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West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Iowa 57) Improvements  
Union Road to Hudson Road  
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Project Number  
STP-U-1185(625)--70-07

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Submitted Pursuant to 42 USC 4332(2)(c)

By The


**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Office of Location and Environment

And

**CITY OF CEDAR FALLS, IOWA**

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.

  
For the Iowa Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration

  
Director, Office of Location and Environment  
Iowa Department of Transportation

  
Date of Approval  
For Public Availability

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## **I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed project consists of upgrading West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Iowa 57), located in Cedar Falls, Iowa, from the current two-lane roadway to a three- to five-lane facility. The project corridor passes through a mix of residential, commercial and agricultural land uses at the western edge of Cedar Falls. The project would begin just west of North Union Road and extend east to Hudson Road for a total length of approximately 1.6 miles (Figure 1).

The new roadway would consist of a three-lane cross section from just west of Union Road to just west of Lake Ridge Drive. It would then widen to a five-lane cross section, including a center left-turn lane. From this point east to Hudson Road, the new roadway would consist of a five-lane urban cross-section. The roadway would include curb and gutter along its length. A 10-ft wide recreational trail would be constructed on the north side of the new roadway. A 5-ft sidewalk on the south side would be accommodated for, but not constructed at this time.

One proposed detour during construction would be Union Road south to West 12<sup>th</sup> Street, then east to Hudson Road and finally north to West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The length of time for a detour will be minimized as much as possible so that local business owners are not inconvenienced long. Continuous access to businesses in the project area will be provided throughout construction of the project.

The proposed project would not significantly affect access to existing businesses and properties along West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The proposed improvements are expected to improve system continuity, reduce traffic congestion and increase traffic capacity on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

planned development would be completed. In consultation with city officials, a "mid-growth" scenario was determined to represent the most probable level of development. This scenario assumed that approximately one-half of the potential residential areas would be developed, along with some new commercial development.

Based on the mid-growth development, future traffic projections for the year 2025 are shown in Figure 2. Volumes are expected to increase to approximately 13,500 vehicles per day west of Magnolia Drive and 19,400 vehicles per day east of Magnolia Drive. Traffic volumes of this magnitude indicate the need for increased traffic capacity on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

### **TRAFFIC OPERATIONS AND LEVEL OF SERVICE**

The existing West 1<sup>st</sup> Street roadway frequently experiences traffic operational problems during peak hours of the day. At intersections with heavier volumes of turning traffic, such as Magnolia Drive, the two-lane road frequently becomes blocked by vehicles waiting to turn left. Traffic at Magnolia Drive has been reported to back up all the way to Hudson Road, a distance of over 2,000 feet. In addition, drivers are frequently observed driving on the shoulder to bypass a line of left-turning vehicles.

Traffic operational conditions are commonly expressed in terms of the "Level of Service." Levels of service are designated as Levels A through F, with Level A representing an uncongested, free-flow condition and Level F representing heavily congested conditions with stop-and-go traffic. New roadway facilities are typically designed to operate at a Level of Service C or better.

Based on existing traffic volumes, most of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street is currently operating at a Level of Service B or C, with some areas being lower during peak traffic conditions. As this area continues to develop, the Level of Service is projected to decline to Level F because of increasing traffic volumes, unless the roadway is widened.

The Preferred Alternative (which includes widening to three lanes west of Lake Ridge Drive, and widening to five lanes east of that point) would accommodate the projected Year 2025 traffic volumes at a Level of Service C or better.

**TRAFFIC SAFETY**

During the 5-year period from 1995 to 1999, a total of 94 crashes were reported in this segment of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Table 1). Included were 31 crashes with reported injuries. In the summer of 2002, a broadside crash occurred that resulted in two fatalities. In addition, two bicycle crashes and one pedestrian collision occurred, all causing injuries. The overall traffic crash rate on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street is approximately 431 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. This crash rate exceeds the statewide average of 123 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles on rural highways, but is less than the "urban highway" average of 467 crashes per 100 million vehicles miles.

**TABLE 1**  
**CRASH SUMMARY 1995-1999**  
**WEST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET CORRIDOR**

Intersection	Rear-End W. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	Rear-End Side Street	Broadside	Animal	Other (1)	Total	Property Damage Value Loss	Fatalities	Injury Accidents (2)
Union Road	2	0	5	0	0	7	23,900	0	3
Shirley Street	1	0	0	7	1	9	16,500	0	0
Stanley Street	0	0	1	0	1	2	13,000	0	2
Le Clair Street	0	0	0	1	1	2	3,800	0	1
Lake Ridge Drive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Magnolia Drive	1	0	0	4	0	5	7,500	0	0
Highland Drive	3	0	2	6	0	11	27,700	0	2
Hudson Road	4	1	1	8	1	15	23,500	0	4
	3	0	6	0	1	10	22,200	0	7
	4	1	0	1	1	7	24,100	0	3
	4	0	2	0	0	6	13,000	0	4
	3	0	1	0	2	6	4,900	0	3
	5	2	6	1	0	14	28,600	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>208,700</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>

(1) Other crashes include those caused by out-of-control vehicles, collisions with objects or unknown causes.  
 (2) Includes possible injuries.

Although West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (which is also Iowa 57) is located within the city limits of Cedar Falls, the entire existing roadway resembles a rural highway with granular shoulders and no curbs. In comparison to other rural highways in Iowa, the crash rate on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street is considerably higher than the state-wide average.

It is noted that 54 of the total crashes (over 57 percent) were either rear-end collisions or broadside collisions. Many of these collisions are characteristic of those which occur at congested intersections, or locations without adequate turning lanes.

Improvements in the traffic capacity and design characteristics of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street would be expected to improve traffic safety by eliminating substandard design features, providing refuge for turning vehicles, accommodating pedestrians and bicycles, and by reducing delays and reducing driver impatience.

## **DESIGN STANDARDS**

The existing roadway on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street was originally constructed in 1916, then reconstructed in the 1960s, based on the design standards in effect at that time. The road is currently signed for 55 mph to the west of Lake Ridge Road, 45 mph between Lake Ridge Road and Highland Drive and 30 mph from Highland Drive to Hudson Road.

Some of the design features of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street do not meet current design standards for a 50 mph design speed and would be upgraded as part of the project. Specific features to be upgraded include:

- One horizontal curve on the project is currently signed for a reduced speed of 40 mph and would be flattened out to accommodate the proposed speed limit of 45 mph.
- Several "crests" (hills) and "sags" (valleys) in the roadway profile are too sharp for current design standards for a 50 mph design speed. These would be flattened out to meet current standards.
- The intersections at Magnolia Drive, Eagle Ridge Road, LeClair Street and Union Road would be upgraded by accommodating truck-turning paths where needed, adding right-turn lanes in some locations and adding protected left-turn movements on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street.
- Some obstructions, such as trees and utility poles, are present within the "clear zone" and would be removed or relocated. The "clear zone" is the roadside border area available for safe use by errant vehicles.
- No accommodations are present for pedestrians or bicycles. The proposed project would include a new multi-purpose recreational trail.

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the traffic capacity and traffic safety on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Union Road and Hudson Road.

The need for the project is supported by:

- Increasing Traffic Volumes
- Ongoing Development in Areas Adjacent to West 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- The Need to Improve Traffic Safety
- Inadequate Design Standards on the Existing Roadway



### III. ALTERNATIVES

The West 1<sup>st</sup> Street project extends from North Union Road to Hudson Road, a distance of approximately 1.6 miles. The current roadway in this segment is a two-lane roadway with nine at-grade intersections and some private accesses. It has a pavement width of 24 ft, with shoulders approximately 4- to 6-ft wide.

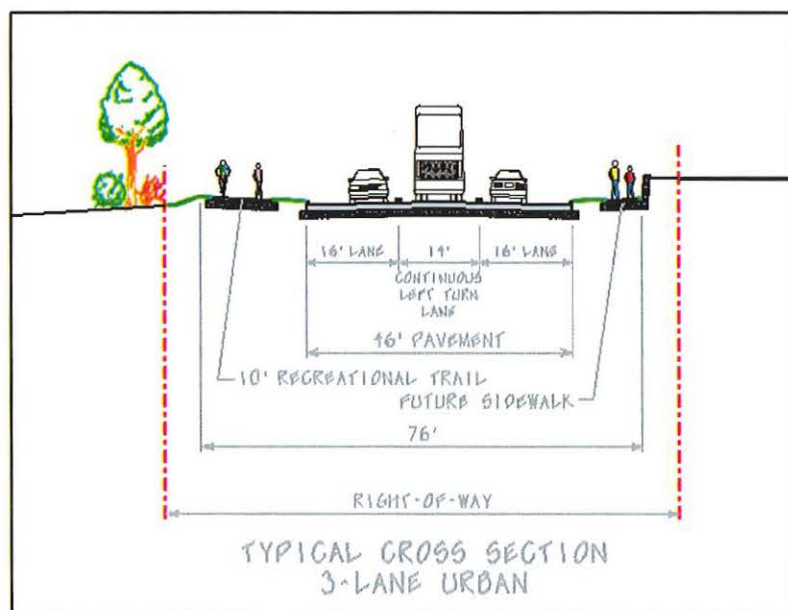
Alternatives considered for this project include a three-lane option, a four-/five-lane option and No Action. Considering current and future land use, traffic safety, traffic volumes and future traffic forecasts, a Preferred Alternative was developed that best meets the future needs in the West 1<sup>st</sup> Street corridor. The Preferred Alternative and other alternatives considered are described below.

#### PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE (Figure 3)

The Preferred Alternative consists of reconstructing the existing two-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway from Union Road to just west of Lake Ridge Drive, then reconstructing to a four-/five-lane roadway east to Hudson Road. A paved, 10-ft wide recreational trail would be located on the north side of the new roadway from Union Road to Hudson Road. The proposed recreational trail is part of the Cedar Falls Recreational Trail Plan dated January 24, 2001. This plan shows future trails along Union Road and Hudson Road which would tie into the proposed trail along West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The project will also accommodate a future 5-ft wide sidewalk on the south side of the roadway. The sidewalk is not anticipated to be constructed at the same time as the new roadway. As development occurs and a future need is identified, the sidewalk may be constructed without significant grading or purchasing of additional right-of-way.

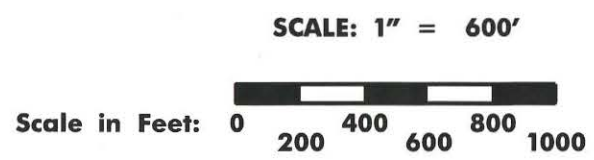
As part of this project, the roadway curvature, profile, intersection layouts and roadside clear zones would also be upgraded to meet current design standards.

The three-lane section would be 46 ft wide from back-of-curb to back-of-curb and would include a continuous left-turn lane (CLTL). See Figure at right for individual lane widths. Total width of this section, including the recreational trail and future sidewalk, is 76 ft. Access at Shirley Street, Stanley Street and LeClair Street would remain the same as it is currently, but some regrading of these intersections may be needed to meet the new roadway. Figure 4 shows the Preferred Alternative at Shirley Street. The Preferred Alternative would also be this configuration at Stanley Street, LeClair Street and Union Road.





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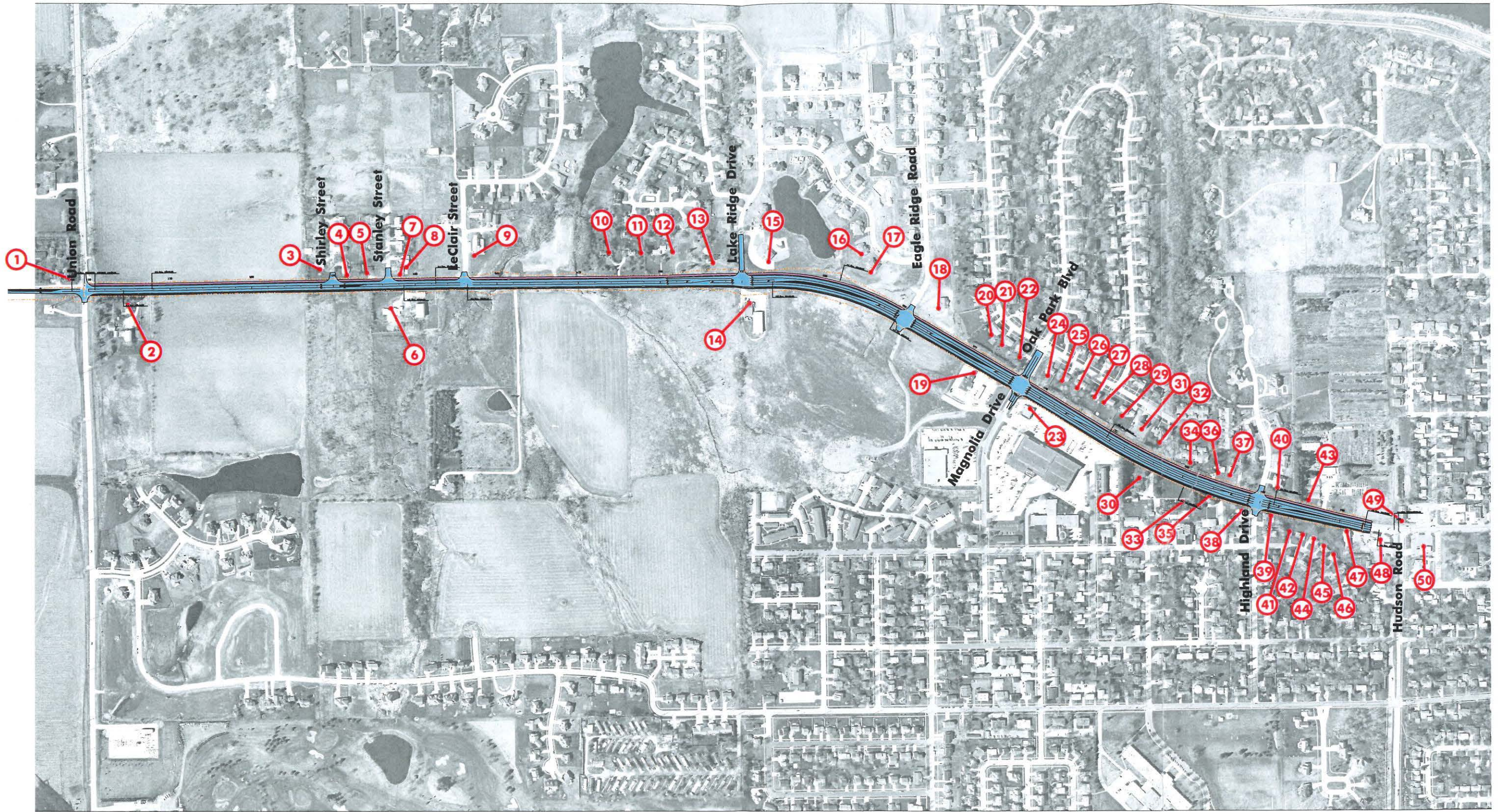


Note: Access Locations to individual properties will be determined at the time of final design.

EARTH  TECH

**Figure 3**  
**Preferred Alternative**  
West First Street (Iowa Hwy. 57) Environmental Assessment  
City of Cedar Falls, Iowa  
March 2003 55285





SCALE: 1" = 600'



Figure 6

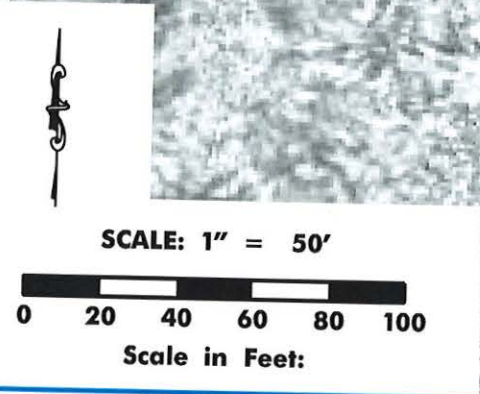
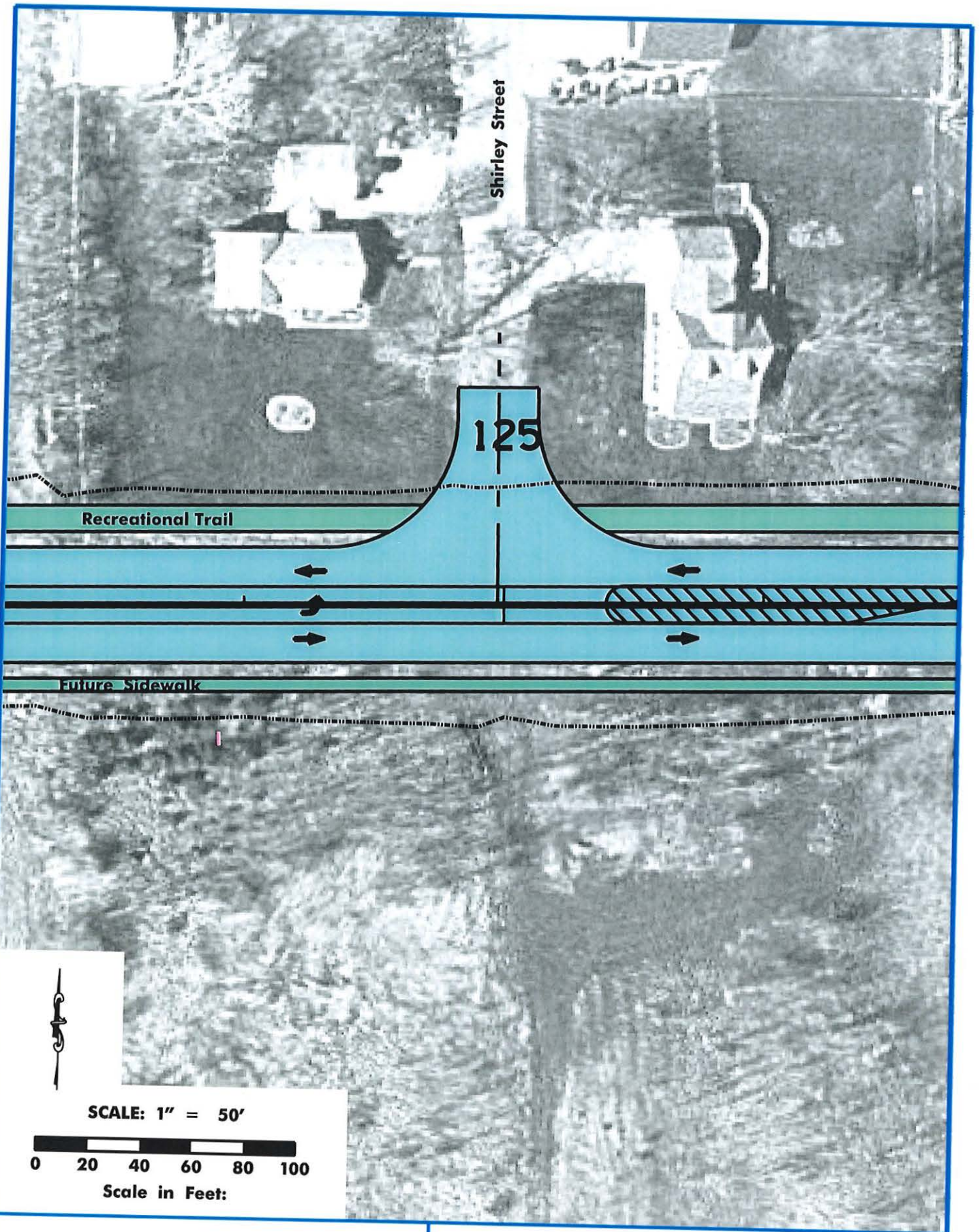
Noise Receiver Locations

