

Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvements Project
Pottawattamie County, Iowa, and Douglas County, Nebraska
Project Number: IM-029-3(62)54—13-78

TIER 1
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Prepared in Accordance with:
The National Environmental Policy Act, as amended
42 USC 4332(2)(c)
49 USC 303

by the
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
and
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
and
NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS

Cooperating Agencies
U.S. Coast Guard

The signatures are considered acceptance of the general project location and concepts described in the environmental document unless otherwise specified by the approving officials. However, such approval does not commit to approve any future grant request to fund the Preferred Alternative.

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Date of Approval

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials
CBIS	Council Bluffs Interstate System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOI	Department of the Interior
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Environmental Site Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Association
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
HHS	United States Department of Health and Human Services
I	Interstate
IA	Iowa State Highway
IDNR	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Iowa DOT	Iowa Department of Transportation
L&WCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MAC	Mid-America Center
MAPA	Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
NDEQ	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
NDOR	Nebraska Department of Roads
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NGPC	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
Papio NRD	Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
PESA	Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right-of-Way
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TSM	Transportation System Management
UP	Union Pacific

U.S.	United States Highway
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USCOE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	United State Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Purpose of and Need for Action

1.1 Description of the Proposed Action

The Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing improvements to the interstate system in the Omaha/Council Bluffs metropolitan area, extending across the Missouri River on Interstate 80 (I-80) to east of the Interstate 480 (I-480) interchange in Omaha, Nebraska (see Figure 1-1). The study considers long-term, broad-based transportation improvements along Interstate I-29 (I-29), I-80, and I-480, including approximately 18 mainline miles of interstate and 14 interchanges (3 system¹, 11 service), that would add capacity and correct functional issues along the mainline and interchanges and upgrade the I-80 Missouri River Crossing. These improvements, once implemented, would bring the segments of I-80 and I-29 up to current engineering standards and modernize the roadway to accommodate future traffic needs.

1.2 Study Area

The project area includes I-80 from east of the I-480 interchange in Omaha, Nebraska, east to U.S. Highway (U.S.) 6 (Kanesville Boulevard). It also includes (I-29 between 25th Avenue on the north to just south of U.S. 275, and I-480 from the Missouri River Bridge on the Iowa side to the I-29 interchange. Since most of the system is within Council Bluffs, the project is referred to in this document as the “Council Bluffs Interstate System (CBIS) Improvements Project.” The Study Area encompasses a large portion of Council Bluffs and extends into Nebraska. The termini are logical in that they include sections of the interstate system in Council Bluffs that require capacity improvement in the next 20 years and provide continuity by tying into the interstate system in Nebraska.

For this Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), impacts of the project were determined for an “area of potential impact.” This area consists of the combined right-of-way (ROW) needs of the concepts that remain under consideration plus an offset that would accommodate design as it is refined and to provide flexibility for potential changes from geotechnical analysis, drainage design, minor design changes, and construction phasing. Figure 1-2 illustrates the Study Area and area of potential impact for the CBIS Improvements Project.

¹ A system interchange provides connections between interstates and freeways. A service interchange provides connections between the interstate and local roads.

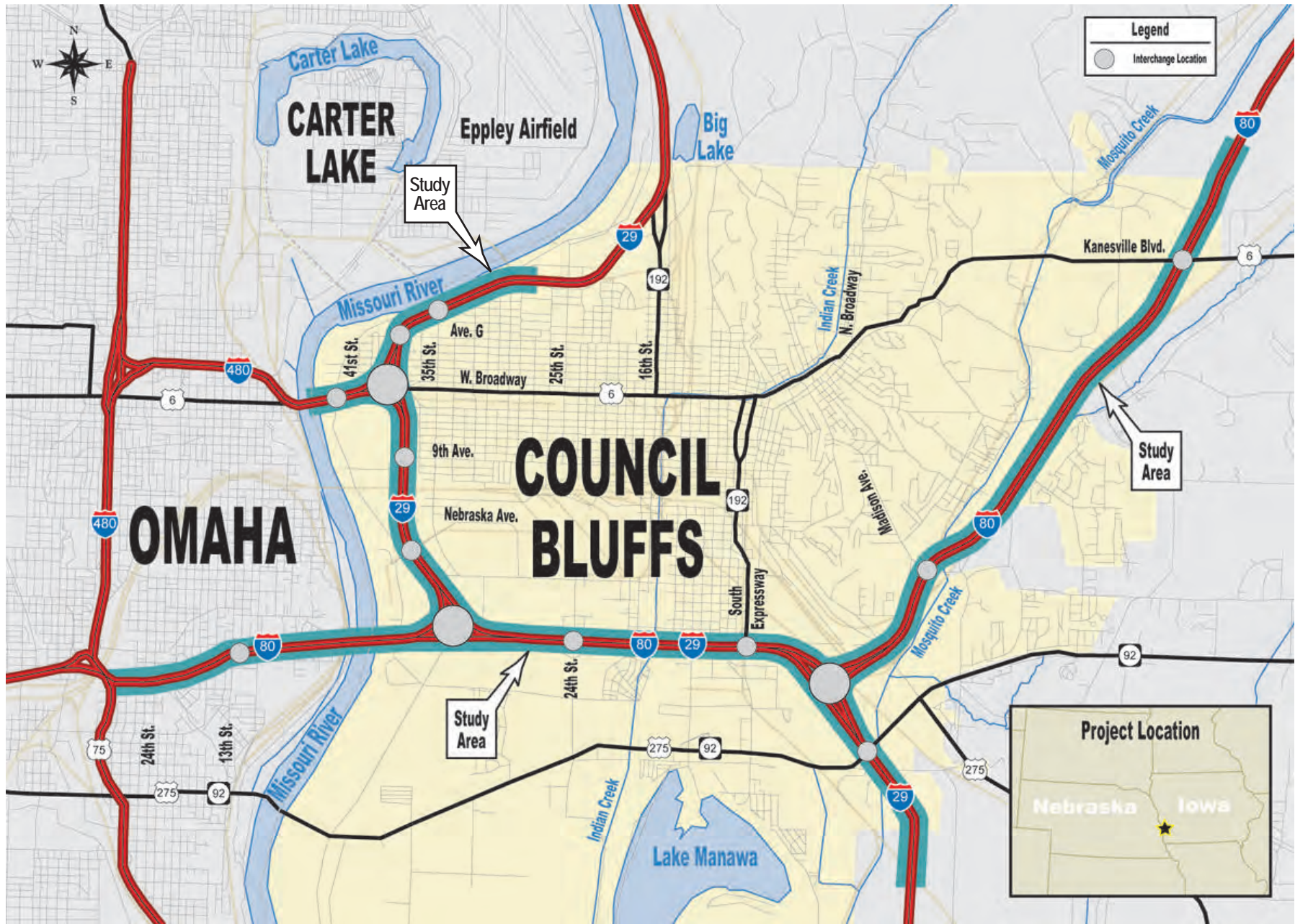


Figure 1-1
CBIS Project Area

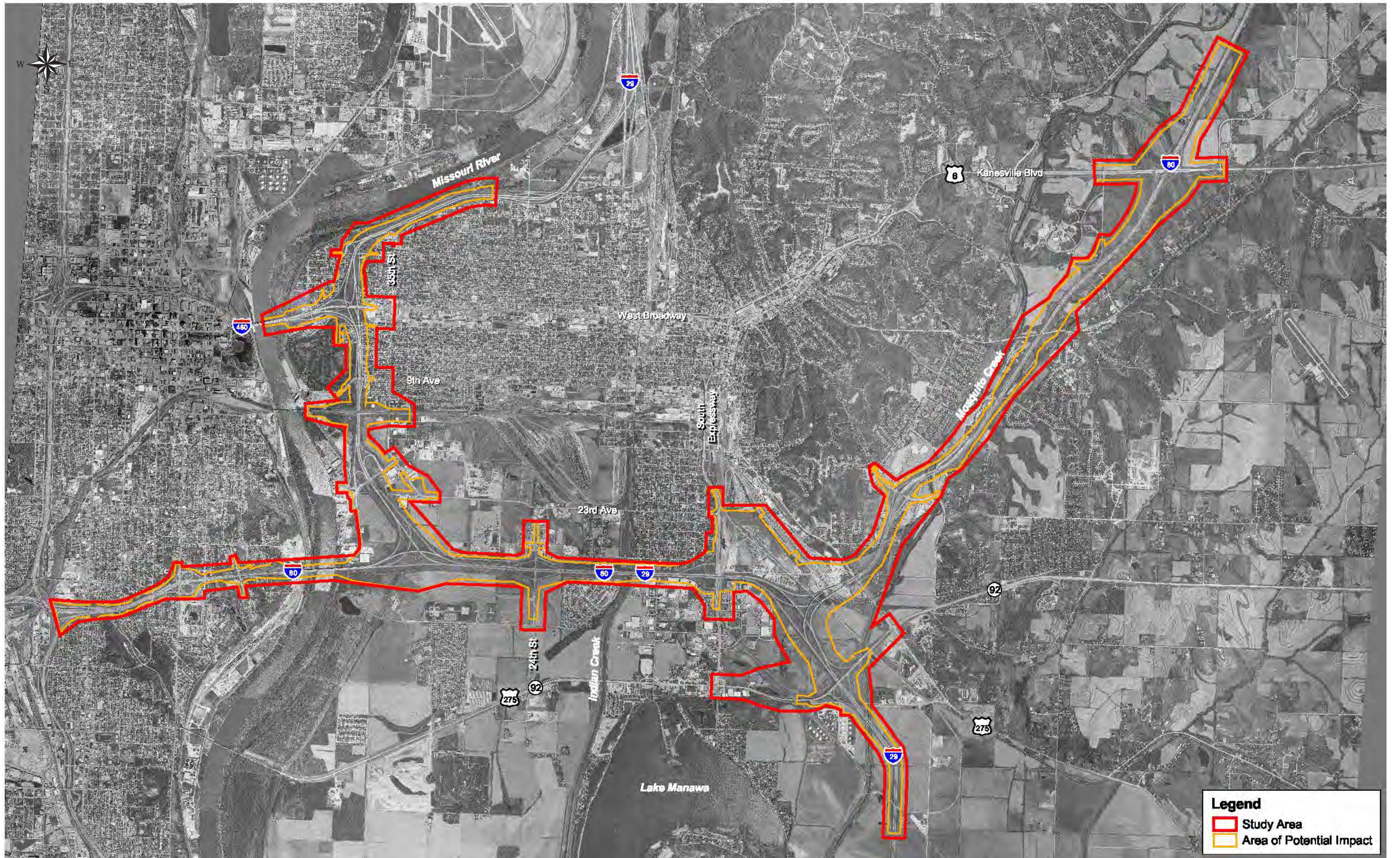


Figure 1-2
Study Area and Area of Potential Impact

1.3 Summary of the Study Process

In 2001, Iowa DOT and FHWA initiated the CBIS Improvements Project study. The agencies concluded that the environmental study process would be conducted in two stages, using a tiered approach (see Figure 1-3). The current phase, Tier 1, is an examination of the area's transportation needs, a study of alternatives to satisfy them, and broad consideration of potential environmental and social impacts. The Tier 1 evaluation consists of a sufficient level of engineering and environmental detail to assist decision makers in selecting a preferred transportation strategy.

The first step in the Tier 1 process was the development of the Draft EIS, which was approved by FHWA, Iowa DOT, and NDOR in November 2004 with comments accepted through March 15, 2005. The Draft EIS summarized the alternatives that were considered to address the transportation needs around Council Bluffs; identified reconstruction of all or part of the interstate, the "Construction Alternative," as the Preferred Alternative; identified three system-level decisions that needed to be made at the Tier 1 level; and invited comment on the issues.

These decisions included:

- Full access provided between West Broadway and I-29, or maintain existing (or similar) access
- Design of the I-80/I-29 overlap section as either a dual-divided freeway, or a traditional combined freeway
- Location of the new I-80 Missouri River Bridge north or south of the existing bridge

This Final EIS further documents the Construction Alternative as the Preferred Alternative and also identifies the recommended decisions at each of the aforementioned locations.

To avoid repetition of material from the Draft EIS, this Final EIS is written in an abbreviated format that briefly summarizes key information from the Draft EIS including the Preferred Alternative and project impacts, but primarily consists of new or modified information and comments received since the Draft EIS was signed. This document is therefore a much shorter document than a traditional Final EIS, and because of the tiered nature of the project specific impacts (e.g., Section 4(f) and wetlands) and subsequent mitigation commitments cannot yet be defined. Details of the CBIS Improvements Project not included in this Final EIS can be found in the Draft EIS.

At the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange, the preferred option provides direct access from I-29 to West Broadway. Providing access to/from I-29 to West Broadway would generally result in a redistribution of traffic volumes at adjacent interchanges but is not anticipated to result in a net increase of traffic on West Broadway, east of 35th Street. This direct access was highly desirable to reduce truck traffic through residential areas and provide improved interstate access to West Broadway, which is a national highway (U.S. 6). The decision to provide direct access between I-29 and West Broadway was made based on an evaluation of operations as well as input received during the Draft EIS comment period.

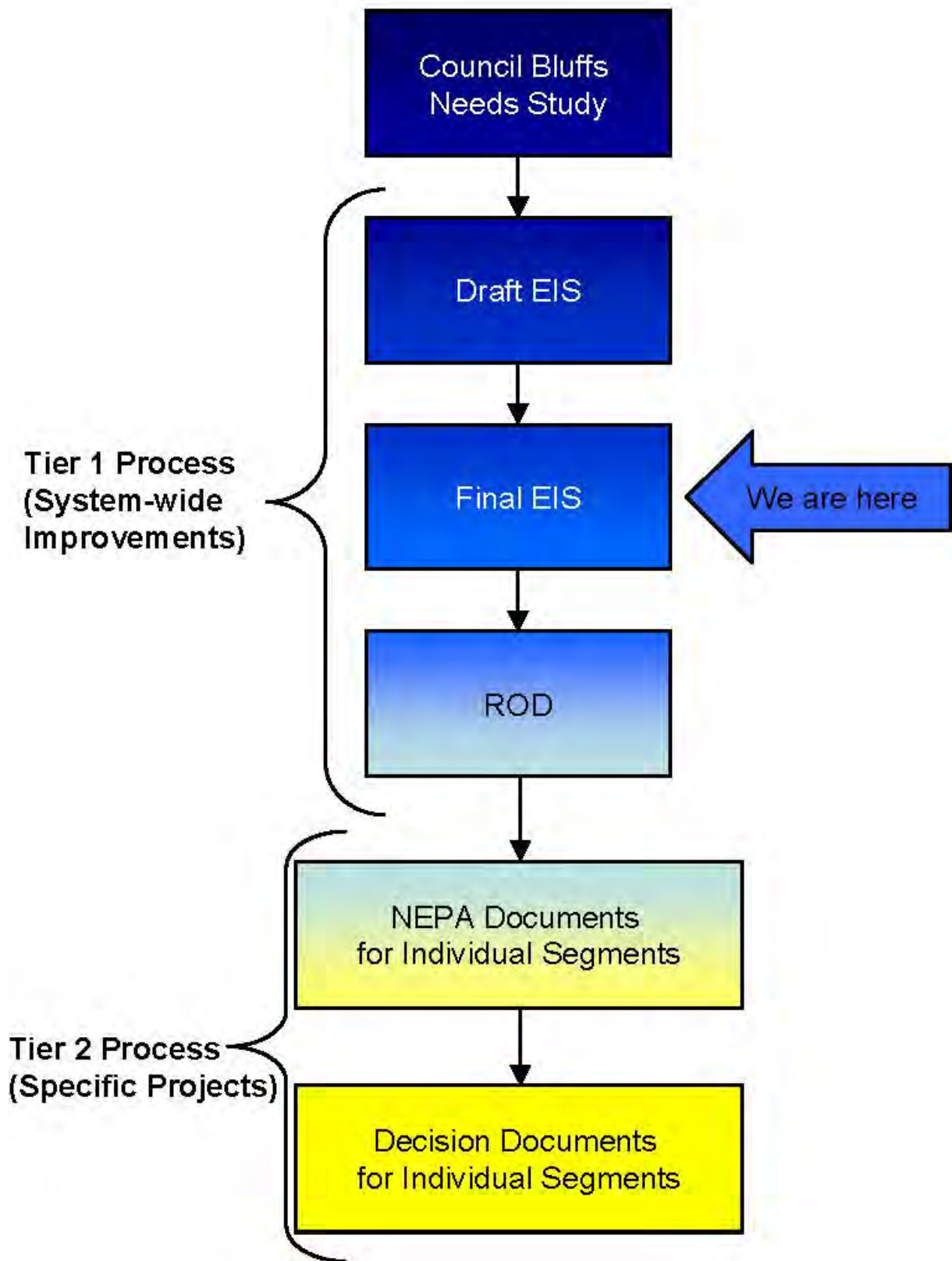


Figure 1-3
Project Study Process

Through the I-80/I-29 overlap section, the dual-divided concept was identified as the preferred option. The dual-divided concept is comprised of two one-way roadways in each direction of travel all within the access control limits. The outer roadway usually serves all of the interchange traffic, with through traffic directed to the inner lanes. Although this option resulted in greater ROW requirements, the operational and safety benefits led to its selection as the preferred option at this location.

