

Northeastern Washington and Canada cannot be met with only the minor capacity improvements included under the No Build Alternative. The inability of this alternative to manage congestion, resulting in increases in traffic accidents, traffic delay, energy consumption, and carbon monoxide levels within the non-attainment area is the main reason why this alternative was not selected.

Alternative 6 - Market/Greene (Middle Element of the Selected Alternative)

This alternative provides for a full access-controlled highway with eight lanes from I-90 to Francis Avenue (three general purpose lanes and one HOV lane each direction), six lanes from Francis Avenue to US 2 (two general purpose lanes and one HOV lane each direction), and four general purpose lanes (two each direction) from US2 to US 395. It begins with a new interchange connection with I-90 at about Thor/Freya Street. It goes north along the same line as Greene Street. After crossing the Spokane River, it continues north past Wellesley Avenue and Francis Avenue, to Lincoln Road. The alignment basically follows the vacant Burlington Northern Railroad property just east of Hillyard. Starting at approximately Lincoln Road, two separate alignment options were developed to go around the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Company and Bonneville Power Administration facilities. These two options, either of which provide the necessary connection to U.S. 395, are described later in this document as the North and South Options.

Market/Greene follows the railroad corridor which once served a high volume of freight as well as engine construction and repair. This corridor, with industrial sites that required rail service, results in Market/Greene crossing over several sites requiring extensive hazardous-waste remediation.

The Market/Greene alternative was selected for implementation because it is considered the most desirable in terms of functional efficiency and social and environmental effects. It is also the alternative that best meets the purpose and need of the project. Its location would support future development of HOV and mass transit strategies. The Market/Greene alternative was environmentally more desirable than Havana because of the following major reasons:

- It displaces substantially less people, businesses, and workers (140, 50, and 630 respectively) north of Main Avenue, where the alternatives diverge, to Lincoln Road where they connect to either the North (selected) or South Option than Havana (285, 78, and 970 respectively).
- It avoids Section 4(f) properties north of the interchange area, while Havana has severe impacts, including the use of land, on two important 4(f) recreational properties (one of them is also a significant historic property).
- It would have less unmitigated noise impacts than the Havana alternative (the difference

is 25 or more unmitigated noise impacts).

- The roadway prism requires much more cutting away of the hillside in the vicinity of Beacon Hill on the Havana route than required anywhere on the Market/Greene route. The detrimental change in visual quality resulting from the Havana alternative is more severe than from the Market/Greene Alternative.

Alternative 7 - Havana

The Havana alternative is also a full access-controlled highway and has the same lane configuration as the Market/Greene Alternative. It also begins with a new interchange connection with I-90 at about Thor/Freya Street. From there, the alignment turns to the east as it goes north. At about the current Trent Avenue intersection with Havana, it turns back to the north and crosses the Spokane River. After crossing the river, the alignment continues north to about Frederick Avenue, where it begins to climb, turning slightly to the west to go up and around the base of Beacon Hill. After going over Minnehaha Park, it again turns to the north and follows the eastern edge of the developed portion of Esmeralda Golf Course. Once past the golf course, the alignment proceeds north until just past Francis Avenue, where it begins to sweep to the west against the base of the hill. It continues north/northwest until it joins the Market/Greene alignment in the vicinity of Lincoln and Gerlach Roads. That is also the general location where the North and South Options, common to both build alternatives start.

The Havana Alternative was not selected for the reasons discussed under the Market/Greene alternative. It is less effective in accomplishing the purpose and objectives of the project, it displaces substantially more people, businesses and employees; it has more unmitigated noise impacts; it has a more detrimental visual impact; and more importantly, it uses two Section 4(f) properties that the Market/Greene alternative can avoid.

Operationally the Havana alternative would function similar to the Market-Greene alternative. Development of future HOV and Mass Transit would be hindered, however, due to the location of the route on the east edge of the city of Spokane. Population densities will remain much lower along the Havana route than on the Market-Greene route. Planning and development under the Growth Management Act is not expected to alter this general projection of population densities.

Build Options Common to Both Alternative 6 and Alternative 7

North and South Options - The following two options (North and South Options) are connection options at the north end of the project from approximately Lincoln Road to US 2 and US 395. These options apply to both the Market/Greene and Havana Alternatives.

North Option - Under this alignment, the freeway turns to the north at approximately Gerlach

Road. It continues north until the vicinity of Hawthorne, where it begins to curve in a northwesterly direction. The new roadway crosses US 2 just south of Farwell Road. It then proceeds in the same direction until it approaches US 395 where it begins turning north. Just southwest of the Wandermere Golf Course, the new roadway connects at the south end of the new US 395 bridge over the Little Spokane River.

South Option - Under this option, from just north of Lincoln Road, the alignment would continue in a northwesterly direction to US 2. The alignment would pass to the south of the Kaiser Aluminum Plant and intersect US 2 in the vicinity of the existing Nevada Street intersection. From there, the alignment would begin to swing to the north and would cross US 395 just south of Hastings Road. It would continue northward to connect to the new US 395 bridge over the Little Spokane River.

There is no clear environmentally preferred option. Both options could be considered environmentally preferred.

The North Option was selected because of the following reasons:

The South Option would displace the privately-owned Pine Acres Par 3 Golf Course. Although this golf course is not protected under Section 4(f) regulations, its displacement is considered a substantial adverse impact on recreational facilities.