West First Street (Iowa Hwy. 57) Environmental Assessment  
City of Cedar Falls, Iowa

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E A R T H  T E C H

**Figure 4**  
**Shirley Street Intersection**  
**(showing 3-lane configuration)**

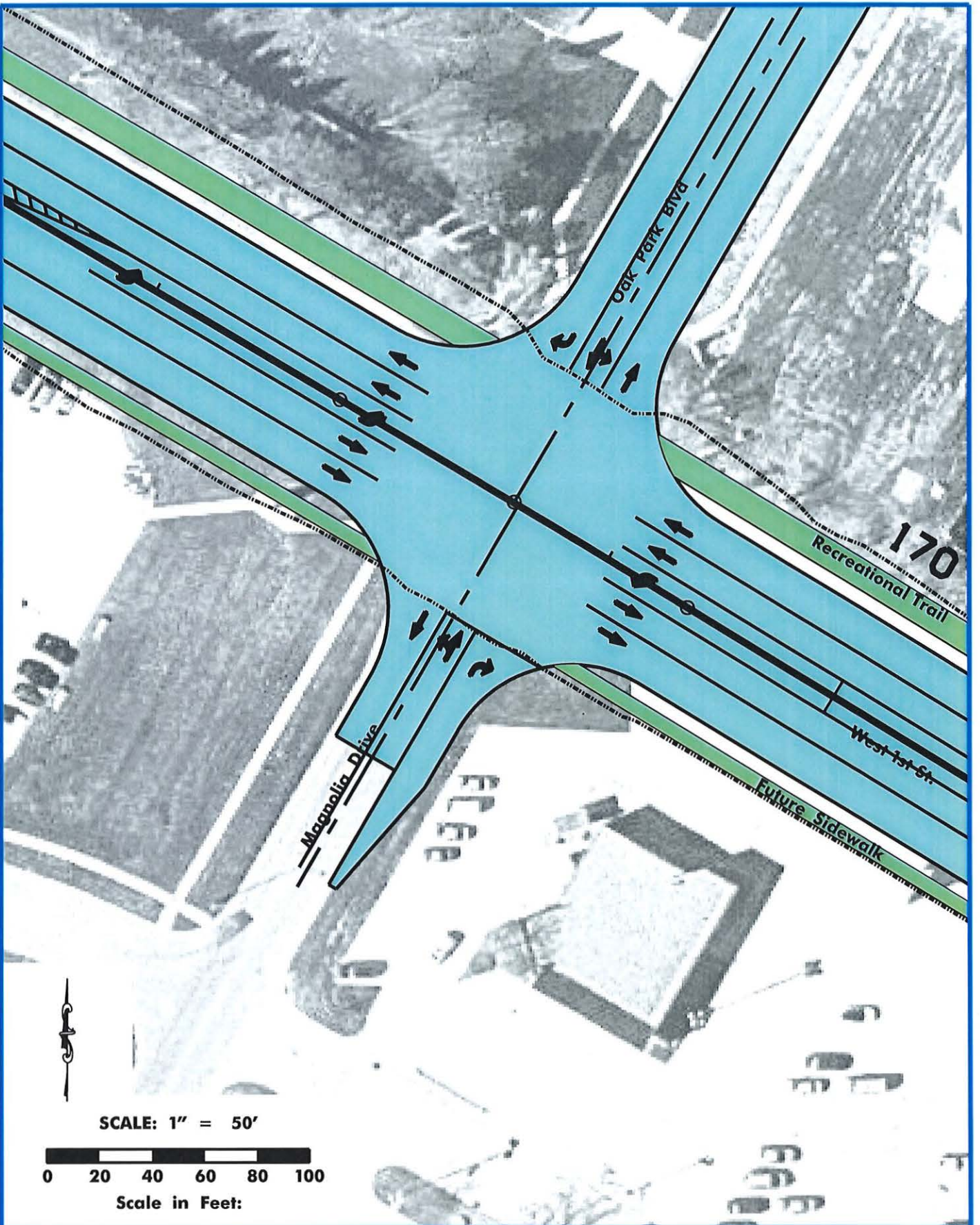
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City of Cedar Falls, Iowa

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**Figure 5**  
**Magnolia Drive Intersection**  
**(showing 5-lane configuration)**

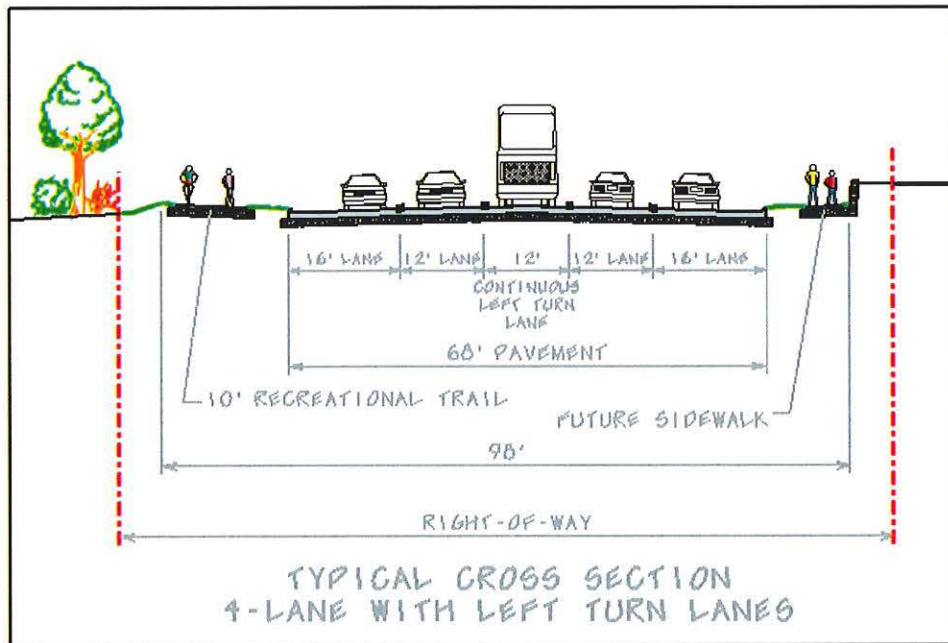
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March 2003

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Beginning 480 ft west of Lake Ridge Drive, the roadway would transition to a four-/five-lane roadway. This section would be 68 ft wide from back-of-curb to back-of-curb and would include a continuous left-turn lane (CLTL). See figure below for individual lane widths. Total width of this portion of the project, including the recreational trail and future sidewalk, is 98 ft. Access to Magnolia Drive and Hudson Road would remain as they are currently. Existing traffic signals at Magnolia Drive would be replaced as part of this project. Highland Drive would be upgraded to a signalized intersection in the future to improve access for residents living off this and neighboring side streets. Figure 5 illustrates the Preferred Alternative at Magnolia Drive. This same lane configuration would be used at Highland Drive, Eagle Ridge Road and Lake Ridge Drive.



Access to several individual properties is currently provided onto West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Revisions to existing access points will be evaluated during the final design. All properties currently having access will continue to be provided access onto the public street system.

## **OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

### **Three-Lane Alternative**

This alternative would consist of a new three-lane roadway from Union Road to Hudson Road. The center lane would serve as a continuous left-turn lane. Other features of this alternative would be similar to the Preferred Alternative.

The roadway would be 46 ft wide from back-of-curb to back-of-curb, with an overall width of 76 ft, including the recreational trail and sidewalk.

A three-lane roadway can normally accommodate traffic volumes in the range of 15,000 vehicles per day, while a volume of 19,000 vehicles per day would be near the upper limit of traffic that can be carried on a three-lane roadway. Traffic forecasts of approximately 19,000 vehicles per day are anticipated for a "mid-growth" condition along West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, while any higher growth would exceed that limit. Since the anticipated growth would generate traffic at or slightly above a three-lane road capacity, and since even more growth is expected in the future according to the developers, this alternative was eliminated from further consideration because it did not meet the project purpose and need.

### **Continuous Five-Lane Alternative**

This alternative would consist of a roadway with four lanes from Union Road to Hudson Road, plus a continuous center turn lane. This would result in a five-lane cross section with a width of 68 ft from back-of-curb to back-of-curb. Overall width would be approximately 98 ft total. The overall width includes the recreational trail and future sidewalk. Other features of this alternative are similar to the Preferred Alternative.

In the westerly segment of this project, traffic forecasts are estimated to be from 9,000 to 13,000 vehicles per day between Union Road and Lake Ridge Road, assuming a medium-range of growth. Since these traffic volumes can easily be accommodated on a three-lane roadway, a five-lane road is not warranted in this segment. Therefore, a continuous five-lane alternative was eliminated from further consideration.