North expansion has been identified as the preferred option for the new I-80 Missouri River Bridge. The north expansion resulted in fewer socioeconomic impacts and had fewer constructability issues.

Tier 1 will conclude with a Record of Decision (ROD), which defines the Selected Alternative for the project, the conditions for implementation of the Selected Alternative, and a framework for implementing Tier 2. Based on the decisions in Tier 1, funding strategies and an implementation strategy will be developed in Tier 2. After completion of the Tier 1 ROD, selected Tier 2 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies will be initiated on individual segments of the CBIS. Under any implementation scenario, the Construction Alternative is a long-term improvement that will be implemented in segments over time at a level of detail sufficient to move elements of the plan toward construction. A specific alignment will be determined for each segment, appropriate environmental studies completed, and mitigation plans specified.

Based on the requirements of independent utility and logical termini, Iowa DOT, NDOR, and FHWA recommended the following segments (see Figure 1-4):

- Segment 1 – Nebraska I-80 section including the Missouri River Bridge
- Segment 2 – I-80/I-29 overlap section including the West System Interchange and the 24th Street interchange; I-29 including the Nebraska Avenue interchange and the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad overpass
- Segment 3 – I-80/I-29 overlap section including the East System Interchange and the South Expressway Interchange; I-29 including the U.S. 275 interchange; I-80 including the Madison Avenue Interchange
- Segment 4 – I-29 including the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange
- Segment 5 – The northern section of I-80, including the U.S. 6 (Kanesville Boulevard) Interchange

In addition to the five project segments, a NEPA document will also be prepared to address borrow needs for the project. Borrow is the fill material required for onsite construction that is generally obtained from other locations. The NEPA document prepared for the borrow process will address the impacts associated with excavating, transporting, and stockpiling the material.

Due to the level of engineering performed during Tier 1, and the long-range nature of the project, it was not feasible to conduct detailed studies and determine specific impacts of many resources. Therefore, many analyses and resulting conclusions that are not addressed in the EIS will be addressed in individual Tier 2 documents. Additionally, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §1508.20 mandates mitigation of impacts, which may include avoiding an

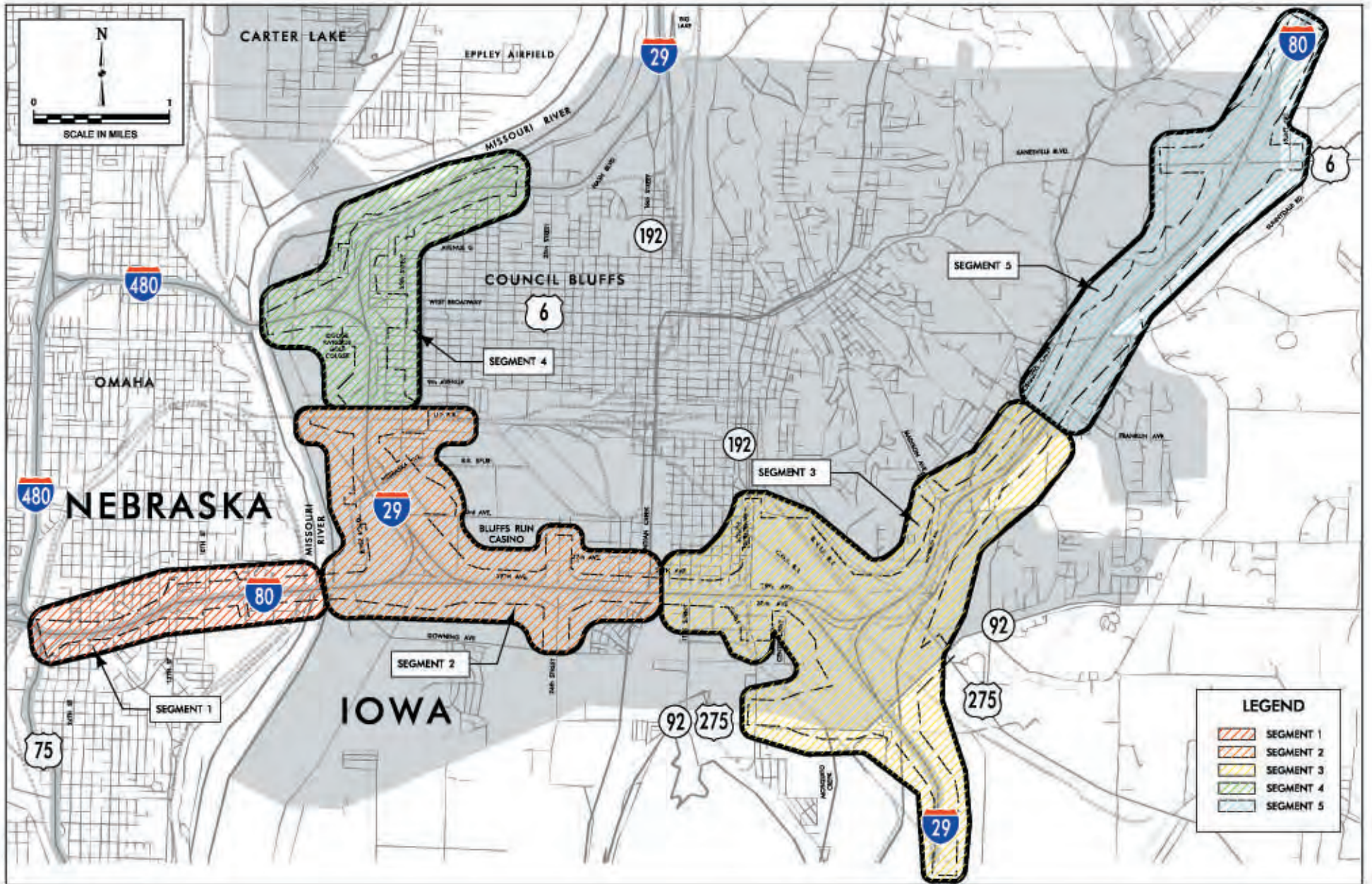


Figure 1-4
Proposed Segmentation

impact, minimizing an impact, correcting an impact, reducing or eliminating an impact over time, or compensating for an impact. While the Draft EIS includes conceptual mitigation measures, the final determination of the appropriate mitigation measures will be necessary in later project stages when impacts are better defined, and the appropriate public and resource agencies have been consulted. As part of the project development process, the Tier 2 NEPA documents will include the results of mitigation commitments for each project segment.

Specific actions completed to date as well as actions or studies that will be completed during Tier 2 are summarized in Table 1-1 at the end of this section.

1.4 Summary of Purpose and Need

The proposed improvements to the CBIS are intended to address the existing and future transportation needs of the region by upgrading mobility through the I-80, I-29, and I-480 corridors by improving the condition of roadways, reducing traffic congestion and crashes, adding capacity, strengthening system linkages by making transitions between interstates easier, correcting functional design issues, and accommodating planned development in the Study Area.

Traffic volumes along parts of the interstate system are expected to double by 2030. Consequently, most of the interstate system is expected to experience traffic volumes beyond its capacity. The purpose of the CBIS Improvements Project is to examine needed transportation improvements in the Study Area that would address existing and future travel demand. The proposed improvements to the CBIS would add capacity and correct functional issues along the mainline and interchanges, and upgrade the I-80 Missouri River Crossing. Although built to meet the design standards in place at the time of construction, the existing roadway does not meet modern engineering standards². Design features such as horizontal alignment, stopping and decision sight distance, and exit and entrance ramp design contribute to safety concerns. In addition, the age and condition of the facility are those of a facility approaching the end of its service life. The actions will improve the condition and extend the life of the roadway, and combined, these improvements will accommodate future development in the Study Area. For more detailed information on the transportation needs of the CBIS, see the Draft EIS, *Section 1.4, Need for the Proposed Action*.

1.5 Additional Information and Responses to Tier 1 Draft EIS Comments

No comments were received in response to the Tier 1 Draft EIS that affect the project purpose and need. The following table summarizes general input that was received and how it will be addressed in this tiered process.

² As defined by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Iowa DOT, and NDOR.

TABLE 1-1
Tier 2 NEPA Activities and Subsequent Environmental Activities

Resource	Tier 1 Process	Tier 2 and Subsequent Activities
Neighborhoods, Community Services, and Facilities	Information from published and electronic databases was augmented by limited field verification to identify schools, churches, cemeteries, police and fire departments, city and township halls, hospitals, and public utilities within the area of potential impact. Limited interviews occurred during Tier 1.	<p>Coordination with city personnel will take place as appropriate to identify opportunities to minimize or mitigate social impacts.</p> <p>Where appropriate, focused neighborhood outreach may be utilized to address impacts on the pockets of low-income and minority residents; community leaders could be utilized to help disseminate information. Minority-owned businesses and significant ethnic businesses will also be identified.</p>
Residences and Businesses	Aerial photograph analysis with limited field evaluation was conducted to assess the number of residences (single-family homes and apartments) and businesses within the area of potential impact.	Area of potential impact limits will be further refined and specific residential and business relocations will be identified. Subsequent to Tier 2 NEPA documents, the ROW acquisition process will commence.
Wildlife and Threatened or Endangered Species	<p>Biological resources in the Study Area were identified through coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC), as well as desktop analyses, and limited windshield surveys.</p> <p>Potential threatened and endangered species were identified through coordination with USFWS, NGPC, IDNR, and limited windshield surveys.</p>	<p>Detailed studies (including field surveys for potential habitat used by wildlife, migratory bird species [including the cliff swallow], and the 11 identified threatened and endangered species of concern) will be conducted as appropriate. If suitable habitat for western prairie fringed orchid, prairie bush clover, or American ginseng is identified in the field, field surveys for those plant species will be conducted. Results of the habitat studies for the other eight threatened and endangered species will be coordinated with USFWS, IDNR, and NGPC to determine if other species surveys will be conducted.</p> <p>As appropriate, biological evaluations or biological assessments for potential impacts to threatened or endangered species will be completed during the Tier 2 NEPA process. A determination of effect on the 11 potential threatened and endangered species will be made as part of the biological evaluations or biological assessments. As necessary, plans for avoiding or mitigating impacts to designated species will be developed and coordinated with USFWS, IDNR, and NGPC.</p> <p>Prior to construction of the Missouri River Bridge, surveys of trees that could be used by the bald eagle and Indiana bat will be performed and the results coordinated with USFWS, IDNR, and NGPC to determine when tree cutting could occur.</p>

TABLE 1-1
Tier 2 NEPA Activities and Subsequent Environmental Activities

Resource	Tier 1 Process	Tier 2 and Subsequent Activities
Wetlands	Reviewed available National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapping and aerial photography and performed field verification of the presence of wetlands within the area of potential impact.	<p>If determined necessary based on field habitat surveys, a survey for cliff swallow nests will be conducted on the existing I-80 bridge over the Missouri River. If nests are present, construction will be timed to avoid impacts on occupied nests. If disturbance of the nests cannot be avoided, USFWS will be contacted for guidance.</p> <p>Wetland delineations in accordance with the 1987 Edition of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USCOE) Wetlands Delineation Manual will be performed on all wetlands within the Tier 1 area of potential impact. The wetland boundaries will be identified in the Tier 2 NEPA documents and used to facilitate roadway and bridge design.</p> <p>Pursuant to Executive Order 11990, a wetland finding will be prepared indicating that there is no practical, prudent, or economic alternative to the placing of fill for highway construction in certain wetlands within the future ROW.</p> <p>Subsequent to the Tier 2 NEPA documents, Iowa DOT will submit a permit application to USCOE, Rock Island District office for approval of addressing wetland impacts in Iowa and NDOR will submit a permit application to USCOE, Omaha District office for approval of addressing wetland impacts in Nebraska.</p>
Water Quality/Surface Water Impacts	<p>Identified areas where surface waters would be intersected by roadways and determined likely locations for bridges and culverts.</p> <p>Used a database to identify private wells within the area of potential impact.</p> <p>Reviewed state water quality reports to determine existing conditions within the area of potential impact.</p>	<p>Hydraulic and hydrologic evaluations will be conducted to evaluate impacts of bridges and culverts on surface water flow. Field verification of the precise locations of the private wells within the ROW area for the selected alignment will be performed. Existing water quality data will be analyzed to determine potential impacts of the CBIS project on siltation and pathogen levels in the Missouri River. Analyses will also be performed to further evaluate potential water quality impacts to the Missouri River, Mosquito Creek, and Indian Creek. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction permit application will be submitted to address stormwater impacts. Erosion and sediment control measures will be implemented.</p>

TABLE 1-1
Tier 2 NEPA Activities and Subsequent Environmental Activities

Resource	Tier 1 Process	Tier 2 and Subsequent Activities
Navigational Impacts	<p>Vessels engaged in emergency operations, national defense activities, and channel maintenance in the Missouri River were identified.</p> <p>The following were investigated and found to be unaffected by the project: river bends, additional structures or other features (lightering areas, dockages); potential hydrologic or atmospheric conditions that could pose additional hazards for vessels passing through the proposed structure; and access to local service facilities.</p>	<p>Environmental documentation for the I-80 Missouri River Bridge project will address measures to minimize and avoid navigational impacts, and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) will be consulted regarding the required horizontal clearances over the Missouri River for this project.</p>
Floodplains	<p>Potential floodplain encroachments were identified by examining Federal Emergency Map Association (FEMA) Flood Insurance Study maps. Calculations were performed to evaluate the amount of longitudinal and transverse floodplain encroachment within the area of potential impact.</p>	<p>Compliance with 23 CFR 650 and Executive Order 11988. Consider the design of the preferred alignment and determine where floodplain encroachments occur. Calculate floodplain impacts and document them within Tier 2 NEPA documents. Perform hydrologic modeling to determine any lost floodwater storage volume. Determine required permitting and mitigation measures.</p>
Regulated Materials	<p>Identified potential sites within the area of potential impact through a database search and windshield surveys.</p>	<p>Conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (PESA) for sites within the area of potential impact. Perform a windshield survey to verify uses of properties and search for regulated material releases. Where necessary, conduct an in-depth assessment by reviewing agency records and/or interviewing property owners/operators. The Tier 2 NEPA documents will summarize the findings of the Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). If determined necessary, sampling, monitoring, and other detailed work may occur to assess the potential risk at each site.</p> <p>As appropriate, the construction footprint in Iowa in the vicinity of I-480 will be sampled for lead.</p> <p>The impacts of disturbing potentially contaminated sediments during construction of the north expansion of the I-80 Missouri River Bridge will be considered.</p>

TABLE 1-1
Tier 2 NEPA Activities and Subsequent Environmental Activities

Resource	Tier 1 Process	Tier 2 and Subsequent Activities
Historic and Archaeological	Documented potential cultural and historic properties in the Study Area through initial reconnaissance surveys. Identified currently known historic or archaeological resources within the area of potential impact.	Coordination with Iowa State Historic Preservation Office will be ongoing as further studies are carried out. A full Phase I archaeological survey and intensive level historical/architectural survey will be completed for land within the area of potential impact. Results of the surveys will be summarized and the potential effects of the selected alignment will be determined in the Tier 2 NEPA documents. If needed, specific mitigation will be addressed in a Memorandum of Agreement.
Section 4(f) and Public Lands	Properties with Section 4(f)/6(f) potential were identified for the entire Study Area. Properties within the area of potential impact were also identified.	Consideration of Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) resources, including formal determination of Section 4(f) applicability by FHWA, will be conducted. Coordination will be performed with agencies with jurisdiction over the lands in the process of applicability determination. The Section 4(f)/6(f) evaluations will determine for significant resources whether a potential use can be avoided. If use cannot be avoided, impact minimization and mitigation commitments will be developed. The evaluations will be documented and summarized in the Tier 2 NEPA analyses.
Noise	A traffic noise model was used to define typical noise levels by roadway categories, vehicles, vehicle speeds, and distance from the edge of pavement at present, and for predicted traffic levels in 2030 assuming the CBIS Improvements Project was constructed. Sensitive receivers near the project such as schools and churches were also identified.	Determine existing noise levels through monitoring and modeling. Perform future traffic noise modeling of selected alternative alignments and determine impacted receivers. Consider noise mitigation measures (such as noise barriers)
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Identified existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the study area and area of potential impact, and verified that continuity would be maintained.	An examination of bicycle and pedestrian corridors (including any Americans with Disabilities Act designated accommodations) will identify any pedestrian corridors that cross the project. As appropriate, the inclusion of features such as sidewalks will be considered at interchanges to connect the residents to recreation and employment sites.

