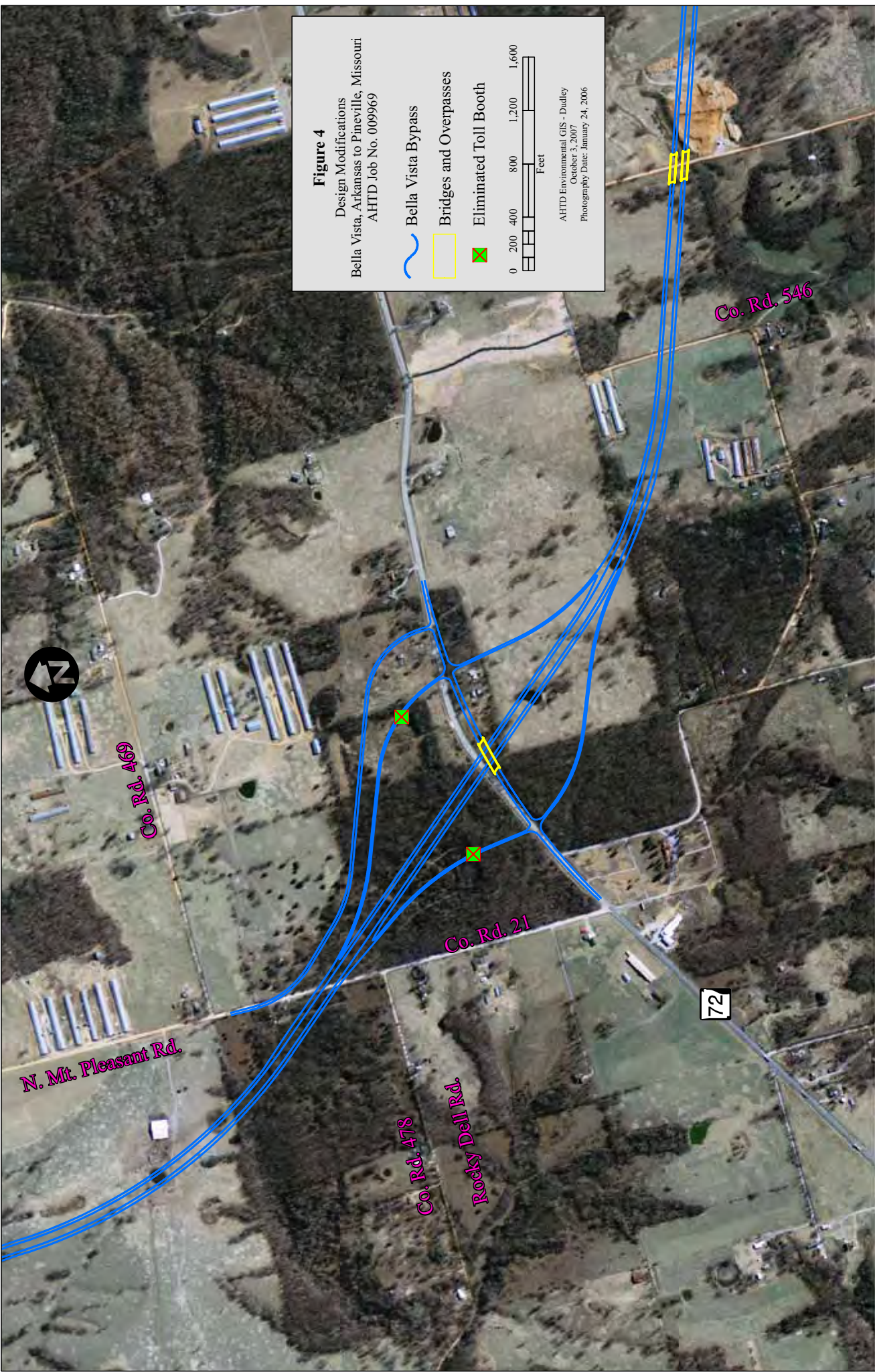





Figure 4

Design Modifications
 Bella Vista, Arkansas to Pineville, Missouri
 AHTD Job No. 009969

-  Bella Vista Bypass
-  Bridges and Overpasses
-  Eliminated Toll Booth



AHTD Environmental GIS - Dudley
 October 3, 2007
 Photography Date: January 24, 2006

N. Mt. Pleasant Rd.

Co. Rd. 469

Co. Rd. 478

Rocky Dell Rd.