### **No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative would be the continuation of the street system as it exists at the present time. No physical changes would be made in the pavement width, lane configuration, intersection layouts or traffic patterns.

The No Action Alternative, while having fewer environmental impacts such as land acquisition and relocations, would not be consistent with regional planning efforts and West 1<sup>st</sup> Street's (Iowa 57) intended function as a route of regional and local importance.

If no changes are made to the existing street system, it is expected that traffic congestion and traffic-related crashes on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street will continue to increase in proportion to future traffic volume increases. The existing street is incapable of handling any significant increase in traffic volume. In addition, the existing intersections on West 1<sup>st</sup> Street are also incapable of safely handling the future traffic volumes. Therefore, a portion of the future traffic would need to find alternative routes. Some of this traffic would be expected to divert onto other streets throughout the community.

For these reasons, the No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need requirements of this project. It is, nevertheless, carried forward as a detailed study alternative to serve as a baseline for comparison of the Preferred Alternative.



## IV. PROJECT IMPACTS

### SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

#### Population Characteristics

The project is located in Black Hawk County (population 128,012) in the community of Cedar Falls (population 36,257). The project passes through approximately 1.6 miles of the northwest portion of Cedar Falls. Census Tract 26.03, which includes Block Groups 2 and 3, covers the entire project corridor. Data from these census subdivisions were used to characterize the project corridor population. This information is summarized in Table 2.

**TABLE 2  
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS FOR CEDAR FALLS  
WEST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET (IOWA 57)**

	Black Hawk County	Cedar Falls	Census Tract 26.03	Block Group 2	Block Group 3
Population	128,012	36,257	7,570	1,162	3,200
White	113,117	34,570	7,249	1,073	3,054
Black	9,871	400	48	0	40
American Indian and Alaskan Native	276	166	58	0	31
Asian	1,316	569	125	83	9
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	56	22	0	0	0
Other	1,279	125	3	0	0
Median Household Income	\$37,266	\$40,226	\$53,942	\$74,135	\$51,308
Income Below Poverty Level (%)	16,050 (13%)	5,284 (17%)	989 (13%)	39 (3%)	317 (10%)
Median Housing Value	\$76,200	\$97,400	\$151,600	\$197,100	\$149,000

Source: U.S. Census Summary Tape Files 1 and 3A, 2000.

The populations of Census Tract 26.03 and Block Groups 2 and 3 have a higher median household income and, according to the U.S. Census Bureau Poverty Thresholds, all have a lower percentage of persons below the poverty level when compared to the city and county populations. Approximately 3.2 percent of persons in Tract 26.03 population, 7 percent of persons in the Block Group 2 population and 2.5 percent in Block Group 3 are considered a minority, compared to 3.5 percent for Cedar Falls and 10 percent for Black Hawk County as a whole.

Overall, the proposed action is not expected to cause significant adverse impacts to the social and economic character of the area. The economy of the area may be enhanced by this project through improved access and decreased travel time between destinations. This, in turn, may attract new businesses and residential communities to the area.

#### Environmental Justice

On February 11, 1994, President Clinton issued an Executive Order on Environmental Justice 12898. The Executive Order requires all federal agencies to address the impact of their programs with respect to

environmental justice. The Executive Order states that, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, neither minority nor low-income populations may receive disproportionately high and adverse impacts as a result of a proposed project. It also requires that representatives of any low-income or minority populations that could be affected by the project in the community be given the opportunity to be included in the impact assessment and public involvement process.

Based upon the information presented in the above section, Socioeconomic Characteristics, the proposed project would not adversely impact low-income or minority populations.

The public involvement process described in Section VII, Comments and Coordination, was inclusive of all residents and population groups in the study area. All potentially affected property owners were individually invited to attend all public meetings. The public involvement process did not exclude any person because of income, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or handicap.

### **Land Use**

Along the project corridor, land use is primarily devoted to mixed residential and commercial uses, with agricultural land use at the west end. The Magnolia Drive area is devoted to neighborhood business uses. Some of these businesses at Magnolia Drive include a gas station with convenience store and restaurant, grocery store, variety/drug store and dry cleaner. Other businesses are located near Hudson Road, while a few are scattered further west in the project.

Future land use along West 1<sup>st</sup> Street is shown to be low-density residential for large portions of the area north of the roadway. Low-density residential is shown south of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the western portion of the project. Regional commercial development is indicated south of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the vicinity of Lake Ridge, Eagle Ridge and Magnolia Drive. Neighborhood commercial land uses are projected at the Union Road and West 1<sup>st</sup> Street intersection. The city of Cedar Falls has indicated that the proposed project is consistent with existing and future land-use designations.

The proposed project would not negatively impact current or future land uses along the West 1<sup>st</sup> Street corridor.

### **Right-of-Way Impacts**

Preliminary right-of-way estimates show that approximately 4.4 ac of new right-of-way would be required to accommodate the Preferred Alternative. Of this total, approximately 1 ac is farmland.

Access to existing businesses and properties would remain similar to existing conditions and should not be negatively affected by the proposed project. Acquisition of one (1) residence may be required near the intersection of South Highland Drive and West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. If desired by the property owner, this house could be relocated within the limits of the existing property. This two-story house, built in 1920, is currently used as a parsonage for the Christian Reformed Church of Cedar Falls. A historic architecture survey of this property determined it is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Final determination on this acquisition would be made during final design.

The Preferred Alternative would require the acquisition of land from approximately 37 properties of the 60 total located along West 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Union Road and Hudson Road. Of these 37 properties, 9 are commercial and 28 are residential properties. The Preferred Alternative would require new right-of-way from individual properties ranging from approximately 60 sq ft to 0.84 ac. Most properties that

would experience a right-of-way acquisition would have 20 ft or less acquired from the edge of their property. A few parcels would have as much as 40 ft acquired for construction of the proposed project.

It is the policy of the state of Iowa that displaced individuals receive fair and equitable treatment and do not suffer disproportionately from highway projects planned for the public as a whole. Persons required to move as a result of this or any highway project are eligible for relocation assistance and may be eligible for moving assistance, supplemental replacement housing payments, and reimbursement for other expenses incurred in purchasing replacement housing. A relocation assistance agent will work with each relocatee to smooth the transition.

The city of Cedar Falls' acquisition and relocation program will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646), as amended, by the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987. The program provides relocation resources to all residential and business relocates without discrimination.

### **Farmland Impacts**

A minor amount of farmland will be impacted as a result of this project. A total of approximately 1 ac of farmland would be acquired on the edge of the two farm fields. For this small amount of agricultural land, a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (AD-1006) was not completed.

## **AIR QUALITY AND NOISE IMPACTS**

### **Air Quality**

Air quality impacts of this project are expected to be very minor. There would be temporary air quality impacts during construction of the project. Standard construction specifications require contractors to comply with state regulations, including limitations on generation of fugitive dust.

This project is in an area where the State Implementation Plan does not contain any transportation control measures. Therefore, the conformity procedures of 23 CFR 770 do not apply to this project.

### **Noise Impacts**

This section presents the analysis of the potential noise impacts generated by the proposed project. A comparison of existing (2002) and future (design year 2025) noise levels is made.

#### **Land Use**

Noise-sensitive locations in the project area consist mostly of residences located along the project area. Several businesses are located throughout the corridor. The terrain surrounding the western part of the corridor consists mostly of gently rolling hills, whereas the eastern portion consists of level ground.

#### **Noise Fundamentals**

Noise levels are described by a logarithmic scale in units of decibels (dB). The A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) approximates human perception of the overall noise spectrum and is therefore used in most noise studies. To quantify the noise level, an average noise level over a 1-hour period (the  $L_{eq(h)}$ ) is commonly used. All noise levels presented here are given in peak hour dBA  $L_{eq}$ . Small changes in noise levels

(3 dBA or less) are not noticeable by the average person; a 10 dBA increase is generally perceived as a doubling of the noise level.

### Methodology

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has developed Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC; see Table 3) and procedures to be used in the planning and design of highways. These criteria and procedures are set forth in Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 772 (23 CFR 772). Most noise-sensitive land uses in the corridor are residential and fall into Activity Category B, although the business/commercial land-use areas are considered to fall in Activity Category C.

**TABLE 3  
FHWA NOISE ABATEMENT CRITERIA**

Activity Noise Abatement Criteria (dBA)		Description of Land Use Category
Land Use Category	L <sub>eq</sub> (h) (dBA)	
A	57 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas and parks not included in Category A and residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries and hospitals.
C	72 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties or activities not included in Categories A and B above.
D	---	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 (Exterior)	Residences, motels, public meeting rooms, churches, libraries, hospitals and auditoriums.

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) policy on Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement implements the FHWA policy in the state of Iowa. In keeping with the DOT policy, traffic noise impacts were considered to occur when the predicted noise levels equaled or exceeded 66 dBA at residences or 71 dBA at businesses, or when predicted noise levels exceeded the existing noise levels by 10 dBA or more.

The FHWA TNM software was used in this analysis to estimate future noise levels at 47 noise-sensitive sites in the project area (Figure 6). Inputs into TNM include roadway location, traffic volume, traffic mix (cars, medium trucks and heavy trucks), receiver location and elevation, and average speeds during free-flowing conditions.

The project area is located adjacent to existing roads, and the existing noisescape is dominated by traffic noise. Traffic noise levels for the 50 receivers were predicted using existing (2002) and future (design year 2025) traffic volumes for the No Action and Build scenarios. Comparison of the future noise levels with the existing levels and with the NAC is assumed to indicate the degree of noise impacts to be experienced at the noise-sensitive sites.