TABLE 1-1
Tier 2 NEPA Activities and Subsequent Environmental Activities

Resource	Tier 1 Process	Tier 2 and Subsequent Activities
Mitigation	General types of mitigations were identified, but no specific mitigation commitments were established.	<p>The Tier 2 NEPA documents will summarize mitigation measures to be incorporated into the project. Near the permitting stage, mitigation plans will be agreed upon by the DOTs and each respective resource agency with jurisdiction.</p> <p>Potential resources requiring mitigation include wetlands, floodplains, Section 4(f) and public lands, wildlife and threatened and endangered species, noise, groundwater and surface water, regulated materials, and cultural resources.</p>

SECTION 2

Alternatives/Preferred Alternative

Alternatives are strategies that can satisfy the needs of the CBIS, as established in Section 1. This section of the Tier 1 EIS discusses the range of alternatives developed for the CBIS, including:

- No-Build
- Reconstruction of all or part of the interstate (Construction Alternative)
- Improvements to alternate modes of transportation (enhance transit accommodations/ expand bicycle and pedestrian trails)
- Transportation management strategies (Travel Demand Management [TDM] and Transportation System Management [TSM])
- Improvements to other metro-area roadways
- Construction of a new cross-town roadway

In review of the comments received from the Tier 1 Draft EIS and the public hearing, no new information relating to the alternatives was made evident that necessitates new descriptions or evaluations. The process for determining the alternatives carried forward for detailed evaluation and those not carried forward is discussed in the Tier 1 Draft EIS and incorporated by reference in this Final EIS.

2.1 Summary of Alternatives

The following alternatives were identified for potential application to the CBIS based on the current and projected transportation needs of the Study Area, as defined in the purpose and need. Each of these alternatives was defined and discussed in detail in the Tier 1 Draft EIS, *Section 2, Alternatives*.

The Tier 1 Draft EIS analyzed all of the transportation improvement strategies listed above and determined that only the Construction Alternative was able to fully satisfy the purpose and need requirements (see Table 2-1). For this reason, the Improvements to Alternate Modes of Transportation, Transportation Management Strategies, Improvements to Other Metro-area Roadways, and Construction of a New Cross-Town Roadway alternatives have not been carried forward for detailed evaluation. However, components of the alternatives not carried forward for detailed evaluation as standalone alternatives may be implemented, but will be independent of the Construction Alternative. Although it does not meet the purpose and need requirements, the No-Build Alternative has been carried forward as a baseline for comparison to the Construction Alternative.

TABLE 2-1
Alternatives Comparison

Purpose and Need Criteria	Construction	No-Build	Improvements to Alternate Modes of Transportation	Transportation Management Strategies	Improvements to Other Metro-area Roadways	Construction of a New Cross-Town Roadway
Reduce Congestion/ Provide for Projected Demand	●	○	◐	◐	◐	◐
Repair Existing Roadway Conditions	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Address Safety Issues	●	○	○	◐	○	○
Correct Design Issues	●	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodate Planned Development	●	○	◐	○	◐	○

● = Meets criteria ◐ = Partially meets criteria ○ = Does not meet criteria

Note: Routine maintenance included in the No-Build Alternative would also occur under the other alternatives.

2.1.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative represents the base conditions for the Study Area and includes committed capacity and access improvements in the study corridor (i.e., the interstate system) and all planned off-system improvements per the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency’s (MAPA) 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), as described in of the Tier 1 Draft EIS, *Subsection 2.3.2*, within the *Alternatives Section*. This alternative failed to meet the project’s purpose and need, but was retained as a baseline for comparison to the Preferred Alternative as directed by NEPA.

2.1.2 Construction Alternative

Under the Construction Alternative, the CBIS would be improved to address existing and future issues in the study corridor, including insufficient capacity, deteriorating pavement and bridges, and outdated highway geometrics. The Construction Alternative is comprised of multiple reasonable build concepts that remain under consideration for each of the five project segments referenced in Section 1.3 of this document. Design elements within the build concepts include:

- Mainline widening (basic lanes)
- Auxiliary lanes (lane additions between on-ramps and off-ramps) to facilitate acceleration and deceleration
- Collector-distributor roads (divided roadway parallel to main freeway that eliminates weaving and reduces the number of entrances to and exits from the freeway while still providing access)

- Conversion of partial access interchanges to full access interchanges
- Consolidation of existing access points on the interstate
- Revised interchange configurations

All initial concepts were screened for cost and constructability impacts. An initial environmental evaluation, or assessment for reasonableness, was also conducted. Based on the environmental and engineering analysis, concepts that met the project's purpose, need, and design criteria were retained as part of the Construction Alternative. They will be carried forward for further evaluation and subject to refinement in Tier 2.

The build concepts that remain under consideration for each of the five project segments referenced in Section 1.3 include both interchange concepts and mainline concepts. The concepts that remain under consideration are summarized below, and meet American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Iowa DOT, and NDOR design standards.

Interchange Concepts

Concepts were considered at each of the 14 existing interchange locations and evaluated using the project purpose and need and established design criteria. At most interchange locations, multiple design concepts were retained for further consideration. In such instances, more than one concept was reasonable based on the engineering and environmental analysis completed to date. The Construction Alternative consists of these reasonable concepts.³

A decision on whether or not to provide direct I-29 ramp access at West Broadway (currently not provided) is being considered as part of Tier 1 because the provision of access is a system-level decision. For additional details, see Section 1.3 and Subsection 2.2.1 of this document. Specifics on how access might be provided would be decided in Tier 2.

This Tier 1 document addresses only the determination of the Construction Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. Specific interchange forms will be decided during Tier 2. In the Draft EIS, *Section 2, Alternatives*, Table 2-3 summarizes the interchange concepts still under consideration with respect to access changes. In general, these concepts provide comparable operational performance, meet design criteria, are constructible, and meet the project's purpose and need.

Mainline Concepts

Improvements to the mainline throughout the Study Area address design speed, horizontal and vertical alignment, lane and shoulder width, pavement cross-slope, ramp spacing, weaving lengths, left-hand entrances and exits, lane balance and continuity, and additional capacity. For the segments in the corridor, multiple mainline concepts remain under

³ The Construction Alternative is a composite of the mainline and interchange concepts that remain under consideration. The area of the composite represents the largest area of potential impact. The area of potential impact consists of the combined ROW needs of the concepts that remain under consideration plus an offset that would accommodate design as it progresses. The outer edge of the Preferred Alternative was generally offset (exceptions were made due to existing constraints) to provide flexibility for potential changes from geotechnical analysis, drainage design, minor design changes, and construction phasing.

consideration and were used to establish the Tier 1 Construction Alternative.⁴ These concepts will be carried into Tier 2.

Two mainline decision points related to the build concepts developed are being addressed in Tier 1 because they have the ability to influence the entire interstate system. A decision on the design of the I-80/I-29 overlap section as a combined freeway or dual-divided freeway and constructing a parallel bridge north or south of the I-80 Missouri River Bridge will be decided in Tier 1 (see Section 1.3 and Subsections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3, respectively, of this document).

2.2 Summary of the Preferred Alternative and Decisions Associated with the Preferred Alternative

Based on comments received on the Tier 1 Draft EIS and from the public hearing, this Final EIS identifies the Construction Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. The ROD will confirm the Construction Alternative (Preferred Alternative) as the Selected Alternative, and further document this project decision. The ROD, therefore, will provide the basis to move forward with Tier 2 work. During Tier 2, NEPA documents will be prepared for the five project segments to summarize impacts, appropriate mitigation measures, and any Section 4(f) issues. The documents will reflect engineering and environmental studies in further detail and identify the preferred mainline concept, and interchange(s) for each segment.

During the concept development process, several Tier 1 decision points were identified. These decisions are being addressed in Tier 1 because they have the ability to influence the entire interstate system:

- I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange – full access provided between West Broadway and I-29 vs. maintain existing (or similar) access
- I-80/I-29 overlap section – dual-divided vs. combined cross section
- I-80 Missouri River Bridge – location of a parallel bridge north or south of existing

The preferred action regarding each decision is identified and presented below. Tables 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4 summarize the environmental effects associated with these three build decisions. These decisions are described in detail in the Draft EIS, *Section 2.5*, and include the provision of direct access at Broadway from I-29, the dual-divided concept for the I-80/I-29 overlap section, and the Missouri River Bridge expansion. Because each of the build decisions still consists of multiple concepts, the effects of each decision are shown as a range of potential impacts.

2.2.1 I-29 / I-480 / West Broadway System Interchange

The decision to provide access is part of the Tier 1 process; however, specific access design will be decided during Tier 2. There is currently no direct access linking I-29 and West Broadway. The current access to I-29 is provided indirectly via local streets and Avenue G,

⁴ The estimated ROW needs for all concepts retained were combined to compose the “area of potential impact,” which represents the largest area that would be needed to accommodate projected future traffic demands.

35th Street, and 9th Avenue interchanges. Two different access scenarios were carried forward for further consideration in the Draft EIS.

- Option 1 would provide direct access from I-29 to West Broadway via the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange. Multiple design concepts remain under consideration for providing access. Specifics on how access will be provided will be determined in Tier 2. However, the concepts were developed to ensure that access could be provided.
- Option 2 considered maintaining a similar access from I-29 via a full access interchange at 35th Street or 9th Avenue. No direct access linking I-29 and West Broadway would be provided. However, reconstruction of the interchange would still occur to bring the interstate up to current standards.

Based on an evaluation of operations and input received during the Draft EIS comment period, the Preferred Alternative includes providing direct access from I-29 to West Broadway. Providing access from I-29 to West Broadway would generally result in a redistribution of traffic volumes at adjacent interchanges but is not anticipated to result in a net increase of traffic on West Broadway, east of 35th Street. This direct access was highly desirable to reduce truck traffic through residential areas and provide improved interstate access to West Broadway, which is a national highway (U.S. 6) and is functionally classified as an arterial. By providing direct access, the partial interchanges at Avenue G and 35th Street would be removed due to the close proximity of the I-480 system ramps. Figure 2-1 illustrates the operations when access is provided at West Broadway (Preferred Alternative).

2.2.2 I-80 / I-29 Overlap Section

The existing overlap section of I-80/I-29 between the East and West System Interchanges is currently a four-lane divided roadway (two travel lanes in each direction) with a depressed grass median. There are currently service interchanges at 24th Street and Iowa State Highway (IA) 192/South Expressway; these access points would be maintained.

Traffic analyses conducted during preparation of the Draft EIS indicate that the overlap section will require 10 basic lanes (five in each direction) to provide enough capacity to accommodate 2030 traffic. Due to the proximity of the 24th Street and South Expressway interchanges, auxiliary lanes between the two interchanges would also be required. Thus, between 24th Street and the South Expressway, 12 lanes would be necessary to accommodate forecasted future traffic volumes.

The Preferred Alternative includes a dual-divided freeway through the I-80/I-29 overlap section. A dual-divided freeway typically consists of two one-way roadways in each direction of travel, all within the access control limits. The outer roadway usually serves all interchange traffic, yet carries a substantial portion of through traffic. Initial analysis assumed the inner roadway would be designated I-80 Express, and the outer roadway would be designated I-80 Local and I-29; actual signing will be determined during final design. Figure 2-2 illustrates the operations of the dual-divided freeway through the I-80/I-29 overlap section of the Preferred Alternative.

On the outer lanes of the dual-divided freeway, two basic lanes would be maintained in each direction. On the inner roadways, three basic lanes in each direction would be

