



## LIVE OAK TAKES CRUISE THROUGH DOWNTOWN AUSTIN

A 50-foot live oak tree cruised through downtown Austin, Texas, thanks to careful tree moving services by Environmental Design, Inc., a Davey affiliate.

The oak became a part of downtown traffic, but the tree had the road all to itself as it traveled from the Texas state capital complex grounds to a new location in nearby Waterloo Park.

Jon Hillis, regional vice president, Environmental Design, Inc., said they shut down the roadways early on a weekend so the tree, complete with police escort, could be transplanted to the park.

“The actual move only took about five hours,” Hillis said. “It was on the street and off the street within about three hours.”

What did take long was planning for the gigantic move. The Texas facilities commission, Waterloo Park, city of Austin and Waller Creek Conservancy all worked together with Environmental Design to move the tree to make way for construction of a new pedestrian corridor on the state complex grounds. The tree’s new home, Waterloo Park, is being renovated by the conservancy.

Environmental Design, which has a strategic alliance with Davey to provide tree transplanting resources, pruned the tree to make sure it would clear the high-rise buildings. And about 25 employees were on-call on moving day. Additionally, Austin Energy provided several bucket trucks so crews could temporarily remove or relocate street light signals to make way for the tree.

Hillis said several trees were removed to make way for the new pedestrian thoroughfare, but the city mandated this large live oak be saved – due in part to city ordinances.

“The city determined this tree is termed a heritage-size

tree, which is qualified as any tree over 24 inches in trunk diameter,” he said. “Some of the ordinances mandate that you either work around the tree by designing around it, or you must move it. This tree was chosen because it was one of the largest trees on site.”

In its new home, the tree will adorn the landscape of a nearby concert and event venue, Hillis said.

“It’s a rolling lawn area that is adjacent to Waller Creek,” he said.

**Above:** The live oak weighed about 400,000 pounds with a root ball diameter in excess of 34 feet.

**Below:** The tree only moved about a half-mile to its new location in Waterloo Park. Environmental Design, Inc., has a strategic alliance with Davey to provide tree transplanting resources.