### Noise Impacts

Estimated existing and future noise levels are presented in Table 4.

The majority of the receivers (42 out of 50) represent single-family, multi-family or other residential structures located adjacent to the proposed facility. The remaining eight receivers (R9, R14, R19, R23, R43 and R48-R50) represent commercial establishments.

Existing noise levels range from 55 dBA at receiver R46 to 68 dBA at R35. Four residential locations (R4, R7, R35 and R36) are currently impacted by traffic noise that approaches, equals or exceeds the FHWA NAC for Activity Category B. No commercial (Activity Category C) locations are now impacted.

In the design year under the No Action Alternative, noise levels are expected to increase by 1 to 2 decibels to a range of from 57 dBA at receiver R46 to 69 dBA at R35. Ten residential locations (R1, R2, R4, R5, R7, R35-R38 and R47) are expected to be impacted by traffic noise under the No Action Alternative. All of the impacted locations would experience noise levels that approach, equal, or exceed the FHWA NAC for Activity Category B; none of these locations would experience a substantial increase in traffic noise. No commercial (Activity Category C) locations would be impacted.

In the design year under the Preferred Alternative, noise levels are expected to range of from 56 dBA at receivers R26, R27 and R28 to 70 dBA at R39. Noise levels would be either reduced by as much as 2 dBA or would remain unchanged at 19 locations (R1, R2, R7, R9, R11, R12, R15, R17, R24-R29, R31, R32-R34, R36 and R37). With the exception of receiver R35, which would be acquired under this option, all other locations, traffic noise would be expected to increase by as much as 7 dBA. Eight locations (R4, R5, R7, R36, R38-R40 and R47) are expected to be impacted by traffic noise under this alternative. All of the impacted locations would experience noise levels that approach, equal or exceed the FHWA NAC for Activity Category B; none of these locations would experience a substantial increase in traffic noise. No commercial (Activity Category C) locations would be impacted.

**TABLE 4  
EXISTING AND PROJECTED NOISE LEVELS**

Receiver	Existing 2002 Noise Level, dBA	Projected 2025 Noise Levels			
		No Action		Preferred Alternative	
		Noise Level, dBA	Increase Over Existing	Noise Level, dBA	Increase over Existing
R1	65	66	1	65	2
R2	65	67	2	64	-1
R3	63	65	2	64	1
R4	66	68	2	67	1
R5	65	67	2	66	1
R6	61	63	2	63	2
R7	67	68	1	67	0
R8	63	65	2	64	1
R9**	60	61	1	60	0
R10	59	61	2	60	1
R11	60	62	2	60	0
R12	60	62	2	60	0
R13	63	65	2	64	1
R14**	61	63	2	64	3
R15	62	64	2	61	-1
R16	56	58	2	57	1

**TABLE 4**  
**EXISTING AND PROJECTED NOISE LEVELS**

Receiver	Existing 2002 Noise Level, dBA	Projected 2025 Noise Levels			
		No Action		Preferred Alternative	
		Noise Level, dBA	Increase Over Existing	Noise Level, dBA	Increase over Existing
R17	60	62	2	59	-1
R18	61	63	2	62	1
R19**	65	67	2	69	4
R20	59	61	2	62	3
R21	60	62	2	63	3
R22	61	63	2	62	1
R23**	65	66	1	67	2
R24	58	60	2	58	0
R25	57	59	2	57	0
R26	56	58	2	56	0
R27	57	59	2	56	-1
R28	58	60	2	56	-2
R29	62	64	2	60	-2
R30	62	63	1	63	1
R31	61	63	2	60	-1
R32	63	64	1	61	-2
R33	61	62	1	62	1
R34	59	61	2	58	-1
R35	68	69	1	Acq	N/A
R36	66	67	1	66	0
R37	65	66	1	65	0
R38	64	66	2	68	4
R39	63	64	1	70	7
R40	62	64	2	66	4
R41	59	60	1	63	4
R42	58	60	2	63	5
R43**	63	65	2	66	3
R44	59	60	1	64	5
R45	57	59	2	62	5
R46	55	57	2	60	5
R47	64	66	2	69	5
R48**	63	65	2	67	4
R49**	64	65	1	69	5
R50**	60	62	2	64	4

\* Impact is defined as approaching, meeting or exceeding the applicable FHWA NAC.  
 \*\*Applicable NAC is 72 dBA; applicable NAC for all other receivers is 67 dBA.  
 Shading indicates presence of noise impacts.

Along the Preferred Alternative, the estimated position of the design year 66-dBA contour is located approximately 75 ft from the centerline in the rural areas and 100 ft from the centerline in the urban areas. The 66-dBA contour corresponds to an approach of the FHWA NAC for residences.

## Noise Abatement Analysis

The locations impacted under the Preferred Alternative are located from just east of Shirley Street to just east of Stanley Street (R4, R5 and R7); and near the eastern edge of the project (R36, R38-R40 and R47). R47 represents a small motel located on the south side of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street just west of Hudson Road; all other impacted locations represent single-family residences.

Noise walls placed adjacent to the roadway would attenuate traffic-related noise and are the most practical and commonly used measure. When proven effective and feasible, such barriers may be used for noise abatement. An effective barrier must break the line-of-sight and typically extends parallel to the roadway alignment for a length of four times the perpendicular distance to the last protected receptor. A substantial noise reduction is the goal when implementing a noise barrier. Iowa DOT considers at least a 5 dBA noise reduction as substantial, and this is the minimum goal for this project.

Noise barriers must also meet criteria for reasonableness, including cost effectiveness. Iowa DOT considers a maximum cost of \$20,000 per benefited receptor (based on 1996 costs) to be reasonable from the standpoint of cost effectiveness. In addition, reasonable barriers must generally protect at least two residences; i.e., barriers will not be built to protect individual residences.

Noise barriers were considered for the residences represented by receivers R4, R5, R7, R36, R-38-R40 and R47. At all potential noise wall locations considered, noise walls were found to be not effective or not reasonable. The following describes potential noise barrier locations and evaluates these locations in terms of effectiveness and reasonableness.

The effectiveness of noise walls is substantially compromised when access openings for driveways and cross streets need to be provided. For receivers R4, R5, R7, R36, R40 and R47, noise barriers would be ineffective because of the need to provide access to driveways and cross streets. In addition, receivers R1, R39 and R40 represent locations occupied by single residences; construction of noise walls to protect these locations would also be not reasonable.

At receiver R38, a barrier analysis determined that a wall 216 ft long with an average height of 11.0 ft would provide a 5 dBA noise reduction at R38. The estimated cost of this noise wall is \$59,500, which exceeds the Iowa DOT criterion for cost effectiveness. Such a wall would not be reasonable from the standpoint of cost effectiveness.

Because none of the noise wall locations considered were reasonable, feasible and effective, the construction of noise walls to provide noise abatement at the impacted locations will not be constructed as part of this project.

## THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has no record of federal or state threatened or endangered species in the project corridor. The absence of records does not guarantee that threatened or endangered species do not occur there.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists three federally listed threatened species with ranges within the region of Iowa. They are listed below:

- Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)



- Prairie Bush Clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*)
- Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*)

DNR records are more specific, whereas USFWS records are more regional, which accounts for the differences in the records of the two agencies. Based on field reviews by the project biologist, no potential habitat exists for these species in the project corridor. Letters from the above agencies appear in Appendix A.

## NATURAL AREAS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

The USFWS and DNR have no records of any unique or significant natural resources occurring in the project area. A field review conducted by the project biologist did not locate any significant natural communities within the project corridor.

The most abundant wildlife habitat type within the project corridor is agricultural land (rowcrops). Species common in these areas include white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus ornis*) and American crows (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*).

## WETLAND IMPACTS

The project biologist evaluated the potential wetland impacts through inspection of USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, the Black Hawk County Soil Survey and a field review.

NWI maps indicate several palustrine emergent wetlands within the project corridor. A field review by the project biologist found one palustrine emergent/scrub-shrub wetland, approximately 0.52 ac in size on the south side of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, west of Eagle Ridge Road. The wetland is located in a drainageway that receives overflow from a constructed pond north of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Palustrine wetlands, commonly called marshes, wet prairies, swamps and ponds, include all nontidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, emergent vegetation and mosses or lichens. Emergent wetlands are dominated by herbaceous (nonwoody) plants such as sedges and cattails. Vegetation in the wetland located in the project corridor consists predominantly of cattail (*Typha latifolia*), dark green bulrush (*Scirpus atrovirens*), fox sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*) and sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*).

## Wetland Summary

### Avoidance

A total of 0.52 ac of wetland was found within the project corridor. The conversion of approximately 0.10 ac of jurisdictional wetland is an unavoidable impact of this project. No feasible and prudent alternatives exist to avoid these areas. The new construction is logically located adjacent and parallel to the existing roadway. Design constraints in placement of the additional lanes do not allow this wetland to be missed.

### **Minimization**

Erosion control and maintenance of hydrology in wetlands adjacent to the project corridor are important considerations. Therefore, upslope erosion control measures, including the use of silt fences and vegetative cover, will be implemented as needed to protect wetlands down slope.

### **Compensatory Mitigation**

Corridor impacts to the wetland located in the project were previously permitted under a Section 404 permit obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) (Permit No. 420750) by a landowner adjacent to the West 1<sup>st</sup> Street project corridor for impacts resulting from the construction of a housing development. A wetland mitigation plan has been developed by the adjacent landowner that compensates for the loss of the wetland. Therefore, it is anticipated a Section 404 permit will not be required for this project.