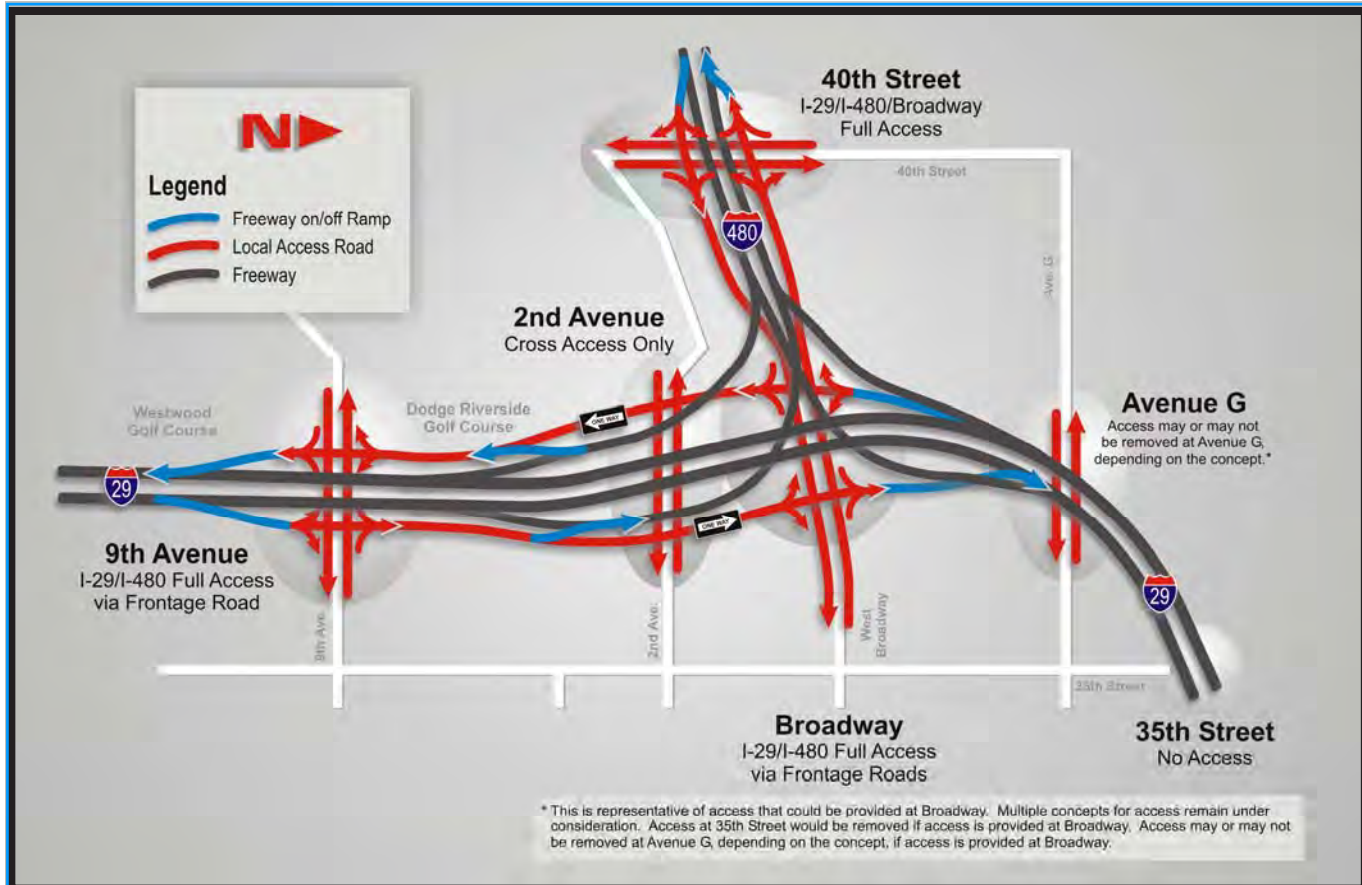


Figure 2-1
Potential Broadway Access

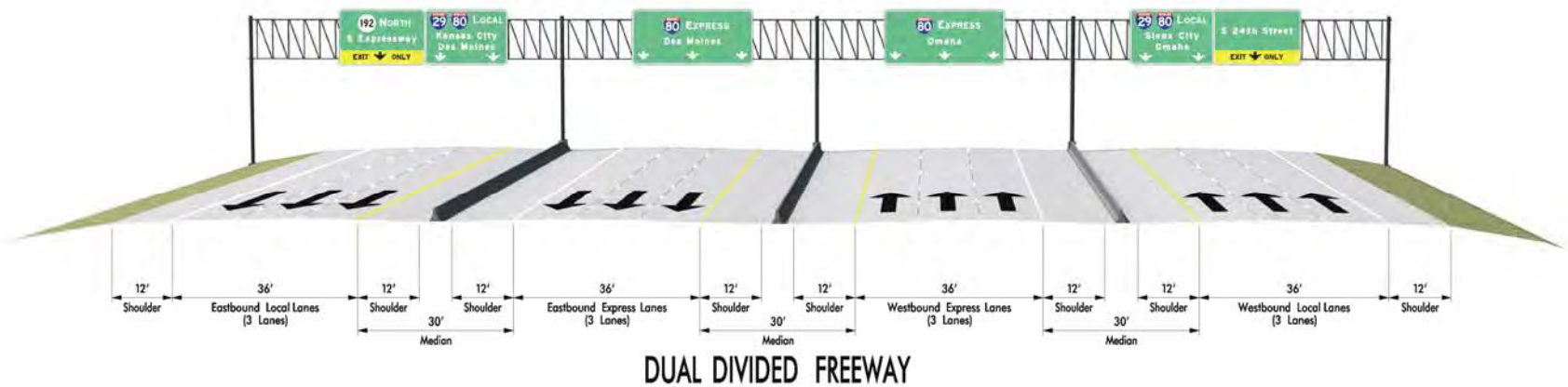
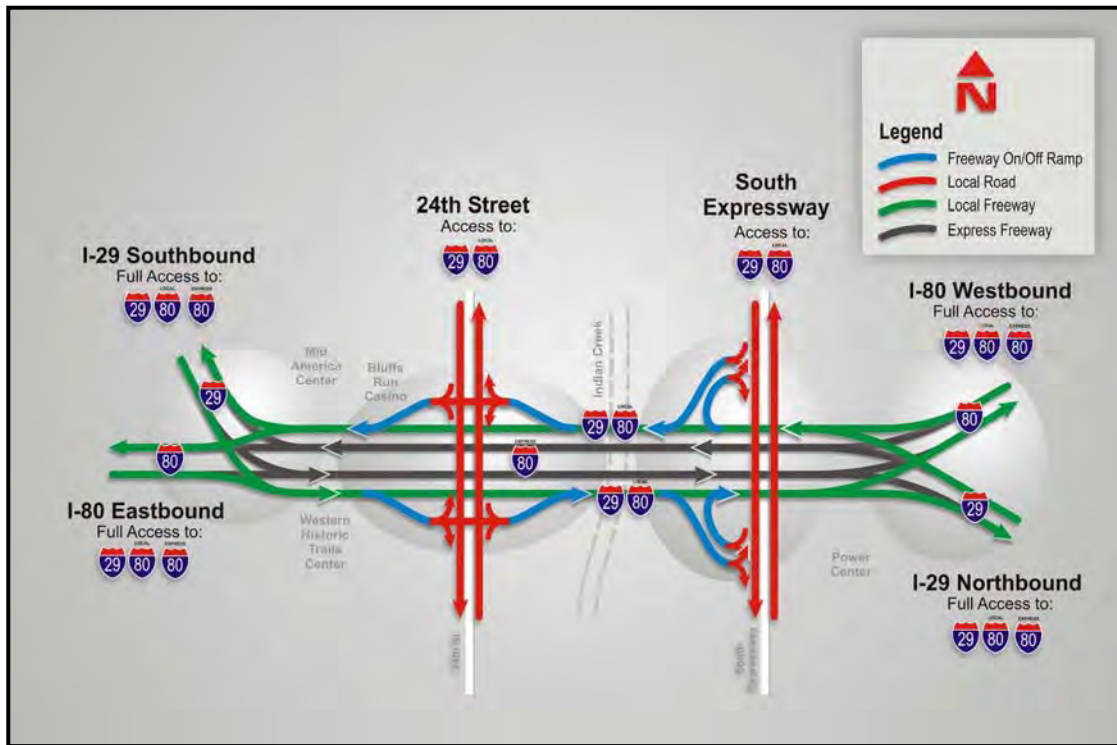


Figure 2-2
I-80/I-29 Overlap Section: Dual Divided Operations and
Typical Cross-Section

maintained. Full redundancy would be built into the East and West System Interchanges to allow through traffic to utilize either route through the overlap section.

The advantages of dual-divided freeways include flexibility in operations and maintenance, incidents have less of an impact due to the presence of a parallel alternate route, and traffic on the inner roadway is removed from the weaving segments of tightly spaced interchanges. Disadvantages of the dual-divided freeway might include the potential disruption of established communities due to the wide expanse of pavement and heavy traffic volumes that tend to cut off the continuity of the area. However, since the area is already severed by the existing interstate facility, community cohesion is not a significant issue in this case. Dual-divided facilities are also typically more expensive to construct and require more ROW than the traditional combined freeway due to the additional shoulder width provided. Snow removal from dual-divided facilities is also difficult in the inner lanes. However, the operational advantages of the dual-divided freeway outweigh the potential disadvantages because dual-divided freeways usually function smoothly and carry extremely high volumes of traffic.

2.2.3 I-80 Missouri River Bridge

A third issue considered during Tier 1 is the expansion of the I-80 Missouri River Bridge to provide additional capacity. Alternatives providing a parallel structure to the north or south of the existing structure were developed. Widening the existing bridge is not feasible for a variety of reasons, including the need to close the bridge during construction, the need to dismantle and replace many of the bridge components, and the high cost associated with this process. Environmental, social, and constructability constraints exist both north and south of the existing bridge (see the Draft EIS, *Figure 2-9*). North of the bridge on the Nebraska side, property belonging to Henry Doorly Zoo and the Lauritzen Gardens would be affected by a new bridge. In Council Bluffs, retaining walls would need to be constructed near River Road to avoid a warehouse. Additional constraints exist south of I-80 in both Iowa and Nebraska, including the Western Historic Trails Center, Henry Doorly Zoo, and Rosenblatt Stadium. Constructability issues arise with expansion to the south, including the difficulty tying into the Nebraska approach roadway.

Due to fewer socioeconomic impacts and constructability issues, the Preferred Alternative consists of a new parallel I-80 Missouri River Bridge north of the existing structure (see *Figure 2-3*). East of 13th Street, this north expansion would result in no more than two displacements, and impact two potential Section 4(f) resources, including the Western Trails Historic Center and the Henry Doorly Zoo property. The Preferred Alternative would require either an eastern or western shift of Riverview Boulevard and necessitate the construction of retaining walls near River Road in Council Bluffs.

2.3 Additional Information and Responses to Tier 1 Draft EIS Comments

None of the comments received affected the alternatives considered in the Tier 1 Draft EIS.

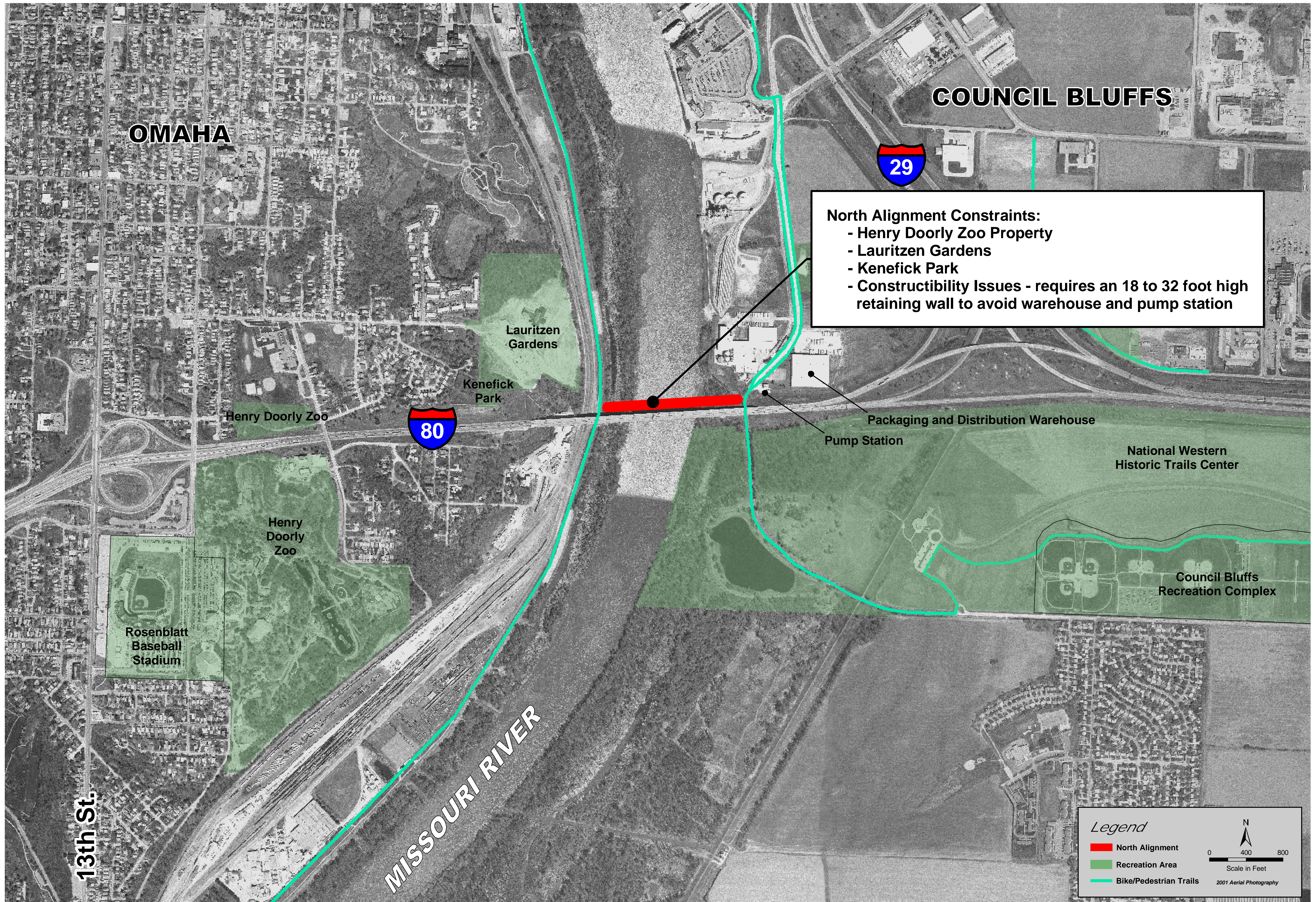


Figure 2-3
Construction Alternative Decision
I-80 Missouri River Bridge

SECTION 3

Affected Environment

Section 3 of the Tier 1 Draft EIS described the existing social, economic, and environmental setting of the Study Area for the CBIS Improvements Project that may be affected by the alternatives retained for detailed evaluation. It describes the existing human and natural environment within the Study Area in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, and Douglas County, Nebraska.

In review of the comments received from the Tier 1 Draft EIS and public hearing, no new specific information describing the affected environment was made evident that would necessitate any change in the Study Area of the affected environment of the Preferred Alternative.

3.1 Summary of Affected Environment

In general, the Council Bluffs/Omaha area is primarily urban and functions as a single metropolitan area, with residents from each city crossing the Missouri River for employment and recreational opportunities. Most goods and services in the area are provided by businesses located in the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs and along the interstate system. Thus, ease of movement throughout the region is critical to economic success.

The Study Area is predominately developed and contains a variety of land uses. Some of the notable land uses are shown in the Draft EIS, *Figure 4-1*. Because the Study Area includes the existing interstate and land adjacent to it, a large percentage of the land use in the Study Area is already dedicated to the transportation corridor.

Section 3 of the Tier 1 Draft EIS presents a detailed description of the social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the Study Area.

3.2 Additional Information and Responses to Tier 1 Draft EIS Comments

No comments were received that resulted in changes to the affected environment as described in the Tier 1 Draft EIS. However, new information concerning the affected environment was identified since the signing and distribution of the Draft EIS.

In the Draft EIS, *Table 3-13* states that the western portion of Playland Park, which was purchased for development of condominiums, would revert back to the City of Council Bluffs if a building permit was not received by December 2004. In order to reacquire the land, the City must buy the land at the original purchase price. As the developer did not meet the obligations of the agreement, Council Bluffs is currently pursuing funding to buy the land back. Impact information for Playland Park, as provided in the Draft EIS on *Page 4-36*, remains unchanged.

A new Council Bluffs Trail Master Plan was published in December 2004. Three new trail segments were included in the updated plan, and one of the segments is within the CBIS Study Area. The 0.6-mile segment of Valley View Trail from College Road to McPherson Road includes 1,252 linear feet in the northeast portion of the Study Area (see Figure 4-2). Additionally, work on an approximately 2-mile segment of new trail (not yet shown on the Master Plan) from the west bank of Indian Creek north of U.S. 275/Iowa 92 to Sunset Park along 16th Avenue was scheduled to begin in Spring 2005. This segment of the trail would cross beneath the I-80/I-29 overlap section, with 1,027 linear feet within the Study Area. With the completion of these two trails, the miles of trail within the Study Area changes from 6.8 to 7.2.

Other land use changes in the Study Area since the completion of the Draft EIS include the proposed addition of a Bass Pro Shop in the area near the proposed water park west of the Mid-America Center (MAC), the development of Kenefick Park in Lauritzen Gardens, and an ongoing expansion of Bluffs Run Casino. Kenefick Park is planned to open in the fall of 2005 and will host two Union Pacific steam locomotives as a gateway to Omaha for travelers heading west across the I-80 bridge. The park will be on private land of Lauritzen Gardens, will be open to the public at no charge, and will not be a component of the Omaha Park System.

SECTION 4

Environmental Consequences

Section 4, Environmental Consequences, of the Tier 1 Draft EIS considered the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts associated with the area of potential impact.

This section describes the beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental effects of the Construction Alternative (Preferred Alternative). The Preferred Alternative evaluated in this section is a composite of the mainline and interchange concepts that remain under consideration. The area of potential impact represents the largest possible impacts, and the actual impacts are anticipated to be less than those detailed in this section when specific mainline and interchange concepts are finalized during Tier 2.

In the Draft EIS, the No-Build Alternative was retained for comparison to the projected impacts of the Preferred Alternative. The projects that constitute the No-Build Alternative, those defined in the MAPA 2025 LRTP, would also occur under the Preferred Alternative. However, it is likely that if the Preferred Alternative was not implemented, additional projects would be required to accommodate future demand.

The resource evaluations in this section rely primarily upon existing and available data, with limited field reconnaissance for the resources affected by the alternatives (e.g., wetlands, parks, and cultural resources). Field reconnaissance was employed to verify and refine data obtained from Geographic Information System sources and resource agencies. Standard resource evaluations will be conducted as part of Tier 2. Since the Preferred Alternative is a composite, the potential environmental effects summarized in this document are greater than the effects of the constructed project would be. Detailed Tier 2 environmental evaluations of individual concepts will result in refinements and reductions in the impacts defined in this section.

Tier 1 studies have determined that the following resource areas would be affected by the proposed project: land use, ROW (including relocations and acquisitions), socioeconomics, wetlands, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, potential Section 4(f) resources, regulated materials, and noise. Four resources: land use, wetlands, water quality, and threatened and endangered species, were identified as having possible indirect/cumulative impacts, which are discussed in their respective subsections within the Draft EIS, *Section 4, Environmental Consequences*.

Resources will be avoided or impacts minimized as reasonable; for resources where avoidance and minimization is not possible, FHWA supports mitigation that is cost effective and is in response to a specific project impact. The potential mitigation measures discussed in this section are conceptual, with the final determination of the appropriate mitigation measures occurring in later project stages when impacts are better defined and with input from the public and resource agencies.

The level of analysis was limited to identifying unusual issues that would make environmental mitigation impractical or difficult. Specific mitigation locations have not been selected or identified in this Tier 1 Final EIS. More detailed analysis of the mitigation of

potential impacts would be performed as necessary during the Tier 2 process. Near the Tier 2 permitting stage, mitigation plans will be agreed upon by the DOTs and each respective resource agency with jurisdiction.

In review of changed conditions for some portions of the Study Area, and the comments received from the Tier 1 Draft EIS and the public hearings, no new specific information describing the environmental consequences was made evident that necessitates new evaluations of the environmental consequences of the Preferred Alternative. Consequently, the environmental consequences noted in the Tier 1 Draft EIS are incorporated by reference in this Tier 1 Final EIS.

4.1 Summary of Environmental Consequences

The proposed improvements seek to avoid and minimize impacts to the socioeconomic and natural environment while providing the benefits of the proposed action. Substantial population and employment growth, as well as substantial development in the Council Bluffs and Omaha area is expected to continue, regardless of whether major transportation improvements are implemented. The proposed improvements would use existing ROW throughout much of the corridor as the improvements are being made to an existing transportation facility. However, there would be direct conversion of land to transportation uses in areas of mainline widening and interchange reconstruction. The transportation use is consistent with the land use plans for the area.