The South Option has greater unmitigated noise impacts, (unavoidable impacts that can not be reasonably mitigated). The South Option would result in 30 unmitigated impacts while the North Option would result in 15.

While both options do not differ substantially in their effect on adjacent intersections throughout the project area, the south option creates an increase in congestion for the US2 /Hawthorne Rd Intersection while the North Option results in a substantial decrease. The traffic analysis for the 2020 No Build shows that the above intersection will be operating at LOS F with a vehicle delay of 103.8 seconds. The intersection under the South Option for the same year operates at LOS F with an increase in delay of 133.9 seconds. The North Option results in an improvement to a LOS C. This intersection is located adjacent to the Northpointe Shopping Center and has been determined a "high accident location" because it exceeds the statewide average for number of accidents.

I-90/Collector-Distributor (C/D) System

The C/D system consists of three new lanes in each direction from the Liberty Park interchange

to the Sprague Avenue interchange, with an auxiliary lane between Liberty Park and Sprague Avenue interchanges. The new lanes will be separated from mainline I-90 by a barrier/median and will follow a separate vertical alignment. Entrances and exits to the C/D roadways would be limited to the Liberty Park, Thor/Freya, Sprague Avenue, and NSF interchanges. There would be no access to or from the through lanes between the Liberty Park and the Sprague Avenue interchanges.

As a result of additional traffic analysis that was performed following the publication of the Final EIS it was determined that two additional auxiliary lanes would be necessary to improve the traffic operations. One lane is to be located on I-90 WB from Broadway I/C to the Fancher off-ramp at the Sprague Ave I/C. The other lane is located on I-90 EB from the Division St. on-ramp to the Liberty Park I/C. Both of these additions have been analyzed and can be constructed within the proposed ROW. There are no substantial impacts as a result of this revision.

Access at Liberty Park Interchange would allow a direct route to and from existing 2nd and 3rd Avenues and Spokane's Central Business District. The Sprague Avenue Interchange connections will allow direct access to and from the proposed Valley Couplet.

The C/D system is part of the selected alternative as well as the Havana alternative because neither of these alternatives could operate safely and efficiently without the collectors/distributors. The interchange at the junction of the new facility and I-90 could not possibly handle the volumes of traffic converging at that point without the assistance of the C/D system.

Section 4(f) Considerations

There are eight recreational properties adjacent to or within the right of way of the alternatives evaluated. All are considered to be protected under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act.

Widening proposed along I-90 as part of the C/D System needed to implement either of the build alternatives evaluated (Market/Greene, the selected alternative, and Havana) will use land from one of the 4(f) properties, "Your Place Park," a small city-owned park with an area of 0.18 hectare (0.44 acre). The proposed widening will directly impact the park requiring 0.05 hectare (0.13 acre) of park property. (see figure 6-4 on p. 6-10) Impacts to the park will be mitigated by reconfiguring the park. Commitments to reconfigure the park will result in an increase in size of 0.12 hectares (0.29 acres) and will result in a very similar use to that of the existing. Mitigation is discussed later in this document under "Measures to Minimize Harm".

Avoidance alternatives to this park were evaluated but none were determined to be prudent. The only way to avoid the park, other than selection of the no-build, was to shift the alignment to

avoid the park and use substandard design features to reduce the right-of-way requirements. Avoidance by reducing the lane width would result in unacceptable safety and operational deficiencies at a critical junction of two major freeways (see Chapter 6). Additionally, avoidance by a roadway alignment shift would require relocation of the U.S. West Keystone Exchange. Relocation of the Exchange would cause severe service disruption to the communities and businesses served by the Exchange, and cost an estimated 40 million dollars.

The fact that the impact to Your Place Park could be mitigated and that the park would be expanded and improved after the project, was a consideration in the determination that avoidance was not prudent.

The Market/Greene alternative (selected alternative) with either the North (Selected) or South Option, would not use land from any other Section 4(f) property.

The Havana Alternative would use land from Minnehaha Park, also eligible for the NRHP, and Esmeralda Golf Course. This alternative would require use of a portion of both of these properties for freeway construction. It would also severely impact the remaining portions of these properties. Avoidance alternatives examined include, besides the Market/Greene Alternative, roadway realignment to the west of the properties, and tunneling through Beacon Hill. Both are very costly monetarily and/or in neighborhood impacts. In addition they are operationally and environmentally less desirable than Market/Greene (Selected Alternative), considered to be a feasible and prudent alternative that avoids impacts to both Minnehaha Park and Esmeralda Golf Course.

Based on the above considerations, which were more thoroughly discussed in the FEIS/Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, the FHWA determined that there was no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the "Your Place Park" for transportation purposes and that the selected alternative (Market/Greene with North Option and C/D System) incorporates all possible planning to minimize harm to "Your Place Park."

Other Considerations

Several agencies provided comments and recommendations supporting selection of the Market/Greene Alternative with North Connection Option and C/D System as the preferred alternative.

- The City of Spokane has adopted resolutions through the Mayor's Office and the City Planning Commission for this corridor and this selection is also in agreement with their Comprehensive Plan of record.
- The Department of Ecology preferred the North Option Connection as an avoidance