### **WATER QUALITY**

Unnamed drainageways are located within the project corridor. Water quality of the drainageways will be maintained during construction. An erosion control plan will be developed during the final design phase and will be implemented during construction to achieve this goal.

### **PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

No parks or recreational facilities occur within the project corridor.

### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

A Phase I archaeological survey was completed in September 2002. Three previously unrecorded archaeological sites were found to be located within the project area. None were considered significant and no further work is warranted. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with this finding on October 8, 2002, (see letter in Appendix B).

In September 2002, an intensive-level historic architecture survey was completed. Of the nine properties examined, one is considered historic (more than 50 years old) and meets one or more criteria for significance under National Register of Historic Places guidelines. This significant structure is the Meadow Brook Farm Barn, located on the south side of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street near the Stanley Street intersection. It is located approximately 75 ft beyond the anticipated right-of-way line (it is currently 90 ft from the existing right-of-way line) and will not be adversely impacted by the proposed project. Noise levels are expected to increase by one (1) decibel over existing (from 61 dBA to 62 dBA) at this location. However, neither the existing nor the projected noise levels are considered adverse impacts to the barn or the surrounding property. A concurrence letter dated October 16, 2002, for the historic architecture survey from SHPO appears in Appendix B.

Tribal Notification was sent with the results of the Phase I archaeological survey on January 24, 2003. One response was obtained on February 3, 2003, from the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma. Since no significant sites were found and the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma was satisfied, no further tribal coordination is expected. See Appendix B for a copy of the form sent and the response.

## HAZARDOUS WASTE

Hazardous waste is an important issue in highway projects since current legislation requires the identification of known sites where hazardous substances are present. To avoid costly cleanup liabilities and project delays, early location of any hazardous sites should be brought to the attention of highway planners.

Information obtained from the Iowa DNR on CERCLA (Superfund) and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites indicates there are no hazardous waste sites located within the project corridor. Two gas stations occur in the project corridor; however, neither would be impacted by the project and were not listed as having active leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites.

A drive-by site assessment of the project corridor did not reveal any additional potential waste sites such as ag-chemical businesses, storage facilities or other similar land uses.

## RIVER AND FLOODPLAIN CROSSINGS

No river or floodplain crossings are included in the project corridor.

## INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Potential indirect and cumulative impacts are described in this section. These terms are defined as follows:

- *Indirect effects* are indirect impacts that are “caused by an action and are later in time or further removed in distance but are still reasonably foreseeable” (40 C.F.R. 1508.8).
- *Cumulative effects* are “impacts which result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions” (C.F.R. 1508.7).

In 1997, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) developed an approach to evaluate secondary and cumulative effects. This approach addresses scoping, describes the affected environment (that is, its resources, ecosystems and human communities) in terms of the stresses it experiences and its response to change, capacity to withstand stresses, regulatory thresholds, baseline condition, and determines the environmental consequences.

Much development has occurred in the northwest part of the city over the last 10 years, especially since a new residential subdivision was established on the north side of West 1st Street called The Ridges. Streets for the Ridges were constructed in the mid-1990s. This development was the beginning of new residential and commercial activity within the project corridor.

In consultation with city officials, a “mid-growth” scenario was determined to represent the most probable level of land-use development. This scenario assumed that approximately one-half of potential residential areas would be developed, along with some new commercial development. Most of these proposed developments are expected to occur regardless of whether West 1st Street is improved or not. A summary of the anticipated development for the “mid-growth” scenario includes:

- The Ridges 4<sup>th</sup> Addition, Near Eagle Ridge Road (Residential)
- Fieldstone Addition, South of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Residential)

- Pheasant Hollow II, South of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Residential)
- Autumn Ridge Addition, Just West of Union Road (Residential)
- Other Localized Residential Development, South of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street
- Thunder Ridge Commercial Area, South of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Near Magnolia Drive

The actions listed above have potential to cause indirect and cumulative effects on resources, ecosystems, and human communities in the West 1st Street area. These actions are reasonably foreseeable and have been considered along with the proposed action.

A review of the project impacts concluded that land use could potentially result in indirect and cumulative impacts. Indirect effects related to land use could include socioeconomic, relationship between land use and transportation, and the effect on public services (i.e., emergency response). Some of the cumulative effects could include farmland loss, population and employment growth, and overburden emergency services.

The resources that would be affected by the proposed project and other unrelated future projects have a strong capacity to withstand stress. The future growth and development attributable to the proposed action is very low, therefore the proposed project would contribute very little to the cumulative environmental features in the project corridor.

Several different types of impacts are anticipated from the proposed improvement of West 1st Street. A summary of the cumulative impacts is shown in Table 5.

## V. SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

This section summarizes the cumulative impacts between the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Alternative for the improvements of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The impacts and general features of each alternative are summarized in Table 5.

**TABLE 5**  
**SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**  
**WEST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET (IOWA 57) CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES**

	No Action Alternative	Preferred Alternative
Length (mi)	1.6	1.6
Total New Right-of-Way (ac)	0	4.4
Farmland Acquired (ac)	0	1
No. Properties Affected		
Commercial	0	9
Residential	0	28
No. Businesses Affected	0	0
Residences Displaced	0	1*
Wetland Impacts (ac)	0	0.10
Archaeology Impacts	None	None
Historic Properties Affected	None	None
Air Quality Impacts	None	None
Noise Impacts	10	11
Water Quality Impacts	None	None
Land-Use Impacts	None	None
Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Impacts	None	None
Natural Areas and Wildlife Habitat (ac)	0	0.10
Parks and Recreational Facilities	None	None
River and Floodplain Crossings	None	None
Projected 2025 Traffic Volumes (Vehicles Per Day)	13,500-19,400	13,500-19,400
Estimated Construction Cost	\$0 <sup>1</sup>	\$4.9 Million

\* This residence is a possible displacement; final determination will be made during final design and right-of-way negotiations.

<sup>1</sup> No initial costs would be incurred. However, throughout the design life of the project, the No Action Alternative would incur routine maintenance costs that would not be expected with either of the build alternatives.

## **VI. SUMMARY**

This Environmental Assessment concludes that the proposed project is necessary for safe and efficient travel within the project corridor. The project will have no significant adverse social, economic or environmental impacts of a level that would warrant an environmental impact statement. Final alternative selection will occur following completion of the public review period and location public hearing.

Unless significant impacts are identified as a result of a public review or at the public hearing, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be prepared for this proposed action as a basis for federal-aid corridor location approval.

## VII. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

### AGENCY COORDINATION

Appropriate federal, state and local agencies were contacted on May 21, 2002, as part of early coordination for their comments concerning this project. Comment letters are in Appendix A. Those agencies contacted are listed below:

- U.S. Department of Interior – Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
- \* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- \* U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- National Park Service
- \* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- \* Iowa Department of Economic Development
- \* Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs – State Historical Society of Iowa
- \* Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG)
- Black Hawk County Conservation Board
- Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors
- \* Black Hawk County Engineer
- Cedar Falls Park Division
- Cedar Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Cedar Falls Historical Society
- \* Cedar Trails Partnership

\*Agencies responding to early coordination

### PUBLIC COORDINATION

A public information meeting was held at Cedar Falls City Hall on October 10, 2002, to inform the public about the project and to allow them to comment and ask questions pertaining to the project. All adjacent property owners were individually invited to attend this meeting. A portion of these invitees were in attendance. Approximately 50 persons were in attendance at the public information meeting. The main comments and concerns received include:

- Several persons were in favor of the project, particularly the three-lane alternative.
- A few property owners were concerned about the impact on drainage near their homes as a result of the proposed project.
- Concern that the recreational trail does not have good system linkage.
- Several meeting attendees commented about the need to control speed limits in the project corridor.
- Some business owners expressed concern regarding business impacts during construction.
- A few property owners were concerned about the potential loss of trees and shrubs, increasing the visibility of the roadway from their backyard.



- Some specific concerns were raised about noise and proximity impacts.
- Another issue was raised regarding potential adverse run-off into a constructed pond located between Eagle Ridge and Lake Ridge Drives.

### **EA DOCUMENT AND PUBLIC HEARING**

This document will be made available to all appropriate federal, state and local agencies for review and comment. The responses from reviewing agencies will be considered during further development of the proposed project. Notification of the time and place of the public hearing for this project will be announced at the time the Environmental Assessment is made available for public review.

APPENDIX A  
AGENCY COORDINATION



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

JUL 19 2002

Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech  
501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222  
P.O. Box 1497  
Waterloo, IA 50704-1497

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

Re: Cedar Fall West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Reconstruction

The Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Team has received and acknowledges your letter proposing reconstruction of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Thank you for notifying the Agency of this proposed action.

We have reviewed the project plan and at this time do not have any objections to the proposed project. As Earth Tech prepares for the planning and design phase of the proposed project, we suggest that focus be placed on ensuring there are minimal impacts to the natural and human environment. We further advise that careful attention is given to the potential of Environmental Justice issues or concerns, if applicable.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (913)551-7168.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naima Halim Chestnut".

Naima Halim Chestnut  
NEPA Reviewer  
Environmental Services Division



# United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Rock Island Field Office  
4469 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue Court  
Rock Island, Illinois 61201  
Phone: (309) 793-5800 Fax: (309) 793-5804

IN REPLY REFER  
TO:

FWS/RIFO

June 19, 2002

Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech Company  
501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222  
Post Office Box 1497  
Waterloo, Iowa 50704-1497

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

This letter responds to your May 21, 2002, request for technical assistance for the environmental document pertaining to the proposed construction of the Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Reconstruction (Earth Tech Project Number 55285-10.100), Black Hawk County, Iowa.