As the project consists almost entirely of improvements to the existing roadway, access and continuity will remain virtually unchanged or be improved by the project. For this reason, very few businesses should face hardship due to proximity impacts. Businesses may in fact benefit from the addition of full access interchanges and improved conditions along the mainline of the corridor through increased traffic capacity and improved traffic flow and safety.

The Preferred Alternative would improve the transportation network by adding more capacity, improving access to the local road system and other modes of transportation, correcting design issues such as some left-hand exits, improving pavement conditions, and improving safety. The analysis of minority or low-income populations for the project alternatives demonstrates that these populations will benefit from improved access and safety in their neighborhoods. Major municipal and public services would not be substantially affected by the Preferred Alternative. Although the displacement of one church and school could impact the cohesiveness of some neighborhoods, overall community cohesiveness could be improved by reduced traffic in some neighborhoods.

Small amounts of riparian and upland vegetation (see Figure 4-1) occur within the area of potential impact and may be removed during construction. Some other impacts to natural resources may occur; however, the most substantial environmental impacts are urban in nature: noise impacts and regulated material impacts. Noise impacts could occur for structures located near the roadway. However, most of those structures are experiencing similar noise levels under current conditions. A traffic noise analysis will be conducted as part of the Tier 2 studies for each roadway segment.

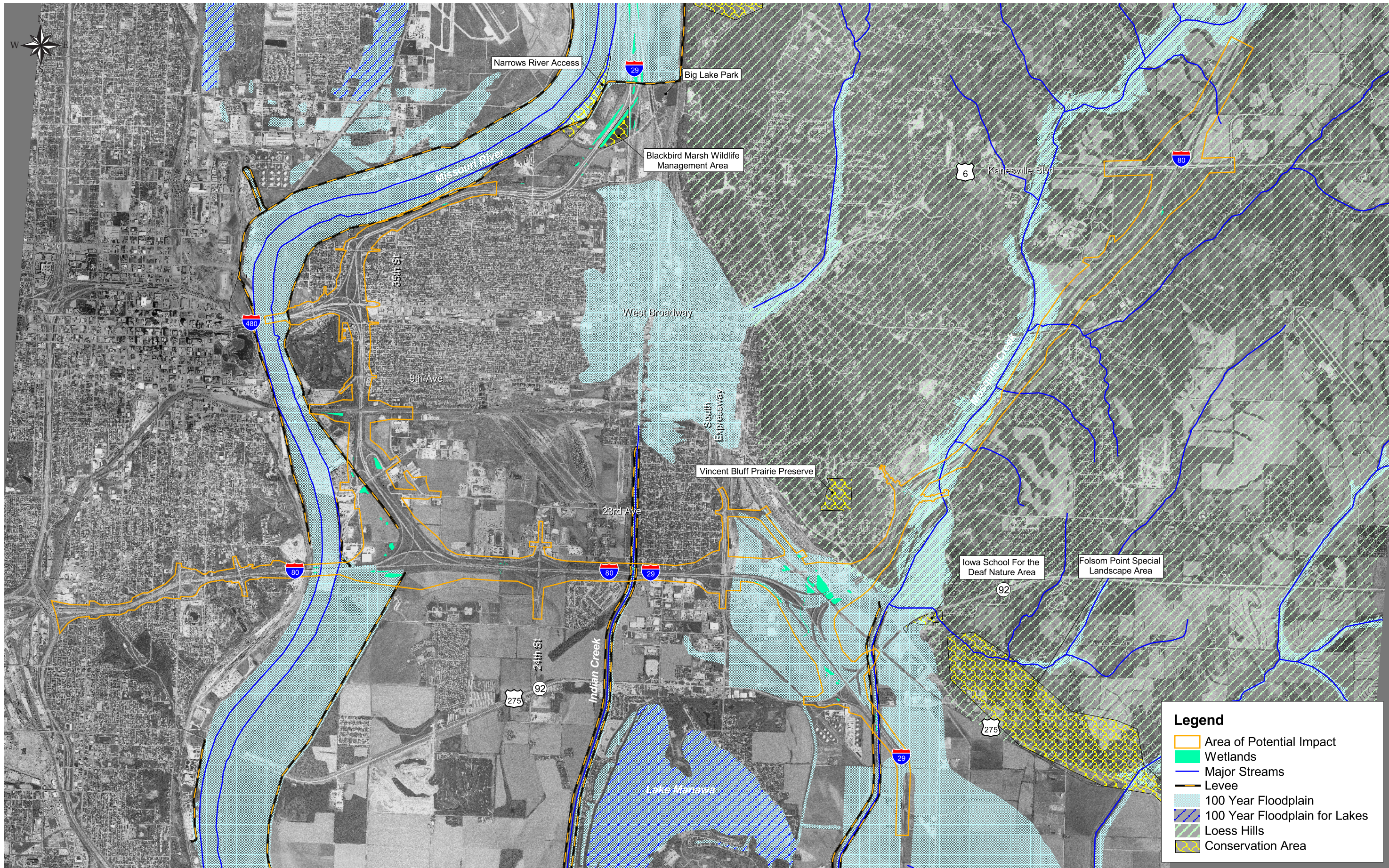


Figure 4-1
Natural Environment - Potential Impacts

Some impacts to water resources, including streams, wetlands, and floodplains, would occur with the implementation of the CBIS Improvements Project. While no occurrences of threatened or endangered species have been confirmed within the area of potential impact, input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) identified 11 potential species that will require analysis during Tier 2.

The impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative are summarized in Table 4-1. More detailed analysis can be found in the Draft EIS, *Section 4*.

TABLE 4-1
Summary of Impacts

Estimated Resource Impacts ^a	Preferred Alternative ^b
Existing and Future Land Use	Minor conversion to transportation use from other land uses, and spot changes in development opportunities near I-480, along I-29 near Avenue G, and the area north of I-80.
ROW ^c	
ROW Acquisition (acres)	1,121
Displacements	
Residences	297
Apartment complexes	8
Businesses	62
Economics	Potential increased profits due to more efficient travel and increased safety, increased opportunities for industries that supply materials and overhead items.
Business/Employment	Employment and earnings from construction, temporary employment increases during the construction period (12.7 jobs/million \$ construction), potential long-term job creation in certain industries (motor freight transport, warehouse, wholesale trade, and engineering-architectural services).
Tax Impacts	Increased local tax revenues due to construction.
Property Values	No declines are expected.
Environmental Justice	The proposed action will not exert high or disproportionate adverse impacts upon minority or low-income populations. Instead, improving access will benefit all residents throughout the Study Area. While some impacts may be borne by minority and low-income residents, the level of impact would not be expected to be disproportionately high, and therefore would not be considered an Environmental Justice impact as defined by Executive Order 12898.
Access	Providing access at West Broadway could affect these populations. The changes aim to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic from local roads, and concentrate this traffic on arterials, improving the safety and quality of life for those living near the interstate.
Neighborhoods, Community Services, Facilities	
Access	Access and continuity would be minimally affected. Overall, the changes would divert traffic from local roads onto arterials, ultimately facilitating movement and improving safety. Communities severed by construction of the interstate highway would remain unchanged. The project would not isolate or change the boundaries of any neighborhoods
Institutions	1 church, 1 school directly affected.

TABLE 4-1
Summary of Impacts

Estimated Resource Impacts ^a	Preferred Alternative ^b
Cohesion	Potential traffic changes and displacements may diminish community cohesion between the UP Railroad Bridge and the I-29 25th Street interchange.
Community Services and Facilities	No direct effect on emergency/health care services; long-term potential improvements in emergency response times.
Bike/Pedestrian Considerations	No direct effect. While detours might be necessary during construction, all trail access and continuity would be maintained.
Transportation Considerations ^d	Reduced congestion, updated geometrics, and improved safety. Increased reliability and access for other modes of transportation.
Farmland	No substantive impact.
Noise Receiver ^e	
Residences	788
Apartment complexes	45
Business	48
Wetlands (acres) ^f	57
Waterways (feet) ^g	8,700
Floodplain	
Acres transverse	425
Acres longitudinal ^h	65
Habitat Areas (acres) ⁱ	43
Threatened or Endangered Species (species) ^j	Limited or none expected. ⁱ
Architectural/Historic Resources (sites) ^k	6
Archaeological Resources (sites) ^l	4
Potential Section 4(f) Resources (sites) ^m	13
Parks/Recreation Sites	9
Historic Structures	4
Regulated Materials (sites) ⁿ	58

a Impacts were conservatively estimated using database information and field reconnaissance. No intensive-level studies for determination of detailed impacts were performed in Tier 1. Impacts could range from none to the estimated maximum values listed.

b Resource locations were plotted on an aerial photograph, and impacts were predicted based on proximity to the area of potential impact. Impacts due to No-Build Alternative would be caused by development and other activities even if the project were not constructed since it includes planned improvements from MAPA's 2025 LRTP.

c ROW and displacements estimated from parcel data and aerial photographs identifying buildings. Right-of-way refers to new ROW required for the improvements.

d These new roadways would be required under either alternative. If the interstate is not improved, ultimately, other major arterials (not currently in any transportation plans) would need to be widened to accommodate increased travel demand.

e Noise receiver impacts estimated from planning level noise analysis and aerial photographs identifying buildings. Some of these receiver locations are currently impacted by traffic noise and others may need to be acquired. Consequently, fewer receivers would be potentially affected by the project.

f Wetland acreage impacts estimated from National Wetland Inventory data, field determinations of NWI areas and other observations (no delineations were performed), and aerial photographs.

g Waterway length impacts estimated from aerial photographs and IDNR rivers/streams database.

h Floodplain acreage impacts estimated from FEMA Q3 database and aerial photographs.

i Habitat only includes riparian acreage impacts estimated from aerial photographs and IDNR rivers/streams database.

j Input from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, IDNR, and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission identified threatened or endangered species that might occur within or near the proposed Study Area. In-depth fieldwork as needed to verify presence or absence of potential species will be completed during Tier 2.

k Architectural/Historical Site impacts estimated from Tallgrass Historians reconnaissance survey.

l Archaeological resource impacts estimated from Iowa Office of the State Archaeologist and Nebraska State Historical Society data and a Phase I survey by Tallgrass Historians.

m Potential Section 4(f) resource impacts estimated from parcel data, various public maps and websites, IDNR data, and Tallgrass Historians reconnaissance survey.

n Regulated material site impacts estimated from parcel data, aerial photographs, field reconnaissance, and EDR database.

The following tables summarize the impacts associated with the three build decisions being made in this Final EIS. Table 4-2 provides a summary of impacts for the Preferred Alternative at the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange.

TABLE 4-2
Summary of Impacts Associated with the Preferred Alternative Broadway Access^a

Resource	Broadway Access
Right-of-Way	34–39 acres
Displacements	3–4 Businesses 63–64 Residences 3 Separate Apartment Complexes Partially Impacted
Wetlands (acres)	<1
Floodplain (acres)	3–4
Potential Section4(f) Resources	Parks/Recreation: 4 Sites, 4 acres impacted Potential Historic Structure: 1 Site
Regulated Material Sites (#)	7

^a Impacts were estimated using database information and field reconnaissance. No intensive-level studies for determination of detailed impacts were performed in Tier 1.

Table 4-3 provides a summary of impacts for the dual-divided section of the Preferred Alternative for the overlap section. The advantages of dual-divided freeways include flexibility in operations and maintenance, incidents have less of an impact due to the presence of a parallel alternate route, and traffic on the inner roadway is removed from the weaving segments of tightly spaced interchanges.

TABLE 4-3
Summary of Impacts Associated with the Preferred Alternative Overlap Section^a

Resource	Dual-Divided Section
Right-of-Way	152–195 acres impacted
Displacements	17–25 Businesses 41–44 Residences
Wetlands (acres)	13
Floodplain (acres)	188–198
Potential Section 4(f) Resources	Parks/Recreation: 2 Sites, 27-40 acres Known Archaeological Sites: 3-4 Sites Potential Historic Structure: 0-1 Site
Regulated Material Sites (#)	25-29

^a Impacts were estimated using database information and field reconnaissance. No intensive-level studies for determination of detailed impacts were performed in Tier 1.

Table 4-4 provides a summary of impacts for the Preferred Alternative of the Missouri River Crossing.

TABLE 4-4
Summary of Impacts Associated with the Preferred Alternative Missouri River Crossing^a

Resource	North Expansion
Displacements	0-2
Potential Section 4(f) Resources	Western Trails Historic Center Henry Doorly Zoo (property only if Riverview Boulevard shifted east)
Local Road Impacts	Eastern or western shift of Riverview Boulevard required
Constructability Issues	Retaining walls near River Road

^a Impacts were estimated using database information and field reconnaissance. No intensive-level studies for determination of detailed impacts were performed in Tier 1.

4.2 Additional Information and Responses to Tier 1 Draft EIS Comments

Correspondence from the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (DOI), see Table 5-1 – Agency Letter 13, confirms the potential Section 6(f) status of Playland Park, as documented in the Tier 1 Draft EIS, *Section 4.2.7, Public Lands/Section 4(f) Considerations*. Although ownership of the western portion of Playland Park may return to the City of Council Bluffs, as discussed in Section 3.2, impact information for Playland Park provided in the Draft EIS remains unchanged. The DOI indicated that Spring Lake Park is also a Section 6(f) property, and if the site were impacted by the project, appropriate Section 6(f) coordination and mitigation would be required. An impact to a Section 6(f) property would occur only if the improvements to the parks or land acquired for the parks purchased with designated funding would be affected. Potential impacts to Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) properties will be fully evaluated during Tier 2 studies.

Kenefick Park will be a park on privately owned land. Although open to the public, it will not be part of a city, county, or other public park system and therefore would not be a Section 4(f) property. The park design is being planned in conjunction with the CBIS Improvement Project concepts. Consequently, the project would not impact this facility.

If the approximately 2-mile segment of new trail from the west bank of Indian Creek north of US 275/IA 92 to Sunset Park is constructed as proposed, it would cross beneath the I-80/I-29 overlap section, with 769 linear feet within the area of potential impact (see Figure 4-2). The new segment of Valley View Trail noted in Section 3.2 is outside the area of potential impact and would not be affected by the Preferred Alternative. Trail impacts were determined not to be Section 4(f) impacts (see the Draft EIS, *Section 3.2.7, Public Lands/Section 4(f) Considerations*); therefore, the potential Section 4(f) impact numbers in the Draft EIS remain unchanged.

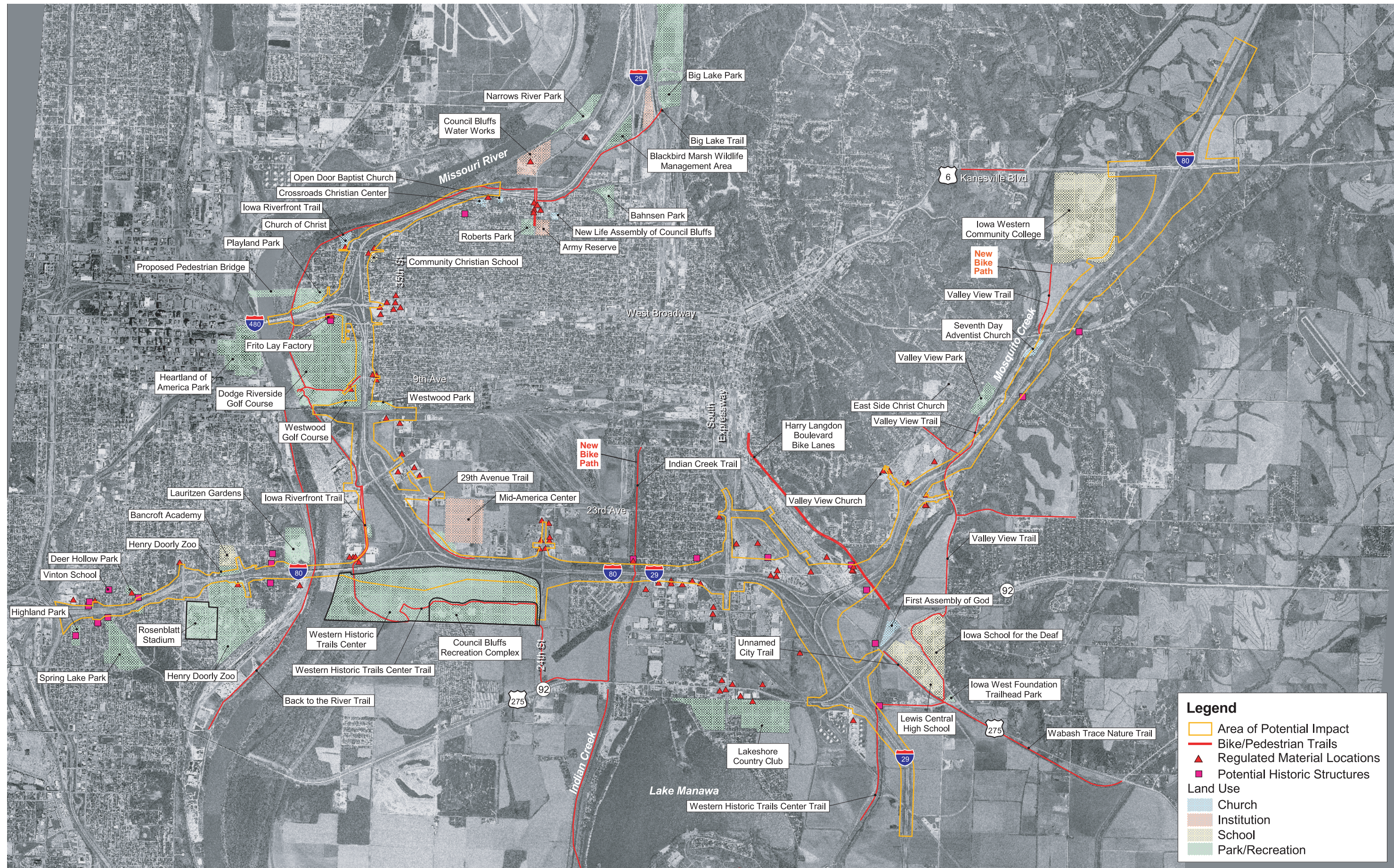


Figure 4-2
Built Environment - Potential Impacts

SECTION 5

Comments and Coordination

Iowa DOT, NDOR and FHWA have provided numerous opportunities for coordination of the CBIS Improvements Project with the resource agencies and general public. This section summarizes the public involvement and agency coordination programs carried out prior and subsequent to the release of the Tier 1 Draft EIS. Plans for future coordination subsequent to publishing of the Final EIS are also summarized in this section. *Section 5* of the Tier 1 Draft EIS presents the public involvement opportunities and agency coordination efforts through the preparation of the Tier 1 Draft EIS and is referenced accordingly.

