

**CULTURAL RESOURCES
OF THE
CBD LOOP ARTERIAL PROJECT AREA**

PHASE II INVESTIGATION

PROJECT NO. M-2787(1)--81-77

PREPARED FOR THE
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA

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A B S T R A C T

This report details the results of Phase II archaeological investigations in the CBD Loop Arterial project area, a proposed roadway in Des Moines, Iowa. These investigations were recommended by the Iowa State Historic Preservation Officer based on the findings of a Phase I investigation conducted in 1982 as part of the Environmental Impact Statement for this project.

The research was multidisciplinary including expertise in history, historic archaeology, prehistoric archaeology, geology, geophysics and geomorphology. The objectives of the investigation were to confirm the Phase I identification of historic archaeological deposits, including the site of Fort Des Moines No. 2, a city dump, and suspected prehistoric deposits.

All of the project area is urban, with paving, railroad tracks and buildings prevalent. Also, most of the area had been covered with industrial fill. These conditions made it necessary to conduct some of the archaeological investigations adjacent to the project right-of-way and required the use of remote sensing techniques.

Six specific tasks were completed in order to evaluate known and suspected cultural remains in the project area. These included: (1) a review and summary of previous archaeological and historical studies; (2) supplemental literature review, archives search and informant interviews; (3) investigations of surficial geology (geomorphology); (4) remote sensing techniques utilizing electromagnetic and ground penetrating radar surveys; (5) backhoe and hand excavations; and (6) laboratory analyses and report preparation.

Prehistoric materials associated with the Moingona (Oneota) Phase, historic materials associated with Fort Des Moines No. 2 and a city dump

dating to the early 20th century development of Des Moines were encountered and analyzed.

Collectively, these three occupations have been designated as an archaeological site, 13PK61. This site was evaluated in terms of the National Register of Historic Places criteria. Two components of the site -- the Oneota and the Fort Des Moines No. 2 components -- appear to meet these criteria. The city dump -- dating between 1910 and 1920 -- is less likely to be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Earlier dumping -- dating to the occupation of the Fort and the very earliest development of the town -- may have occurred in the project area, however. Such deposits may be important. Further investigations are recommended for this site after the project right-of-way has been purchased and paving and tracks can be removed.

Undoubtedly, the CBD Loop Arterial project will impact these cultural resources. The project crosses the terrace overlooking the confluence of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. The surface of this terrace remains intact beneath 1.6 to 6.6 feet of fill. The Oneota site, Fort Des Moines No. 2 and the early Town of Fort Des Moines were all established on this terrace.

Two alternative recommendations for managing this resource are presented. These are seeking a determination of eligibility for archaeological deposits within the project right-of-way, and nominating individual site localities to the National Register of Historic Places.