Appendix D
Environmental Resource Technical Memorandum
Assessment of Visual and Aesthetic Resources
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY
This memorandum describes potential impacts to existing visual resources within the Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar Project study area and provides supplemental information on the assessment of the resource area referenced in the Environmental Re-evaluation of Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar. Moreover, the memorandum details if impacts are anticipated as a result of the addition of a passing track to the environmentally cleared streetcar alignment. This proposed action is known as the Passing Track for Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar. The passing track would be placed in the median of Zang Boulevard at the Oakenwald Street stop located at the Zang and Oakenwald intersection.

The visual and aesthetic analysis follows the method outlined by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Environmental Policy in the report, Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects. The five steps in the assessment process are (1) identification of components of the project, (2) description of the visual environment of the project, (3) identification of significant visual resources, (4) determination of the responses and values of viewers, and (5) summary of major visual effects and how to manage those impacts. Additionally National Aerial Imagery Program (NAIP) Dallas and Oak Cliff 2010 Aerial Imagery were reviewed.

Field investigations were conducted by project staff in December 2011. Investigations consisted of visual assessment of the project study area surrounding the passing track in order to document the existing conditions and evaluate potential impacts.

DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
The Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzed visual and aesthetic resources along a one-quarter mile project study area that began in Oak Cliff and continued north approximately two miles, ending in downtown Dallas. The analysis for the passing track focuses on the project study area
in the Oak Cliff Gateway district as shown in Figure 1. This section addresses updates to the visual and aesthetic resources along the specified portion of the project study area.

The passing track consists of tracks within the median and existing travel lanes. No additional station stop elements are planned. The overhead contact system (OCS) for the passing track would be of the same design as the OCS for the overall streetcar project. The proposed track is located in the viewshed of the Oak Cliff Gateway District.

The Oak Cliff Gateway District south of the Trinity River includes historic buildings and public parks. This district is experiencing new development. Since the EA, the parcel adjacent to the Oakenwald Street and Zang Boulevard intersection has been redeveloped from a commercial site into a five-story multifamily residential complex, known as the Zang Triangle Apartments. Other sensitive receptors in the viewshed of the passing track include Grand Estates at Founders Park Apartments, Oak Cliff Founders Park, Lake Cliff Tower Residences, the Grand Bank of Texas and Lake Cliff Park.
Project Study Area Assessment Unit Descriptions

The passing track falls within the Oak Cliff Gateway Visual Assessment Unit, described in the EA. Land uses that are sensitive receptors within this unit and adjacent to the passing track are described below.

- Grand Estates at Founders Park Apartments – These apartments borrow heavily from previously established architectural styles. These follow a very simplified Classical Revival style while the clubhouse appears to have more Prairie Style attributes based on its low-pitched roof ribbon windows.

- Zang Triangle Apartments – The Zang Triangle Complex varies between four and five stories in height and follows new green Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building techniques. As contributing to part of the new pedestrian-oriented environment, the Zang Triangle Apartments complements the surrounding built environment. The apartment complex features first floor flex-space, which can be used for retail or offices while the upper floors are for residential living. Zang Triangle Apartments has added streetlights with an historic motif, sidewalks, landscaping, and has relocated overhead utilities underground along the Zang Boulevard frontage.

- Oak Cliff Founders Park – Oak Cliff Founders Park currently contains walking paths and benches, and is heavily wooded in the central portion of the park.

- Lake Cliff Tower – Lake Cliff Tower is a 14-story brick building with Classical Revival elements visible.

- Grand Bank of Texas – The Grand Bank is either a deconstructed Temple Front or simplified Enframed Window Wall one-story building.

- Lake Cliff Park – A former amusement park, Lake Cliff Park currently contains basketball courts, tennis courts, a softball field, a playground, walking trails, picnic tables and a lake. The northern area of the park closest to the passing track contains the lake and a stone pavilion used for gathering/picnics. The park is mostly obscured by trees from Oak Cliff Founders Park.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Potential impacts of the passing track have been assessed as “significant, potentially significant, not significant, or not applicable” for impacting the existing visual quality, sensitivity, and the presence of sensitive receptors/assets according to the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects. The assessment is summarized in Table 1. It was assumed that the design and construction of the project would be consistent with Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) design standards (quality, impact on mass-transit customers, connection to community, safety/scale, durability, resistance to vandalism, and minimum maintenance).
Primary viewers for the passing track would be arterial motorists, commercial tenants, pedestrians and single family residents. Because the track is at-grade and no additions are planned to the Zang and Oakenwald Stop, the OCS would be the most visible physical element of the proposed passing track and would be similar in visual appearance to the proposed OCS along Zang Boulevard, as well as, existing light rail transit OCS and overhead utility lines throughout the entire Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar project study area. Therefore the OCS would have no significant impacts to visual or aesthetic elements. The addition of the Zang Triangle Apartments would contribute to recreating a pedestrian-oriented environment similar to what existed when the neighborhood originally developed as a streetcar neighborhood. Historically, pedestrian-oriented streetcar neighborhoods featured multi-use, multi-story buildings at major intersections with public space at ground level and residential living above street-level (Liebs, 1985). The visual and aesthetic character of pedestrian-oriented development supported by streetcar transit around the passing track is aesthetically positive and visually beneficial. Visual impacts from the passing track would not be significant; therefore, no mitigation would be needed. See photographs at the end of this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitive Receptors/ Assets</th>
<th>Primary Viewers</th>
<th>Streetcar Stop Architectural Elements</th>
<th>Other Vertical Elements (Overhead Contact System)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Estates at Founders Park Apartments</td>
<td>A, B, C, E</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zang Triangle Apartments</td>
<td>A, B, C, E</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Cliff Founders Park</td>
<td>A, B, C, D, E</td>
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<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Cliff Tower</td>
<td>A, B, C, E</td>
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<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Bank of Texas</td>
<td>A, B, C, E</td>
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<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Cliff Park</td>
<td>A, B, C, E</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Primary Views**

A=Arterial Motorists  
B=Single Family Residents  
C=Commercial Tenants  
D=Industrial Tenants  
E=Pedestrians

**Impacts**

S=Significant  
PS=Potentially Significant  
NS=Not Significant  
NA=Not Applicable
Photo 1
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing north on Zang Boulevard

Photo 2
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing north on Zang Boulevard from the median
Photo 3
Sidewalk and light posts in front of Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing south on Zang Boulevard

Photo 4
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing south on Zang Boulevard
Photo 5
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing north on Zang Boulevard

Photo 6
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing northwest on Zang Boulevard with downtown Dallas in the background
Photo 7
View of downtown Dallas from East side of Zang, next to passing track: Facing North

Photo 8
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing southwest on Zang Boulevard at Oakenwald
Photo 9
Zang Triangle Apartments:
Facing south on Zang Boulevard from median near passing track site
LITERATURE/SOURCES CITED