5.1 Summary of Federal, State, and Local Agency Coordination

At the beginning of the study, two groups were established to provide a forum to discuss the project and solicit comments from various agencies and elected officials. They were the Resource Agency Group and the Advisory Committee. The Resource Agency Group used the regularly scheduled NEPA/Section 404 Concurrence Process meeting forum to meet and discuss the project. The Advisory Committee met at critical points during project development. Both groups provided input to the process, including local perceptions of transportation needs/issues, assistance in obtaining data, defining study approach, and reviewing study output. In the Tier 1 Draft EIS, *Section 5* presents an overview of these two groups and their role in the CBIS Improvements Project.

As part of the Iowa DOT early coordination process, and under the guidance of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, project information was sent in January 2003 to tribal contacts of the Iowa, Sac and Fox, Omaha, Otoe-Missouria, and Winnebago tribes with potential interest in the project area. *Table 5-5* of the Draft EIS summarizes the responses from these tribes.

Follow-up action includes providing copies of all archaeological studies to the Otoe-Missouria Tribe and Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma per their request. Additional coordination will occur as necessary in the later stages of the project. Other tribes indicated that additional coordination was not necessary.

As part of NDOR's tribal coordination process, copies of the Draft EIS were sent to the Ponca, Winnebago, and Omaha tribes.

5.2 Summary of Contact with the Public and Interested Groups

Opportunities for general public involvement prior to release of the Draft EIS included attendance at public meetings and speakers' bureaus/small group meetings. Up-to-date study information was periodically distributed through newsletters.

5.2.1 Public Information Meetings

Two public information meetings were held during the study process. The meetings were announced in newspaper advertisements, project newsletters, and invitation letters to interested individuals/groups on the project mailing list. An effort was made to involve the Spanish-speaking members of the community in the public meetings by having a Spanish interpreter available at all public meetings, creating the meeting handouts in Spanish, and advertising meetings in Spanish. English- and Spanish-language display advertisements were placed in the following Council Bluffs/Omaha newspapers: *Council Bluffs Daily Nonpareil*, *Omaha World Herald*, and *Nuestro Mundo*. The public meetings were conducted in an open-house format, with personnel from the Iowa DOT, NDOR, FHWA, and their consultants available to answer questions and receive comments about the study. In addition to written public comments, a project team debriefing was held following each of the public information meetings. In the Draft EIS, *Section 5.2.1* presents more detailed information concerning these meetings.

5.2.2 Small Group Meetings

Meetings were held with interested groups throughout the course of the study. Two presentations were made to the Southwest Iowa Association of Realtors concerning the CBIS Improvements Project, due to its potential to have an impact on the realty market in the Council Bluffs area.

5.2.3 Newsletters

Two newsletters were distributed during development of the Draft EIS. The newsletters contained important study information and presented an update from the project Advisory Committee. Contact information for project team representatives was also included in order to provide the opportunity for public input. Newsletters were made available in English and Spanish. *Table 5-6* of the Draft EIS lists the dates and topics of the newsletters.

5.2.4 Mailing List

A mailing list of more than 2,000 names was developed and updated regularly throughout the course of the study. The list included interested individuals; representatives of interest groups; state, county, and local elected officials; and appropriate agency personnel. The list was used to generate newsletter mailing lists and meeting invitations.

5.3 Summary of Public Input Prior to Tier 1 Draft EIS Distribution

Providing information and receiving feedback was a key element of the study process. Through a structured program that provided numerous opportunities for input, the CBIS Improvements Project was able to obtain the broadest participation at all levels: the public, interested groups, agencies, and elected officials. Many comments received during the study emphasized frustration with growing congestion and safety concerns along the corridor, reflecting the need for major improvements. This study focused the transportation discussion on the major problems and potential solutions.

The public involvement process helped frame the project purpose and need and the range of alternatives. Support for major improvements was expressed by the Council Bluffs and

Omaha area residents, business groups, and elected officials based on transportation benefits and cost-effectiveness. In the Draft EIS, *Table S-5* summarizes agency comments prior to its publication. All relevant comments were addressed in the Draft EIS. Comments regarding Tier 2 or construction tasks will be addressed as appropriate in later project stages (see Table 1-1).

5.4 Public Hearing and Formal Comment Period on Tier 1 Draft EIS

5.4.1 Public Hearing

A public hearing was held February 8, 2005, at the MAC in Council Bluffs. Approximately 85 individuals were in attendance.

An open house format was used for the public hearing. This format allowed attendees to review project information at their own pace and ask questions of study representatives. Approximately 20 display boards providing study information and a video of the comparison of the dual-divided and combined section concepts for the I-80/I-29 overlap section were provided for public review. Copies of the Tier 1 Draft EIS were also available for review.

Attendees were able to submit written comments on a comment form or verbal comments to a court reporter. A summary of the Public Hearing, including comments received, is available from the Iowa DOT, Office of Location and Environment.

5.4.2 Newsletter

A third newsletter was distributed in January 2005 to announce the February 8, 2005, Public Hearing. The newsletter provided a project update, a review of the alternatives considered, the next steps the project would be taking, and an invitation to the public to share their opinion on the three decisions being made in Tier 1 (see Section 2-2). Contact information for project team representatives was also included in order to provide the opportunity for public input. The newsletter was made available in Spanish.

5.4.3 Summary of Tier 1 Draft EIS and Public Hearing Comments

A total of 20 comments were received during the comment period for the Tier 1 Draft EIS.

Summary of Public Comments

The majority of the comments submitted during the formal comment period were of a general nature. These comments included requests to be kept informed of project developments, including being notified of upcoming public meetings. Some residents expressed appreciation for the project video airing on CBTV 17. Those whose property could be affected by the project were interested in knowing more about the property acquisition process. Some comments included general support for the CBIS Improvements Project, while others indicated support for particular aspects of the project.

Public Comments

The following list categorizes some of the public comments received:

- How were noise impacts determined (particularly between Indian Creek and South Expressway)?

A traffic noise model was used to define typical noise levels by roadway categories, vehicles, vehicle speeds, and distance from the edge of pavement at present, and for predicted traffic levels in 2030 assuming the CBIS Improvements Project were constructed. Sensitive receivers near the project such as hospitals, schools, and churches were also identified. The more detailed noise modeling will be conducted in Tier 2.

- A new I-80 interchange is needed at Old Highway US 6 to serve the expanding Council Bluffs Airport and the growing population east of I-80.

A new I-80 interchange is not currently planned for Old Highway US 6.

- I-29 northbound should have a modern exit to southbound 16th Street – the study should be extended to that point.

Projected traffic demand did not indicate the need to upgrade I-29 through the 16th Street interchange.

- Is Iowa DOT going to widen I-29 to service I-80?

Committed improvements to the interstate include the addition of a third lane in the eastbound direction through the I-80/I-29 overlap section.

The following comments received cannot be adequately addressed until design progresses in Tier 2.

- What will be impacted on 36th and 4th Avenue?
- What will happen to the housing between 9th and 2nd Avenue going north and south on 36th?
- Concern with truck access to Great Western Highway from 29th Avenue.
- Sound barriers should be provided along the northwest and eastern sections of the project area; these are mainly residential areas.
- Interstate needs to be widened in the South Expressway interchange area before the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange area is improved.
- Concern with poorly designed interchanges – feels that consistent exits and entrances from the right side which don't end in a few hundred feet would help capacity tremendously.
- Would like to see money spent on beautification similar to the I-235 project in Des Moines.
- A desire to have 23rd Avenue extended to Woodbury Avenue to provide better access to the area.

As the Tier 1 EIS does not conduct the level of detailed analysis many would expect from a traditional EIS, many of the issues raised by the public will be addressed in Tier 2 studies.

5.4.4 Tier 1 Draft EIS Agency Comments

On December 22, 2004, FHWA, Iowa DOT, and NDOR in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USCOE) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), distributed the Tier 1 Draft EIS for the CBIS Improvements Project. In accordance with NEPA and the Clean Water Act, comments offered by public agencies, the general public, or other interested parties need to be adequately addressed by the Tier 1 Final EIS. The 45-day minimum comment period on the Tier 1 Draft EIS officially ended on February 28, 2005; however, agency comments were accepted through March. Section 5.4.5 lists agency comment letters on the Tier 1 Draft EIS; these letters are reproduced in their entirety in this Final EIS and are marked to identify specific comments. Table 5-1 includes a summary of the comments received and responses to those comments.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
1	State Historical Society of Iowa	December 29, 2004		No issues.	N/A
2	Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	December 30, 2004	1	Floodplain management questions for Douglas County should be directed to the Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District (Papio-Missouri NRD).	Coordination with the Papio-Missouri NRD is ongoing.
3	Federal Aviation Administration	January 12, 2005	1	Need to consider whether the project will require formal notice and review from an airspace standpoint.	Formal notice and review for airspace conflict will be performed during Tier 2.
4	USEPA	January 14, 2005	1	Planning tool such as QuickZone be used to consider impacts and to refine the delineation of segments. Potential impacts to traffic-delay induced costs to commerce, fuel consumption and air quality should be presented in Tier 1 Final EIS.	Work zone management software to determine traffic-delay induced costs to commerce, fuel consumption, and air quality impacts was investigated. Based on additional coordination with USEPA, QuickZone, was found to be unsuitable for the project due to its tiered nature. At this time, there is not enough design information to use QuickZone.
			2	The construction footprint in Iowa should be sampled for lead.	As appropriate during Tier 2 studies, the construction footprint in Iowa will be sampled for lead.
			3	Earthwork planned in the vicinity of the former ASARCO refinery (the Lewis and Clark Landing) or the former Gould Battery plant (Heartland of America Park) should be coordinated with the NDEQ.	The area of potential impact does not include any land in Nebraska along I-480. Consequently, the referenced areas would not be impacted by the CBIS Improvements Project.
			4	Page 4-17 cautions that installing piers in the Missouri River may disturb contaminated sediments. However, previous sampling of in-river sediments has shown that Missouri River sediments are not contaminated by former metals processing industries.	No change is necessary because the Draft EIS indicated in the same paragraph "Recent testing determined that the Missouri River sediment was not contaminated."

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
5	USCOE – Omaha District	January 25, 2005	1	Changes to the Missouri River left bank levee system at Council Bluffs require approval from USCOE and the City of Council Bluffs.	Approval from USCOE and City of Council Bluffs would be attained as appropriate for any work to the left bank levee system of the Missouri River, including tieback levees on Indian and Mosquito creeks.
			2	Changes to the I-80 bridge or to the left bank levee should be designed for no impact to the 500-year elevations or the 100-year flood elevations.	Changes to the I-80 bridge or to the left bank levee would be designed so that no impact to the 500-year elevations or the 100-year flood elevations would occur.
			3	During construction appropriate soil erosion prevention techniques should be used.	Best management practices to control soil erosion would be used as appropriate during construction.
			4	The environmental assessment should include socio-economic impacts, a description of the affected environment, an explanation of alternative options, compliance with environmental statutes, and a description of environmental consequences including air, water, and quality of life.	The Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement includes a description of the affected environment (Section 3), an explanation of alternative options (Section 2), a review of potential socio-economic impacts, and a description of environmental consequences including air, water, and quality of life (Section 4), and applicable compliance with environmental statutes. The Tier 2 NEPA documents will contain similar information as required/appropriate.
			5	Prior approval in the form of a Section 404 permit from USCOE is necessary for the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States, including adjacent wetlands or impoundments.	Section 404 permits would be obtained from USCOE in future project stages subsequent to the Tier 2 NEPA analyses.
			6	Final project plans should be sent to USCOE for a detailed review of permit requirements.	Final project plans would be sent to USCOE for a detailed review of permit requirements.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
			7	Additional coordination with USEPA, USFWS, and IDNR should occur.	Plans have been and would continue to be coordinated with USEPA. Ongoing consultation with USFWS, IDNR, and NGPC regarding fish and wildlife resources would continue.
6	USCOE – Rock Island District	January 26, 2005	1	As the project is outside the geographic boundaries of the Rock Island District, coordination with the Omaha District to determine if the project involves any USCOE administered lands is required.	Coordination with USCOE- Omaha District has been ongoing and would continue. See Omaha District letters 5 and 9 in the Final EIS.
			2	Section 404 permit applications for the project including wetland delineations, details of impacts to wetlands and other waters of the United States, and types and relative function of wetlands to be impacted should be submitted to this office and to the Omaha District office as soon as possible.	Section 404 permit applications will be submitted to both the USCOE-Omaha District and Rock Island District offices as appropriate in Tier 2.
			3	Sequential mitigation involving an alternatives analysis, minimization of impacts to wetlands, and compensatory mitigation for any unavoidable wetland impacts is required.	Mitigation requirements for impacts to wetlands would be determined as appropriate in Tier 2 NEPA documents and implemented through the Section 404 permit process.
			4	Coordinate with the Iowa Historic Preservation Agency to determine impacts to historic properties.	Coordination with the Iowa Historic Preservation Agency has been ongoing (see comment letter 1) and will continue as appropriate in Tier 2. Coordination for cultural resource issues in Nebraska will be performed with the Nebraska State Historical Society.
			5	The USFWS Rock Island Field Office should be contacted to determine if any federally listed endangered species are being impacted and if so, how to avoid or minimize impacts.	Coordination with USFWS to determine if any federally listed endangered species would be impacted and if so, how to avoid or minimize impacts to these species has been ongoing and will continue as appropriate in Tier 2.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
			6	The Iowa Emergency Management Division should be contacted to determine if the proposed project may impact areas designated as floodway.	The Iowa Emergency Management Division would be contacted in Tier 2 to determine if the CBIS Improvements Project may impact areas designated as floodway.
7	MAPA	January 27, 2005	1	MAPA indicated that they found the project to be consistent with area-wide planning and asked that the following [comments 2, 3, and 4] be taken into consideration:	Area-wide planning was considered in determining the preferred alternative.
			2	That important local events such as the College World Series be considered in the scheduling of construction along I-80;	Local events would be considered prior to construction scheduling along I-80.
			3	Construction scheduling on the Missouri River Bridge on I-80 be coordinated with construction on the South Omaha Bridge (U.S. 275, Iowa and Nebraska State Highways 92) so that both bridges are not under construction at the same time; and	I-80 Missouri River Bridge construction could occur at the same time as construction on the South Omaha Bridge. However, construction will be coordinated to ensure that any reduction in traffic capacity of the I-80 bridge would not occur while the South Omaha Bridge project is reducing traffic capacity.
			4	Sufficient provision of alternate routes should be made during construction on the CBIS.	Appropriate alternate routes would be provided during construction on the CBIS.
8	USCG	February 3, 2005	1	Project requires USCG Bridge Permit.	Prior to construction, a USCG Bridge Permit would be obtained as required.
9	USCOE– Omaha District	February 15, 2005	1	Consult with USFWS and the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources as Tier 2 NEPA studies are initiated.	Ongoing consultation with USFWS, IDNR, and NGPC regarding fish and wildlife resources would continue.
			2	The State Historic Preservation Office should be contacted for information and recommendations on potential cultural resources in the project area.	We have been coordinating with both the Nebraska and Iowa State Historic Preservation Offices. See letters in Appendix A of the Draft EIS.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
			3	A Section 404 permit from USCOE is necessary.	Section 404 permits would be obtained from USCOE in future project phases subsequent to the Tier 2 NEPA process.
			4	Final project plans should be sent to USCOE (both the Omaha and Rock Island districts) for a detailed review of permit requirements.	Final project plans would be sent to both USCOE districts for a detailed review of permit requirements.
10	Omaha Airport Authority	February 25, 2005	1	New construction should be in compliance with the Pottawattamie County Zoning ordinance and Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77, objects Affecting Navigable Airspace, concerning Eppley Airfield.	Formal notice and review for airspace conflict will be performed during Tier 2.
			2	Submit the proper FAA airspace forms for equipment such as cranes.	The applicable FAA airspace forms will be submitted prior to construction.
			3	New construction should not create wetland area off the runway ends of Eppley Airfield.	It is not anticipated that new wetland areas will be created by improvements to the CBIS.
11	NGPC	February 28, 2005	1	NGPC should review the Tier 2 NEPA document for the Nebraska segment.	Tier 2 NEPA studies for the Nebraska segment will be sent to the NGPC as part of the NEPA/Section 404 Merge Process of NDOR.
			2	The Draft EIS should include discussion of the feasibility of onsite wetland mitigation, as well as the discussion of the use of a wetland mitigation bank. In general, we encourage the use of onsite mitigation when feasible.	Specific mitigation opportunities including onsite as well as wetland banking will be evaluated and documented in the Tier 2 documents.
			3	NGPC should review further biological studies as well as any surveys that are completed for threatened and endangered species for the Nebraska segment.	Tier 2 NEPA studies will be completed for each CBIS segment. Biological studies and surveys completed for habitat potentially supporting threatened and endangered species such as the bald eagle, western prairie fringed orchid, and ginseng will be shared with NGPC during Tier 2. If field surveys determine no suitable habitat, then species surveys may not be performed.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
12	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	March 2, 2005	1	HHS agrees that the project should result in reduced congestion and improved safety and noted that the project seems consistent with other statewide and regional traffic planning recommendations.	The proposed improvements to the CBIS are intended to meet the needs of the region by improving mobility through the Study Area by improving the condition of the roadways and reducing traffic congestion and crashes. Area-wide planning was considered in determining the preferred alternative.
			2	HHS should receive a copy of the Final EIS and any future EISs developed for the CBIS Improvements Project.	HHS will be sent copies of the Tier 1 Final EIS as well as future Tier 2 NEPA documents.
13	NDEQ	March 9, 2005	1	The project is subject to the asbestos regulations of NDEQ and the more stringent regulations of the HHS. Because it is a demolition and/or renovation project that is not exempted, at a minimum, an inspection for asbestos by a certified inspector is required. If asbestos is found that meets the regulatory criteria, it must be properly removed and a demolition notification must be provided to NDEQ at least 10 days before beginning the demolition, per Nebraska Air Quality Regulations, Title 129, Chapter 23.	If demolition and/or renovation is required, an inspection for asbestos by a certified inspector would be performed. If asbestos is found that meets the regulatory criteria, it would be legally removed and a demolition notification would be provided to NDEQ at least 10 days before beginning the demolition.
			2	Approval by the Director of NDEQ is required before any open burning can be used for the disposal of land clearing and construction debris, per Nebraska Air Quality Regulations, Title 129, Chapter 30.	If open burning is required in Nebraska, approval from NDEQ would be obtained.
			3	All building debris and waste must be deposited at a licensed solid waste or construction and demolition waste management facility (per Integrated Solid Waste Management Regulations, Title 132).	Any building debris and waste would be deposited at a licensed solid waste or construction and demolition waste management facility, as appropriate in the state of generation.