To facilitate compliance with Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, Federal agencies are required to obtain from the Fish and Wildlife Service information concerning any species, listed or proposed to be listed, which may be present in the area of a proposed action. Therefore, we are furnishing you the following list of species which may be present in the concerned area:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Habitat</u>
Threatened	Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Breeding
Threatened	Prairie bush clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>	Dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil
Threatened	Western prairie fringed orchid	<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>	Mesic to wet prairies

The threatened bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is listed as breeding in Black Hawk County, Iowa. They perch in large shoreline trees to rest or feed on fish. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. The eagle may not be harassed, harmed, or disturbed when present nor may nest trees be cleared.

The prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*) is listed as threatened and is considered to potentially occur statewide in Iowa based on historical habitat. It occupies dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soil. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever prairie remnants are encountered.

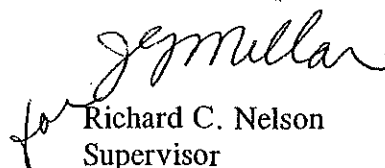
The western prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera praeclara*) is listed as threatened and is considered to potentially occur statewide based on historical records and habitat distribution. It occupies wet grassland habitats. There is no critical habitat designated for this species. Federal regulations prohibit any commercial activity involving this species or the destruction, malicious damage or removal of this species from Federal land or any other lands in knowing violation of State law or regulation, including State criminal trespass law. This species should be searched for whenever wet prairie remnants are encountered.

The Corps of Engineers is the Federal agency responsible for wetland determinations, and we recommend that you contact them for assistance in delineating any wetland types and acreages within the project boundary. Priority consideration should be given to avoid impacts to any wetland areas. Any future activities in the study area that would alter wetlands may require a Section 404 permit. Unavoidable impacts will require a mitigation plan to compensate for any losses of wetland functions and values. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clock Tower Building, P.O. Box 2004, Rock Island, Illinois, 61204-2004, should be contacted for information about the permit process.

These comments provide technical assistance only and do not constitute the report of the Secretary of the Interior on the project within the meaning of Section 2(b) of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, do not fulfill the requirements under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, nor do they represent the review comments of the U.S. Department of the Interior on any forthcoming environmental statement.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments early in the planning process. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact Heidi Woeber of my staff.

Sincerely,

  
for Richard C. Nelson  
Supervisor

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
210 Walnut Street  
693 Federal Building  
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

May 29, 2002

Ref: Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup>  
Street Reconstruction  
Earth Tech Project  
No. 55285.10.100

Ms. Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech  
501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222  
Post Office Box 1497  
Waterloo, Iowa 50704-1497

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

I have reviewed your notification to begin development of an Environmental Assessment for the city of Cedar Falls, Iowa, for the reconstruction of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street (Iowa 57). Since this project may require the acquisition of additional right-of-way, you should contact John Bruene, District Conservationist, NRCS, 3025 – 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Marion, Iowa 52302, (319) 377-5960 to complete the form AD-1006, Farmland Conversion Impact Rating.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leroy Brown".

Leroy Brown  
State Conservationist

# STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

*Where past meets future*

May 24, 2002

In reply refer to:  
R&C#: 020507112

Brenda J. Durbahn  
EarthTech  
P.O. Box 1497  
Waterloo, Iowa 50704-1497

RE: FHWA – BLACK HAWK COUNTY – CITY OF CEDAR FALLS – PLANNING STAGES  
FOR 1.6 MILES OF WEST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET RECONSTRUCTION – EARTH TECH  
PROJECT #55285.10.100 – PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Dear Ms. Durbahn,

Thank you for notifying our office about the above referenced proposed project. We understand that this project will be a federal undertaking and will need to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. We look forward to consulting with you and/or the Iowa Department of Transportation on the Area of Potential Effect for this proposed project and whether this project will affect any significant historic properties under 36 CFR Part 800.4. We will need the following types of information for our review:

- The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this project needs to be adequately defined (36 CFR Part 800.16 (d)).
- Information on what types of cultural resources are or may be located in the APE (36 CFR Part 800.4).
- The significance of the historic properties in the APE in consideration of the National Register of Historic Places Criteria.
- A determination from the responsible federal agency of the undertaking's effects on historical properties within the APE (36 CFR Part 800.5).

If your agency will be the primary contact for this project, the responsible federal agency which we presume is the Federal Highway Administration, needs to notify us that they have authorized you to consult with our office on this project in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.2(c)(5). Also, the responsible federal agency will need to identify and contact all potential consulting parties that may have an interest in historic properties within the project APE (36 CFR 36 Part 800.2 (c)).

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, the Iowa Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration on this project.

## IOWA HISTORICAL BUILDING

600 East Locust • Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0290

Phone: (515) 281-6412 • Fax: (515) 242-6498 or (515) 282-0502

[www.uiowa.edu/~shsi/index.htm](http://www.uiowa.edu/~shsi/index.htm)

American Gothic House  
Eldon

Blood Run NHL  
Larchwood

Centennial Building  
Iowa City

Matthew Edel Blacksmith Shop  
Marshalltown

Abbie Gardner Cabin  
Arnolds Park

Iowa Historical Building  
Des Moines

Montauk Governor's Home  
Union Sunday School  
Clermont Museum  
Clermont

Plum Grove Governor's Home  
Iowa City


Toolesboro Indian Mounds  
Toolesboro

Western Historic Trails Center  
Council Bluffs



Should you have any questions please contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,



Douglas W. Jones, Archaeologist  
Community Programs Bureau  
(515) 281-4358

cc: Gerry Kennedy, FHWA  
Randall Faber, Office of Environmental Services, IDOT  
Steve Larson, IDOT



STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
JEFFREY R. VONK, DIRECTOR

May 30, 2002

Ms. Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech  
P.O. Box 1497  
501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222  
Waterloo, IA 50704-1497

RE: Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Reconstruction  
Earth Tech Project No. 55285.10.100

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

Thank you for inviting our comments on the impact of the above referenced project on protected species and rare natural communities.

We have searched our records of the project area and found no records of rare species or significant natural communities. However, our data are not the result of thorough field surveys. Based on the information provided, we do not think the project will affect protected species or rare natural communities. If listed species or rare communities are found during the planning or construction phases, additional studies and/or mitigation may be required.

This letter is a record of review for protected species, rare natural communities, state lands and waters in the project area, including review by personnel representing state parks, preserves, recreation areas, wetlands, fisheries and wildlife. It does not constitute a permit and before proceeding with the project, you may need to obtain permits from the DNR or other state and federal agencies.

If you have any questions about this letter or if you require further information, please contact Keith Dohrmann at (515) 281-8967.

Sincerely,

  
MIKE BRANDRUP  
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MB:kd

02-1026L



Department of  
Economic Development

**IOWA**

SMART IDEA™

June 11, 2002

Ms. Brenda Durbahn  
Earth Tech re: Cedar Falls  
501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222  
PO Box 1497  
Waterloo, IA 50704

RE: IA020530-502

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

The Iowa State Clearinghouse has performed the required review of your grant application for the Cedar Falls West 1st Street Reconstruction funding in accordance with the Iowa Intergovernmental Review System.

The review:

- generated comments from those who examined the file, please see attached.
- found no serious environmental problems which may result from the project or program.
- indicated that the proposal conforms to pertinent planning to this area.
- did not show that the proposal would result in duplicating any existing activity or project.

The Clearinghouse is pleased to recommend that the application be approved for funding. A copy of this letter must be sent to the federal agency as evidence that the review has been performed.

Sincerely,

Steven McCann  
Federal Funds Coordinator  
515/242-4719

SRM:rao

Thomas J. Vilsack, Governor

Sally J. Pederson, Lieutenant Governor

C.J. Niles, Director

200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Phone: 515.242.4700

Fax: 515.242.4809

[www.iowasmartidea.com](http://www.iowasmartidea.com)

1051



2002 JUN -6 A 8:56

June 6, 2002

DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Keith Dohrmann  
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources  
Wallace Building  
502 E 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Intergovernmental Review of File No. IA053002-502  
Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> Stree Reconstruction

Deadline Date: June 20, 2002

Dear Mr.Dohrmann:

The attached material has been submitted for review under the Iowa Intergovernmental Review System. It is being sent to you to determine if your agency has an interest in the proposal and decides to submit comments. The comments must reach the clearinghouse by the deadline date shown above. If this does not permit sufficient time, please telephone the clearinghouse at 515/242-4719 in order to have the review period extended. If you have comments, please return this letter and indicate that fact.

If you have any questions concerning this review, call Steve McCann at 515/242-4719.

Sincerely,  
*Steven R. McCann*

Steve McCann  
Iowa Economic Development

Reply from Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Re: Intergovernmental Review File No. IA053002-502 Cedar Falls

- 1. Comments concerning the above-named review are attached.
- 2. Our agency would prefer to talk to the applicant or submitting agency prior to submitting comments to the federal agency. The clearinghouse will arrange for such a meeting.
- 3. We have no reason to comment on this proposal.

