

## US 195 / Fish Lake Trail History

When the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) abandoned their rail line through Hangman Valley, the City of Spokane (City) saw it as a great opportunity for a recreational trail and began efforts to acquire the property. The City applied for a grant from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation\* (IAC) to purchase the railroad right-of-way but could not provide the full local matching funds. Meanwhile, the pace of residential growth increased significantly through the Hangman Valley. Without city arterials in place, traffic volumes and safety problems on US 195 increased as well.

In response to these issues on US 195 within the city limits, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) began developing designs that could accommodate the traffic safely, including access control, interchanges, and city street connectivity. In 1991 a Route Development Plan for US 195 showed a potential design for a city arterial on the former UPRR right-of-way from I-90 to Thorpe Road.

With WSDOT's need to alleviate safety issues on US 195 and the City's interest in acquiring the UPRR right-of-way, the City proposed the shared use of the UPRR alignment for the recreational trail and WSDOT's proposed design, if WSDOT would supplement necessary grant funding. In 1991 an agreement between WSDOT and the City of Spokane was signed. It specified that a 1.22 mile portion of the northern end the former railroad corridor would be used for a separated recreational trail as well as a city arterial, both to be constructed by WSDOT. This area agreed upon lies between Lindeke Street and Marshall Road.

The final IAC grant funds were issued February 9, 1995, and the City received a deed for the 10.22 mile length of railroad from UPRR. The railroad bed was then open to the public as a recreational trail, from the High Bridge Park at I-90 to Fish Lake near Cheney. This connected the Centennial Trail to the existing Fish Lake Trail.

On August 9, 2001, the Spokane Park Board approved the WSDOT proposal to construct both a city arterial and a paved recreation trail within the agreement area.

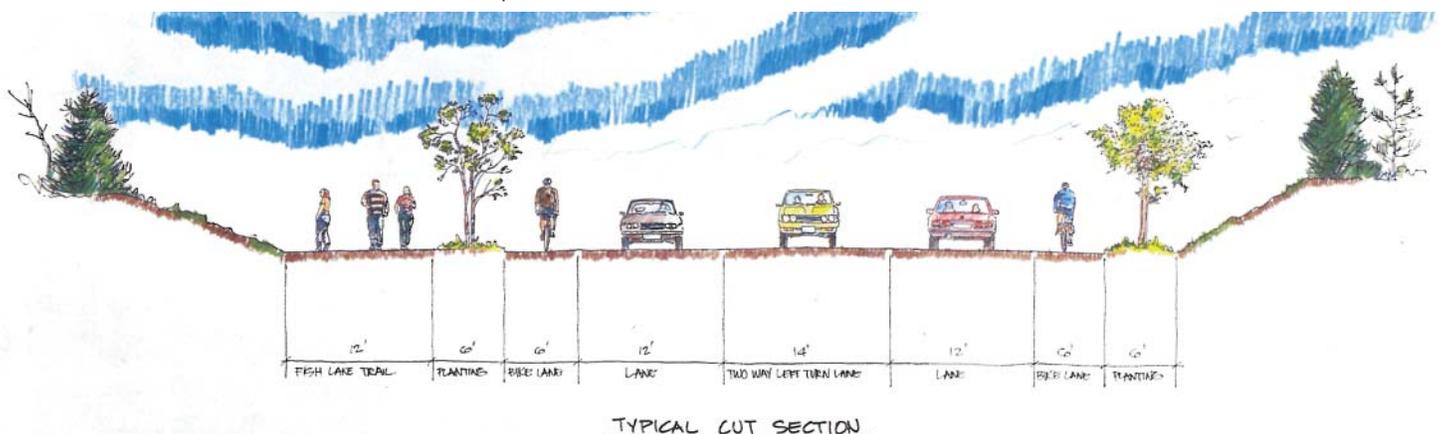
WSDOT proceeded with designs for the US 195 Corridor, including city streets, in close coordination with the City. The public was involved through the environmental review process and a Design Access Hearing (May 29, 2002) which established the limited access for the corridor design. The 1991 agreement had stipulated that the City would grant the northern 1.22 mile portion to WSDOT. The transfer deed was completed in 2008.

In June 2009, the City recorded a *Memorandum of Agreement* with WSDOT to update and clarify the understanding that "at some future date, WSDOT will construct a project which will require the removal and relocation of the Fish Lake Trail."