TABLE 5-1
Agency Comments Received

Letter #	Agency	Date	Comment #	Comment	Response
14	DOI	March 15, 2005	1	DOI agrees with the identification of potential Section 4(f) properties as presented in the Draft EIS. As most of the potential impacts to Section 4(f) are due to the rather constrained nature of the project corridor, construction of avoidance alternatives outside the project area would be cost prohibitive. Impacts to individual properties should be considered for each proposed segment of improvement as they are developed, as long as methods for avoidance of Section 4(f) properties are considered for each segment. Given this, DOI has no specific objections to the project.	Avoidance of individual Section 4(f) properties will be considered for each proposed CBIS segment. If avoidance alternatives are not feasible and prudent, minimization of Section 4(f) use and mitigation of Section 4(f) impacts will be considered.
			2	In reviewing the project in relation to possible conflicts with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) and Urban Park and Recreation Recovery programs, DOI found that L&WCF project 19-00939, Playland Park, and project 31-00142, Spring Lake Park, would be affected. DOI recommends direct consultation with the officials who administer the L&WCF program in Iowa and Nebraska to determine any potential conflicts with Section 6(f)(3) of the L&WCF Act.	The officials who administer the Land and Water Conservation program in Iowa and Nebraska will be consulted to determine potential Section 6(f) conflicts. Coordination with administrators of Section 4(f) lands will be performed to determine the potential for Section 4(f) impacts, and whether they can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated.

5.4.5 List of Agency Comment Letters

Agency Letter #1	State Historical Society of Iowa	December 29, 2004
Agency Letter #2	Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	December 30, 2004
Agency Letter #3	Federal Aviation Administration	January 12, 2005
Agency Letter #4	United States Environmental Protection Agency	January 14, 2005
Agency Letter #5	United States Army Corps of Engineers - Omaha District	January 25, 2005
Agency Letter #6	United States Army Corps of Engineers - Rock Island District	January 26, 2005
Agency Letter #7	Metropolitan Area Planning Agency	January 27, 2005
Agency Letter #8	United States Coast Guard	February 3, 2005
Agency Letter #9	United States Army Corps of Engineers - Omaha District	February 15, 2005
Agency Letter #10	Omaha Airport Authority	February 25, 2005
Agency Letter #11	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	February 28, 2005
Agency Letter #12	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	March 2, 2005
Agency Letter #13	Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality	March 9, 2005
Agency Letter #14	United States Department of the Interior	March 15, 2005

**STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY of
IOWA**

A Division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

December 29, 2004

**In reply refer to:
R&C#: 020378055**

Jim Rost, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE FHWA – POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY – IMN-29-3(62)54—13-78 – COUNCIL BLUFFS
INTERSTATE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS – INTERSTATES 80, 29 & 480 FROM US
HIGHWAY 6 (KANESVILLE BLVD) TO IA HIGHWAY 92 (16TH ST.) – HDR – TIER 1
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Dear Mr. Rost,

We have received and reviewed the draft environmental impact statement document that you submitted to our office concerning the above referenced project. An examination of our records indicates that we have previously received and reviewed information for this proposed project. In our opinion, this document accurately reflects the current status of the consultation process for determining whether any significant historic properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. We look forward to further consulting with your agency and other consulting parties on whether any significant historic properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking.

Please reference the Review and Compliance Number provided above in all future submitted correspondence to our office for this project. We look forward to further consulting with you and the Federal Highway Administration on this project. Should you have any questions please contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,



Douglas W. Jones, Archaeologist
State Historic Preservation Office
State Historical Society of Iowa
(515) 281-4358

cc: Mike LaPietra, FHWA
Kris Reisenberg, NEPA, OLE, IDOT, Ames
Randall Faber, Office of Environmental Services, IDOT, Ames

STATE OF NEBRASKA

JAN 3 2005

Agency Letter #2

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Roger K. Patterson
Director

December 30, 2004

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mike Johanns
Governor

James Rost
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: Interstate 80 Proposed Improvements

Dear Mr. Rost:

The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources has reviewed this proposed project and has the following comments:

Surface Water/Ground Water

No comments.

Floodplain Management

Floodplain management questions for Douglas County should be directed to the Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District. Please call Paul Woodward of that office at (402) 444-6222.]-1

Please call me at (402) 471-3957 if you have any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Steve McMaster in cursive.

Steve McMaster
Water Resources Planner III

cc: Paul Woodward, PMRNRD



U.S. Department
Of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Central Region
Iowa, Kansas
Missouri, Nebraska

901 Locust
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2325

RECEIVED

JAN 18 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Agency Letter #3

January 12, 2005

Mr. James Rost, Director
Office of Location & Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) reviews other federal Agency environmental documents from the perspective of the FAA's area of responsibility; that is, whether the proposal will have affects on aviation and other FAA responsibilities. We generally do not provide comments from an environmental standpoint. Therefore, we have reviewed the material furnished with your letter dated December 16, 2004, concerning Iowa DOT Project No. IM-029-3(62)54-13-78, Council Bluffs Interstate Improvements Project, and have no comments regarding environmental matters.

However, we remind you that you will need to consider whether or not the project will require formal notice and review from an airspace standpoint. The requirements for this notice may be found in Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace. This regulation is contained under Subchapter E, Airspace of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations. We would like to remind you that if any part of the project exceeds notification criteria under FAR Part 77, notice should be filed at least 30 days prior to the proposed construction date. Questions concerning this matter should be directed to Ms. Brenda Mumper at (816) 329-2524.

Sincerely,

Mark H. Schenkelberg, P.E.
Environmental Specialist



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VII
901 NORTH 5TH STREET
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

RECEIVED

JAN 24 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Agency Letter #4

14 JAN 2005

Mr. James P. Rost, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

RE: Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvements Project, Transportation Improvements from Missouri River on I-80 to East of the I-480 Interchange, Tier 1, Pottawattamie County, Iowa and Douglas County, Nebraska

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed improvement of Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvements Project, Tier 1, Pottawattamie County, IA and Douglas County, NE. Our review is provided pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. 4231, Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 C.F.R. Parts 1500-1508, and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. This DEIS was assigned the CEQ number 040588.

The purpose of the proposed improvements for the project is to examine needed transportation improvements in the Study Area that would address existing and future travel demands. Studies that corroborate the need for these improvements include the *Council Bluffs Interstate System Needs Study* (April 1999), and the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency's 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan (Sept. 2001).

EPA has rated this DEIS as "LO", which translates to a "Lack of Objections". EPA believes the draft EIS adequately presents the environmental impacts of alternatives that are reasonably available to address the stated transportation needs. We commend the decision to undertake a tiered approach given the scope and the complexity of the project. EPA offers constructive comments on two specific issues:

Work Zone Impacts

Work zone management can be a cause of significant impacts in transportation infrastructure "Build" Alternatives. EPA recommends that a planning tool such as "QuickZone", (<http://www.tfrc.gov/its/quickzon.htm>) be utilized to consider these impacts and to refine the delineation of Segments, (if the Construction Alternative prevails as the Preferred Alternative). Results of such examination, in terms of potential traffic-delay induced costs to commerce, fuel consumption and degradation of air quality is recommended to be presented in the Tier 1 Final EIS.

This additional analysis, in concert with consideration of other DEIS comments, may assist in determining the degree of National Environmental Policy Act analysis (Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, or Environmental Impact Statement) necessary for the various Segments evaluated in Tier 2 studies.

Soil/Sediment Contamination

The statement on page 3-45: "...no areas in Iowa are known to be included in the area of investigation or the area targeted for cleanup." is accurate at this time. Previous sampling has not shown consistently elevated levels of lead within the study area in Iowa. EPA agrees however, that as second Tier studies are conducted, the construction footprint in Iowa should be sampled for lead.

2

Earthwork planned in the vicinity of the former ASARCO refinery (now Lewis and Clark Landing), or the former Gould Battery plant (now Heartland of America Park), should be coordinated with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. Appropriate contacts for this issue would be Jay Ringenberg, (402) 471-3372, and Dave Haldeman, (402) 471-4219.

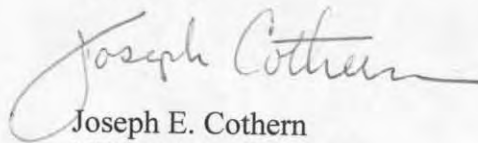
3

Page 4-17 cautions that installing piers in the Missouri River may disturb contaminated sediments. Previous sampling of in-river sediments has shown that they are not contaminated by former metals processing industries.

4

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments regarding this project. If you have any questions, please contact me at (913) 551-7148.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Cothorn
NEPA Team Leader
Environmental Services Division

cc: Edward Kosola, FHWA Nebraska
Jay Ringenberg, NDEQ
Dave Haldeman, NDEQ



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
106 SOUTH 15TH STREET
OMAHA NE 68102-1618
January 25, 2005

RECEIVED
FEB 2 2005
OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Planning, Programs, and Project Management Division

Mr. James P. Rost
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District (Corps) reviewed your letter dated December 30, 2004 regarding the proposed road improvement projects including Interstate 29 and the Broadway Viaduct near Council Bluffs, the Des Moines River and Sioux City, Iowa, Ref. #510. The Corps offers the following comments.

Regarding the I-29/I-80 Council Bluffs Interstate System Study, any changes to the Missouri River left bank levee system at Council Bluffs will require approval from the Corps and the City of Council Bluffs. In addition to the mainline levee along the Missouri River, the Federal levee system at Council Bluffs also includes tieback levees on Indian Creek and Mosquito Creek.

The Missouri River mainline levee at Council Bluffs was designed to provide protection to the 500-year flood level. Any changes to the I-80 bridge or to the left bank levee should be designed for no impact to the 500-year elevations, or the 100-year flood elevations.

Regarding the Broadway Avenue Viaduct project, the Corps recommends that any project produce no change to the existing approach grades along Broadway Avenue east of Eighth Street. Any changes to the approach grades may change the distribution of floodwaters from overflows of Indian Creek and potentially increase flood depths in some areas of the Indian Creek flood plain.

During construction appropriate soil erosion prevention techniques should be used. Your environmental assessment should also include socio-economic impacts, a description of the affected environment, an explanation of alternative options, compliance with environmental statutes, and a description of environmental consequences including air, water, and quality of life.

If U.S. waters are involved, according to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, prior approval is necessary for the discharge of dredge or fill material into U.S. waters including adjacent wetlands or impoundments. Wetlands, characterized by certain types of vegetation, include surface areas flooded some part of most years, or areas saturated during a portion of the growing season. In the absence of wetlands, the landward regulatory water limit is the ordinary high water mark. If any construction meets the above conditions, a permit must first be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. More information regarding Section 404 permits in Iowa can be found at: <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/RegulatoryDivisionHomePage.htm>. Many of

the streams have previously been disturbed; however, there appear to be potential impacts to wetlands on Mosquito Creek, the southern part of Indian Creek, Lake Manawa and the Missouri River. For a detailed review of permit requirements, final project plans should be sent to:

Department of the Army
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rock Island District, Regulatory Branch
Clocktower Building, P.O. 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

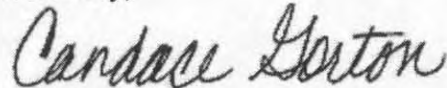
6

Your plans should be coordinated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is currently involved in a program to protect groundwater resources. If you have not already done so, it is recommended that you consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources regarding fish and wildlife resources. In addition, the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office should be contacted for information and recommendations on potential cultural resources in the project area.

7

If you have questions, please contact Ms. Erin Wilson at (402) 221-4882.

Sincerely,



Candace M. Gorton, Chief
Environmental, Economics and
Cultural Resources Section
Planning Branch



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
CLOCK TOWER BUILDING - P.O. BOX 2004
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61204-2004

January 26, 2005

RECEIVED

JAN 31 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Planning, Programs, and
Project Management Division

Mr. James Rost
Director, Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

I received your letter dated December 16, 2004, requesting comments regarding the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (DEIS) for the Council Bluffs Improvement Project. Rock Island District staff reviewed the information you provided and have the following comments:

a. The lands involved are outside the geographic boundaries of the Rock Island District. You must coordinate with the Omaha District to determine if your project involves any Corps administered lands. The address is as follows:

District Engineer
U.S. Army Engineer District, Omaha
106 S 15th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

b. Based on information included in the DEIS and on information you have provided us at our various meetings, this project will require authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Complete applications for the project should be submitted to this office and to our Omaha District as soon as possible. Enclosed is an application for the Rock Island District. Please contact the Omaha District for the proper application for that District. The applications should include wetland delineations, details of impacts to wetlands and other waters of the United States, and types and relative functions of wetlands to be impacted.