Co. Rd. 21

72

Co. Rd. 546



**The Department of
Arkansas
Heritage**

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



**Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program**

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March 16, 2007

Mr. Lynn P. Malbrough
Division Head, Environmental Division
Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
PO Box 2261
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261

RECEIVED
AHTD

MAR 20 2007
ENVIRONMENTAL
DIVISION

RE: Benton County -- Bella Vista
Section 106 Review -- FHWA
Bella Vista Bypass Toll Facility
AHPP Tracking #62392, AHTD Job # 090224

Dear Mr. Malbrough:

This letter is written in response to your inquiry regarding properties of architectural or historical significance in the area of the above referenced project. The staff of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has reviewed your submission and determined that Structures E, AA, CC, EE, and YY are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Structure B, the New Home Church and School was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 28, 1988. We have determined that the remaining 48 structures are not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Once the undertaking is further along in the planning stages, we look forward to reviewing the proposed project. If you should have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth A. James of my staff at (501) 324-9880.

Sincerely,

Ken Grunewald
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Federal Highway Administration

**ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY
AND
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

**Dan Flowers
Director
Telephone (501) 569-2000**



**P.O. Box 2261
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2261
Telefax (501) 569-2400**

July 5, 2007

**Mr. Ken Grunewald
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201**

**Re: Request for Technical Assistance
Job Number 090224
Bella Vista Bypass Toll Facility
Madison County**

Dear Mr. Grunewald.

As part of the initial standing structures survey for the referenced project, Structure EE was photographed and submitted for review by personnel at the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP). Structure EE consists of a Folk Victorian frame house and initial photographs showed only one view of the structure. Based on this photograph (see original picture below), the structure appeared to be original and reasonably intact and the AHTD determined that it was potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The AHPP concurred with this recommendation in the enclosed response letter of March 16, 2007.

As part of the documentation for the Arkansas Architectural Resource Form, the structure was more closely examined and two additions were discovered that were not clearly visible during the initial structure survey. The east addition completely covers the east elevation of the house and the south addition has removed the porch and significantly altered the south elevation (see attached pictures below).

This structure style is defined by the presence of Victorian decorative detailing on simple folk house forms, which are generally much less elaborate than the Victorian styles that they attempt to mimic. The primary areas for the application of this detailing are the porch and cornice line.

Page 2

July 5, 2007

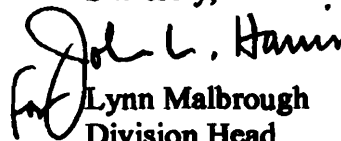
RE: Request for Technical Assistance

Job Number 090224

It is the opinion of AHTD that the determination of eligible to the National Register of Historic Places for Structure EE should be changed to not eligible due to the fact that the main areas that would have the decorative detailing such as the porch and cornice line have been destroyed, in the case of the porch, and significantly altered in the case of the east and south elevations by the additions. This has destroyed any architectural integrity the structure may have retained.

If you have any questions about the project, please contact Robert Scoggin of my staff at 569-2077.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Malbrough". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "M".