During the summer of 2009 the City paved 4.4 miles of the trail including the portion of the Fish Lake Trail within the agreement area. The first construction project planned within the corridor plan will be an interchange at Cheney-Spokane Road. This project is currently being designed.

\* renamed Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

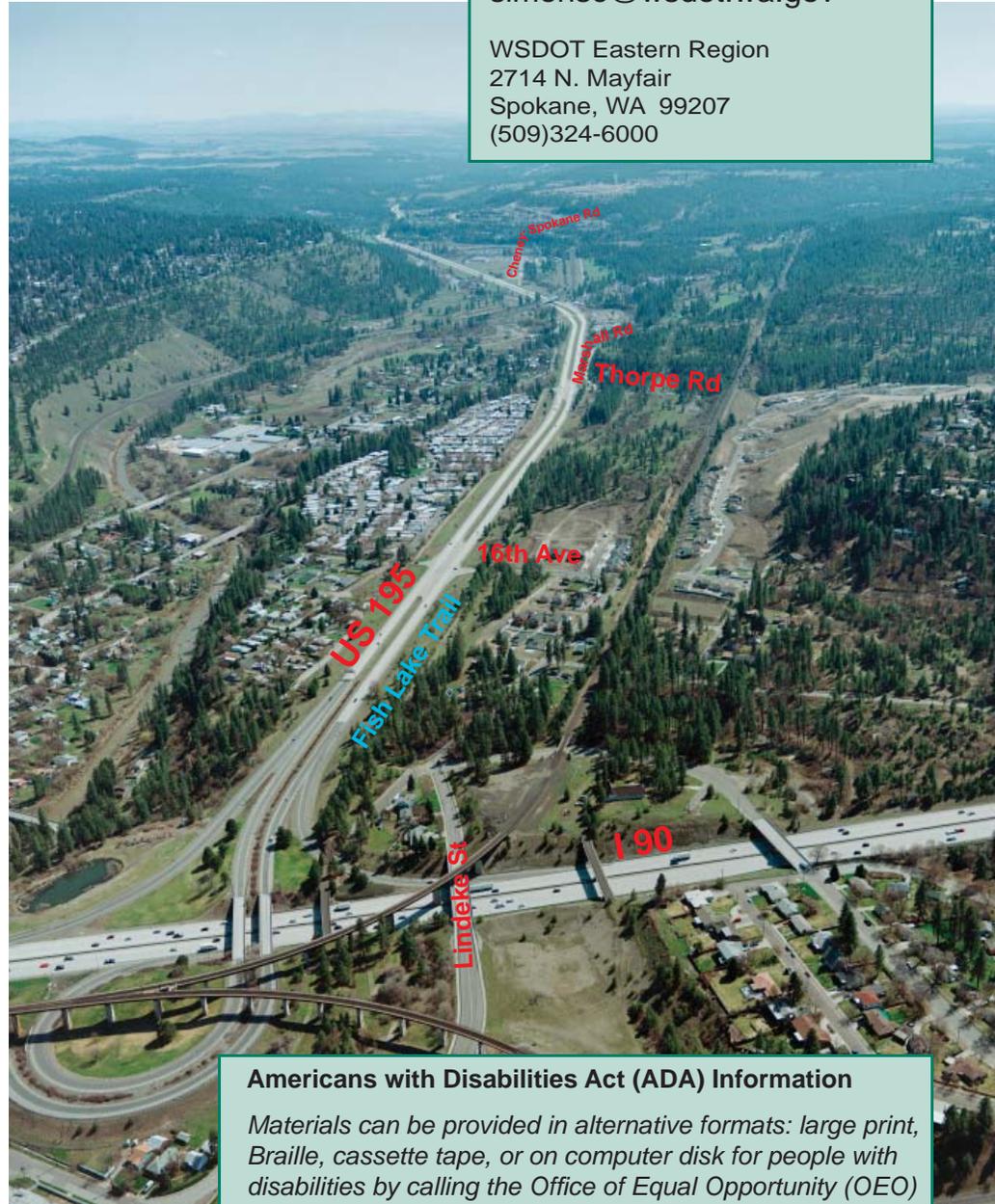
below Proposed Multi Use Area of Fish Lake Trail





left Map of US 195 and Multi Use Area of Fish Lake Trail

below South view of US 195 and Fish Lake Trail  
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