As you were previously informed, this office requires your agency to complete sequential mitigation involving an alternatives analysis, minimization of impacts to wetlands, and compensatory mitigation for any unavoidable wetland impacts. We appreciate the initial work you and your staff have done on the sequential mitigation for this project and are pleased with your progress thus far. If you have any questions regarding permit requirements under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, please contact Mr. Neal Johnson of our Regulatory Branch. You may reach Mr. Johnson by writing to our address above, ATTN: Regulatory Branch (Neal Johnson), or by telephoning 309/794-5379.

c. The Responsible Federal Agency should coordinate with Ms. Maria Pandullo, Iowa Historic Preservation Agency, ATTN: Review and Compliance Program, State Historical Society of Iowa, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 to determine impacts to historic properties.

4

d. The Rock Island Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be contacted to determine if any federally listed endangered species are being impacted and, if so, how to avoid or minimize impacts. The Rock Island Field Office address is: 4469 - 48th Avenue Court, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. Mr. Rick Nelson is the Field Supervisor. You can reach him by calling 309/793-5800.

5

e. The Iowa Emergency Management Division should be contacted to determine if the proposed project may impact areas designated as floodway. Mr. Dennis Harper is the Iowa State Hazard Mitigation Team Leader. His address is: Hoover State Office Building, Level A, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. You can reach him by calling 515/281-3231.

6

No other concerns surfaced during our review. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposal. If you need more information, please call Dr. Sandra Brewer of our Economic and Environmental Analysis Branch, telephone 309/794-5171.

You may find additional information about the Corps' Rock Island District on our web site at <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil>. To find out about other Districts within the Corps, you may visit web site: <http://www.usace.army.mil/divdistmap.html>.

Sincerely,



Kenneth A. Barr
Chief, Economic and Environmental
Analysis Branch

Enclosure

- Douglas County, NE
- Bennington
- Boys Town
- Elkhorn
- Omaha
- Omaha City Council
- Ralston
- Valley
- Waterloo
-
- Sarpy County, NE
- Bellevue
- Gretna
- La Vista
- Papillion
- Springfield
-
- Washington County, NE
- Arlington
- Blair
- Fort Calhoun
- Herman
- Kennard
- Washington
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- Mills County, IA
- Emerson
- Glenwood
- Hastings
- Henderson
- Malvern
- Pacific Junction
- Silver City
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- Pottawattamie County, IA
- Avoca
- Carson
- Carter Lake
- Council Bluffs
- Crescent
- Hancock
- Macedonia
- McClelland
- Minden
- Neola
- Oakland
- Treynor
- Underwood
- Walnut
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- Bellevue Public Schools
- Council Bluffs Airport Authority
- Council Bluffs Planning Commission
- Golden Hills Resource Conservation & Development District
- Iowa Western Community College
- Metro Area Transit
- Metropolitan Community College
- Metropolitan Utilities District
- Millard Public Schools
- Millard Suburban Fire District
- Omaha Airport Authority
- Omaha Housing Authority
- Omaha Planning Board
- Omaha Public Power District
- Papillion / La Vista Public Schools
- Papio - Missouri River Natural Resources District
- Pony Creek Drainage District
- Ralston Public Schools
- Valley Fire Protection District #5

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING AGENCY

2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4328
Phone: (402) 444-6866 Fax: (402) 342-0949
Email: mapa@mapacog.org www.mapacog.org
In the MAPA Region: 1-800-827-6866



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JAN 31 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

January 27, 2005

James Rost
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: MAPA CASE #2005-014 - Iowa DOT, NDOR
Bellevue Bridge Study (DEIS)

MAPA CASE #2005-015 - Iowa DOT, NDOR
Council Bluffs Interstate System
Improvement Project (DEIS)

Dear Mr. Rost:

Enclosed is a copy of the MAPA Board action concerning the projects listed above.
Thank you for the opportunity to review these projects.

Sincerely,

Alene A. Ramsey
Alene A. Ramsey
Administrative Services Director

AAR/drv

Enclosures

OMAHA-COUNCIL BLUFFS METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING AGENCY

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2005 - 018

WHEREAS, the members of the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) Board of Directors have been formally designated by their respective legislative bodies to act as the official representative in planning matters of mutual concern; and

WHEREAS, the following application has been submitted to MAPA in accordance with Executive Order 12372 for intergovernmental review and coordination; and

WHEREAS, MAPA has given due consideration to said project; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that MAPA finds the project to be consistent with area-wide planning and forwards favorable comment along with the following additional considerations to the applicant. 1

"1. The College World Series and other important local events should be considered in the scheduling of construction along Interstate 80 in the final alternative selected. 2

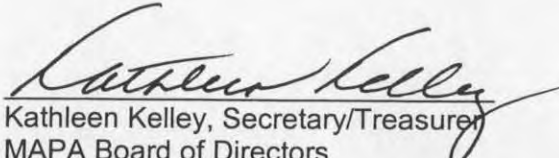
2. The scheduling of any construction on the Missouri River Bridge on Interstate 80 should be coordinated with construction on the South Omaha Bridge (US 275, Iowa and Nebraska State Highways 92) so that both bridges are not simultaneously under construction. 3

3. Sufficient provision of alternate routes should be made during construction undertaken on the Council Bluffs Interstate System." 4

MAPA CASE #2005-015

Iowa DOT, NDOR
Council Bluffs Interstate Improvement Project
(DEIS)

PASSED this 27th day of January, 2005


Kathleen Kelley, Secretary/Treasurer
MAPA Board of Directors

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander
Eighth Coast Guard District

1222 Spruce Street
St. Louis, MO 63103-2832
Staff Symbol: obr
Phone: (314)539-3900 Ext
Fax: (314)539-3755
Email: @cgstl.uscg.mil

RECEIVED

FEB 11 2005

16591.1/613.9± MOR
February 3, 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Mr. James Rost, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Subj: I-80 COMPANION BRIDGE, MILE 613.9±, MISSOURI RIVER

Dear Mr. Rost:

We have completed our review of the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the subject project. The document will support an application for a Coast Guard Bridge Permit. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please call Mr. Bruce McLaren at the above telephone number.

1

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. K. Wiebusch".

ROGER K. WIEBUSCH
Bridge Administrator
By direction of the District Commander



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
106 SOUTH 15TH STREET
OMAHA NE 68102-1618

February 15, 2005

RECEIVED
FEB 18 2005
OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Planning, Programs, and Project Management Division

Mr. James P. Rost, Director
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Rost:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, (Corps) reviewed your letter dated December 16, 2004 regarding the Council Bluffs Improvement Projects Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and offers the following comments.

It appears the project areas lay within both the Corps, Omaha District and Rock Island District civil works and regulatory boundaries; therefore, the Corps will offer comments on both civil works and regulatory issues in the proposed project areas.

It is recommended you continue to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources as Tier 2 National Environmental Policy Act studies are initiated. In addition, the State Historic Preservation Office should be contacted for information and recommendations on potential cultural resources in the project areas.

Construction activities that involve work in waters of the United States require a Section 404 permit. As mentioned previously, the project areas lay within both the Omaha District and Rock Island District regulatory boundaries. Both agencies should be contacted to determine the appropriate permitting District. For a detailed review of permit requirements, final project plans should be sent to the addresses below.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wehrspann Office: Rabbe
8901 South 154th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68138-3621

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Rock Island District Regulatory
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204

If you have questions, please contact Ms. Lauren Deane of our staff at (402) 221-3803.

Sincerely,

Candace Gorton

Candace Gorton, Chief
Environmental, Economics and
Cultural Resources Section
Planning Branch

RECEIVED

FEB 28 2005



OMAHA AIRPORT AUTHORITY

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

P.O. Box 19103 Eppley Airfield Omaha, NE 68119 Phone 402/661-8000 Fax 402/661-8025 www.eppleyairfield.com

February 25, 2005

Mr. James P. Rost, Director
Office of Location & Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Subject: Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvements Project
Pottawattamie County, Iowa and Douglas County, Nebraska
Project Number: IM-029-3(62)54--13-78

Dear Mr. Rost:

Thank you for the opportunity for the Omaha Airport Authority to comment on the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the subject project. The following are comments based on our review:

1. New construction should be in compliance with the Pottawattamie County Zoning Ordinance and Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace, concerning Eppley Airfield.]-1
2. Submit the proper FAA Airspace forms for equipment such as cranes.]-2
3. New construction should not create wetland areas off the runway ends of Eppley Airfield.]-3

Sincerely,

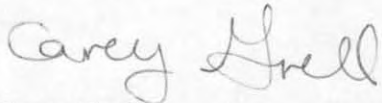
David L. Roth, P.E.
Director of Planning and Engineering

xc: Anna Lannin, NDA

will adversely affect and threatened or endangered species, however final determinations will be made after biological studies are completed in Tier 2. We look forward to reviewing further biological studies as well as any surveys that are completed for threatened and endangered species for the Nebraska segments, such as those proposed for the bald eagle, western prairie fringed orchid, and ginseng. 3

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. If you have any questions, please contact me at (402) 471-5423.

Sincerely,



Carey Grell
Environmental Analyst
Realty and Environmental Services Division

cc: Steve Anschutz, USFWS
Art Yonkey, NDOR
Troy Rahmig, NGPC



Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

2200 N. 33rd St. / P.O. Box 30370 / Lincoln, NE 68503-0370

Phone: 402-471-0641 / Fax: 402-471-5528 / www.outdoornebraska.org

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MAR 07 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

February 28, 2005

James Rost
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Council Bluffs Interstate Improvement Project, Douglas County, Nebraska and Pottawattamie County, Iowa

Dear Mr. Rost:

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) staff members have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Council Bluffs Interstate Improvement Project. Based on Tier 1 evaluation, the Construction alternative, which includes reconstruction of all or part of the interstate along the existing alignment in the Study Corridor. Because the Construction alternative is a long-term improvement that will be implemented in five segments over time, individual NEPA documents will be prepared for each of the segments during Tier 2. The Tier 2 NEPA documents will summarize the incorporated mitigation measures and reflect engineering and environmental studies in further detail and identify the preferred mainline concept and interchanges for each segment.

Section 4.2.3 indicates that approximately 57 acres of wetlands exist within the construction area of the entire project, but that a smaller number of acres would actually be impacted because the preferred alternative includes more than one conceptual alignment in some segments. We look forward to reviewing the Tier 2 NEPA documents for the Nebraska segments once the preferred alignment concept is chosen, and the location, type, and amount of wetland impacts are specified. With regard to wetland mitigation, Section 4.2.3 indicates that wetland impacts due to the project in Nebraska would be mitigated at selected wetland mitigation bank sites at a ratio greater than or equal to 1:1. We feel the DEIS should also include discussion of the feasibility of on-site wetland mitigation, as well as the discussion of the use of a wetland mitigation bank. In general, we encourage the use of on-site mitigation when feasible. Wetlands in the project area provide many localized benefits such as improved water quality and habitat.

As stated in a previous letter (dated March 15, 2002 from Julie Godberson to HDR Engineering), the pallid sturgeon, lake sturgeon, sturgeon chub, bald eagle, ginseng, and western prairie fringed orchid have been observed, collected, or otherwise are likely to be found in Douglas County. The pallid sturgeon is state and federally endangered, the bald eagle and western prairie fringed orchid are state and federally threatened, the lake sturgeon and ginseng are state threatened, and the sturgeon chub is state endangered. Section 4.2.6 indicates that it is not likely that the project



RECEIVED
MAR 14 2005
OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30341-3724

March 2, 2005

Mr. James P. Roast, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Roast:

We have completed our review of the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Council Bluffs Improvemnt Project. We are responding on behalf of the U.S. Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

We agree that this project should have overall positive effects by reducing traffic congestion and improving public safety conditions. We also noted that this project seems consistent with other statewide and regional traffic planning recommendations. 1

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this DEIS. Please send us a copy of the FEIS when it becomes available, as well as, copies of any future environmental impact statements which may indicate potential public health impacts and are developed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). 2

Sincerely,

Paul Joe, DO, MPH
Medical Officer
National Center for Environmental Health (F16)
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention



RECEIVED

MAR 24 2005

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Michael J. Linder

Director

Suite 400, The Atrium

1200 'N' Street

P.O. Box 98922

Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-8922

Phone (402) 471-2186

FAX (402) 471-2909

Mike Johanns
Governor

March 9, 2005

James Rost, Director
Iowa Dept. of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: Council Bluffs Improvement Project – Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Rost:

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) has reviewed the above referenced project. As with any facility, permits may be required prior to beginning construction or operation. At minimum, you should be aware of the following possible requirements:

--Asbestos Issues and Building Demolition or Renovation--

The project would be subject to the Asbestos regulation of both our office and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). You should be aware that HHS regulations are more stringent. At a minimum, because it is a demolition and/or renovation project that is not exempted, you are required to conduct an inspection for asbestos (using a certified inspector), legally remove the asbestos if it meets the regulatory criteria, and provide a demolition notification to NDEQ at least 10 days before commencing the demolition or renovation, per Nebraska Air Quality Regulations, Title 129, Chapter 23.

1

--Land Clearing and Construction Activities--

The project would need approval by the Director of NDEQ before any open burning could be used for the disposal of any land clearing and construction debris, per Nebraska Air Quality Regulations, Title 129, Chapter 30.

2

You must also deposit all the building debris and waste at a licensed solid waste or construction and demolition waste management facility (per Integrated Solid Waste Management Regulations, Title 132).


3

	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Asbestos	Doug Gillespie, HHS	(402) 471-0548
Open Burning	Renee Hancock	(402) 471-6412
Integrated Solid Waste Management	Morgan Leibrandt	(402) 471-1744

We strongly urge the project sponsors to make contact with the Department should any permits be required. It has been our experience that early and open communication helps facilitate the permitting process.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (402) 471-8697.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Stirts". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Hugh Stirts, PhD
NEPA Coordinator



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240



MAR 15 2005

ER 05/35

Mr. Philip Barnes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
105 Sixth Street
Ames, Iowa 50010-6337

Dear Mr. Barnes:

As requested, the Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the **Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvements Project along I-80, I-29, and I-480**, Pottawattamie County, Iowa; and Douglas County, Nebraska. The Department offers the following comments for your consideration:

Section 4(f) Comments

The Department has reviewed the Tier 1 draft EIS for the potential for impacts to properties that may be eligible for consideration under section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 303). We would agree with the identification of the potential 4(f) properties as they are presented in the draft EIS. Most of the potential impacts to 4(f) properties are due to the rather constrained nature of the project corridor, and construction of avoidance alternatives outside the project area would be cost prohibitive. We would agree that impacts to individual properties should be considered for each proposed segment of improvement as they are developed in the future, as long as methods for avoidance of 4(f) properties are considered for each segment. We, therefore, have no specific objections to the project.

1

Section 6(f) Comments

We have reviewed this project in relation to any possible conflicts with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) and Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) programs. We have found L&WCF project 19-00939, Playland Park, Pottawattamie County, Iowa, and project 31-00142, Spring Lake Park, Douglas County, Nebraska, would be affected.

2

Mr. Philip Barnes

2

We recommend you consult directly with the officials who administer the L&WCF program in the States of Iowa and Nebraska to determine any potential conflicts with Section 6(f)(3) of the L&WCF Act (Public Law 88-578, as amended). This section states:

"No property acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall, without the approval of the Secretary [of the Interior], be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the then existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as he deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location."

The administrator for the L&WCF program in Iowa is Ms. Kathleen Moench, Federal Aid Coordinator, Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, East Ninth Street and Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319. The administrator for the L&WCF program in Nebraska is Mr. Neal Bedlan, Federal Aid Coordinator, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, P.O. Box 30370, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68503-0370.

The Department has a continuing interest in working with the Federal Highway Administration, the Nebraska Department of Roads, and the Iowa Department of Transportation to ensure impacts to resources of concern to the Department are adequately addressed. For matters related to section 4(f), please contact the Regional Environmental Coordinator, National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, telephone 402-661-1844. For matters related to section 6(f) (L&WCF and UPARR) programs, please contact Outdoor Recreation Planners Dan Wiley (Nebraska) in the same office, telephone 402-661-1572 or Roger A. Knowlton (Iowa) in the same office, telephone 402-661-1558.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,



Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

cc: (next page)

Mr. Philip Barnes

3

cc:

**Mr. Arthur Yonkey
Planning and Project Development Engineer
Nebraska Department of Roads
1500 Highway 2
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4759**

**Mr. James P. Rost, Director
Office of Location and Environment
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010**

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

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