Lynn Malbrough
Division Head

Environmental Division

LM:RS:pb

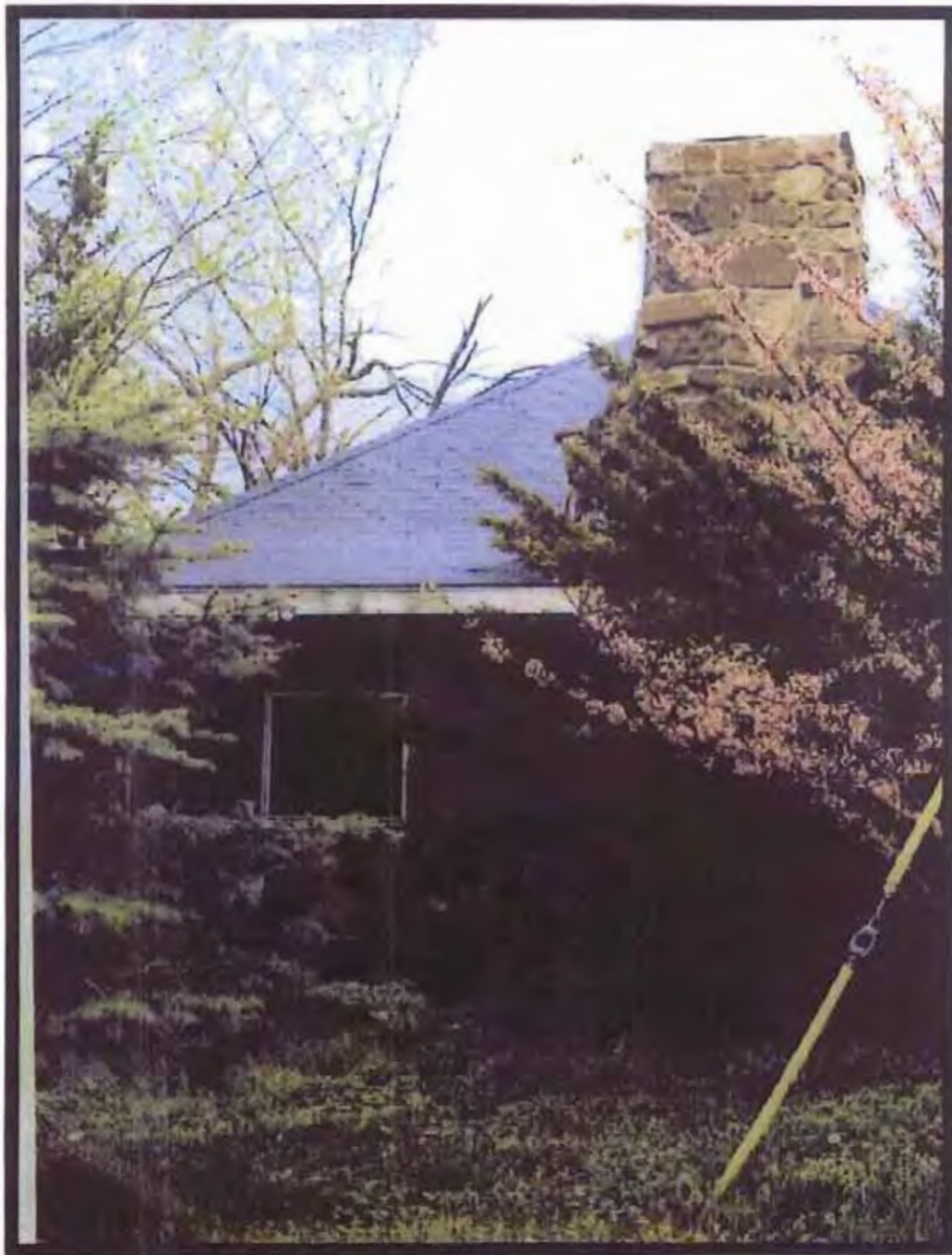


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Original picture submitted for Structure EE



Photograph showing addition to the east elevation.



Photograph showing addition to the south elevation that has replaced porch.



**The Department of
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July 16, 2007

**Mr. Lynn P. Malbrough
Division Head, Environmental Division
Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
PO Box 2261
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261**

**RE: Benton County – Bella Vista
Section 106 Review – FHWA
Bella Vista Bypass Toll Facility
AHPP Tracking #62392, AHTD Project #090224**

Dear Mr. Malbrough:

This letter is written in response to the additional documentation provided with your July 5, 2007, letter concerning Structure EE. The staff of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has reviewed the additional documentation that pertain to this undertaking and determined that Structure EE is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

Once the undertaking is further along in the planning stages, we look forward to reviewing the proposed project. If you should have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth James at (501) 324-9880.

Yours truly,

**Ken Grunewald
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer**

KG/rw

cc: Federal Highway Administration

**RECEIVED
AHTD**

JUL 19 2007

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