Completed by: *Keith A. Dohrmann* telephone: *515/281-8969*  
*6-6-2002*

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
JEFFREY R. VONK, DIRECTOR

**May 30, 2002**

**Ms. Brenda J. Durbahn**  
**Earth Tech**  
**P.O. Box 1497**  
**501 Sycamore Street, Suite 222**  
**Waterloo, IA 50704-1497**

**RE: Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> Street Reconstruction**  
**Earth Tech Project No. 55285.10.100**

**Dear Ms. Durbahn:**

**Thank you for inviting our comments on the impact of the above referenced project on protected species and rare natural communities.**

**We have searched our records of the project area and found no records of rare species or significant natural communities. However, our data are not the result of thorough field surveys. Based on the information provided, we do not think the project will affect protected species or rare natural communities. If listed species or rare communities are found during the planning or construction phases, additional studies and/or mitigation may be required.**

**This letter is a record of review for protected species, rare natural communities, state lands and waters in the project area, including review by personnel representing state parks, preserves, recreation areas, wetlands, fisheries and wildlife. It does not constitute a permit and before proceeding with the project, you may need to obtain permits from the DNR or other state and federal agencies.**

**If you have any questions about this letter or if you require further information, please contact Keith Dohrmann at (515) 281-8967.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Brandrup".

**MIKE BRANDRUP**  
**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**MB:kd**

02-1026L

OFFICE

RICHARD L. KING, PE / LS  
COUNTY ENGINEER

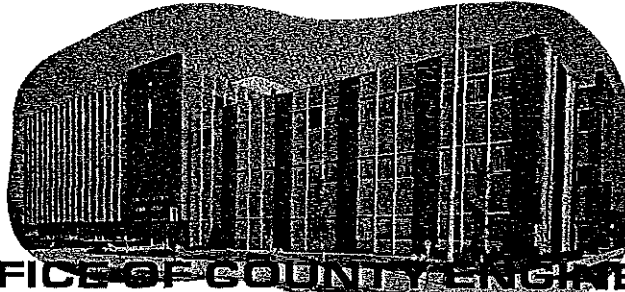
JAN HIX  
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE II

THOMAS P. SCHOELLEN, PE  
ASST. COUNTY ENGINEER

DENNIS A. CLARKE  
ENGINEERING TECH.

GEOFFRY A. TINKER  
ENGINEERING TECH.

LYNN KLOBERDANZ  
ENGINEERING TECH.



**OFFICE OF COUNTY ENGINEER**

**BLACK HAWK COUNTY**

316 E. FIFTH ST. ROOM 211  
WATERLOO, IOWA 50703-4774  
TEL. (319) 833-3008  
FAX (319) 833-3139  
EMAIL [engineer@co.black-hawk.ia.us](mailto:engineer@co.black-hawk.ia.us)

FIELD

GALEN EILERS  
MAINT. SUPT.  
(319) 291-2510

RICK BUFFINGTON  
MAINT. SUPERVISOR  
(319) 291-2510

May 30, 2002

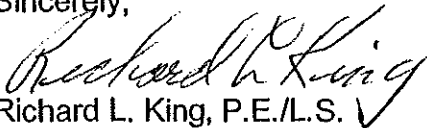
Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech  
PO Box 1497  
Waterloo IA 50704-1497

Re: Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> St. Reconstruction  
Earth Tech Project No. 55285.10.100

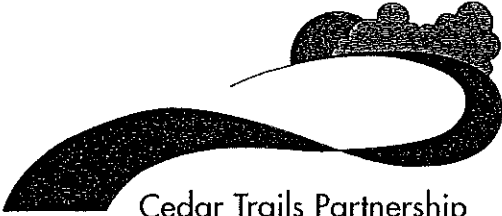
Dear Ms. Durbahn:

Black Hawk County concurs in the project schedule. It is understood that this project is to be of no cost to the County.

Sincerely,

  
Richard L. King, P.E./L.S. ✓  
County Engineer

C: Board of Supervisors



Cedar Trails Partnership  
2410 West Lone Tree Road  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
319-266-6813

Ms. Brenda J. Durbahn  
Earth Tech  
PO Box 1497  
Waterloo, IA 50704-1497

June 21, 2002

RE: Cedar Falls West 1<sup>st</sup> St. Reconstruction  
Earth Tech Project No. 55285.10.100

Dear Ms. Durbahn:

Thank you for offering the Cedar Trails Partnership the opportunity to comment on this project.

It is our understanding that this project will include accommodation for bicycle and pedestrian use.

We feel that the most suitable accommodation for non-motorized users would be paved, 10'-wide shoulders on both sides of the road.

On the downhill stretches of 1<sup>st</sup> St. between Union and Hudson Roads, bicyclists easily exceed a speed 30 mph. This is an unsafe speed for the confines of a separated, two-way recreational trail, particularly when pedestrians are present, or when a speeding downhill cyclist encounters a struggling uphill cyclist. A paved shoulder would allow high-speed cyclists to merge into the traffic lane if necessary to avoid pedestrians. It would also lessen the chances of downhill and uphill cyclists meeting, since they would be on opposite sides of the road, riding in the same direction as the adjacent motor traffic.

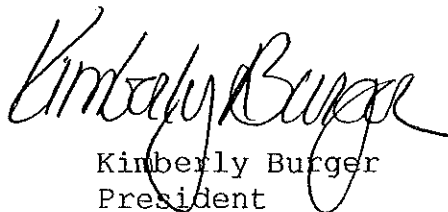
As residential development continues in the area of this project, we anticipate that more intersections will be created along 1<sup>st</sup> St. Car-bike conflicts are most common at intersections, and are more likely at the intersection of a separated recreational trail and road than at the intersection of two roads. This danger of conflict is particularly high in the case of a fast downhill cyclist

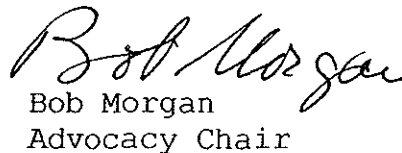
riding on a trail against the direction of parallel motor traffic. Paved shoulders, on the other hand, will both place the cyclist in the normal flow of intersection traffic and discourage wrong-way riding.

These advantages of paved shoulders over a separated multi-use recreational trail will mainly benefit bicyclists. However, given the terrain and the distances between destinations, we anticipate far more use of this facility by bicyclists than by pedestrians. Pedestrians will, of course, still benefit from the wide shoulder, which will be useful as a walkway; they will also be less likely to be involved in a pedestrian-bicycle conflicts than they would on a multi-use trail.

Again, thank you for giving the Partnership an opportunity to comment on this project. We hope our remarks prove helpful.

Respectfully,

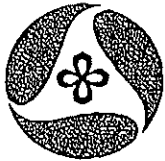
  
Kimberly Burger  
President

  
Bob Morgan  
Advocacy Chair



APPENDIX B  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA LETTERS  
AND TRIBAL NOTIFICATION

OCT 03 2002



# Iowa Department of Transportation

800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010 515-239-1795  
FAX 515-239-1726

September 27, 2002

Ref. No. STP-U-1185(625)—70-07  
City of Cedar Falls  
Black Hawk County  
Local

Doug Jones  
Review and Compliance  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
600 East Locust  
Des Moines, IA 50319

R&C# 020507112

Dear Doug:

**RE: West First Street Reconstruction; Cedar Falls**

Enclosed for your review and comment is the archaeological report for the above-mentioned project. The project proposes to reconstruct West First St. from Union Rd. east 1.59 miles to Hudson Rd in Cedar Falls. The area of potential effect is a corridor about 300 ft wide the length of the project. The total area surveyed was 58 acres.

The investigation included background research, analysis of soil profiles, 208 subsurface tests and a pedestrian survey. Much of the corridor has been adversely impacted by modern construction. Targeted areas were systematically surveyed.

Three sites were recorded. 13BH134 consists of a prehistoric lithic scatter and 13BH135 & 136 are historic scatters. All three sites have a low artifact density and no diagnostic features. The sites do not qualify for inclusion on the National Register. No further work is recommended.

Based on the results of the report, our determination is No Historic Properties Effected. If you agree with the determination and recommendation, please sign the concurrence line, date, add any comments, and return this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Judy McDonald  
Office of Environmental Services  
judy.mcdonald@dot.state.ia.us

JM

Enclosure

cc: Jim Hemberger, District 2  
Leah Rogers, Tallgrass Historians  
Kris Riesenber, Location & Environment

Concur:

Douglas W. Jones  
SHPO archaeologist

10/8/2002  
Date

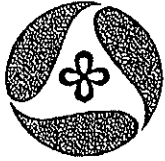
Comments:

OCT 08 2002

RECEIVED

OCT 21 2002

OFFICE OF LOCATION & ENVIRONMENT



# Iowa Department of Transportation

800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010

515-239-1795

FAX 515-239-1726

October 3, 2002

Ref. No. STP-U-1185(625)-70-07  
City of Cedar Falls  
Black Hawk County

Ralph Christian  
Review and Compliance  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
600 East Locust  
Des Moines, IA 50319

R&C# 020507112

Dear Ralph:

**RE: West First Street Reconstruction; Cedar Falls**

Enclosed for your review and comment is the architectural report for the above-mentioned project. The project proposes to reconstruct West First St. from Union Rd. east 1.59 miles to Hudson Rd in Cedar Falls. The area of potential effect is a corridor about 300 ft wide the length of the project. Nine properties were evaluated for this project.

One property, 07-00063, the Meadow Brook Farm barn is considered eligible for the National Register under criterion A and C. The barn should be avoided. The Garden Motel, 07-10016, is not presently National Register eligible; however, if the integrity is maintained, it could qualify in the future.

Property sites 07-10003, 07-10005, 07-00116 and 07-10010 through 07-10016 as listed on page vi of the report are not eligible for the National Register.

Based on the results of the report, our determination is No Historic Properties Effectuated *if the historic horse barn is avoided*. If the barn cannot be avoided, consultation will proceed according to 36CFR.800(5) and (6).

If you agree with the determination and recommendation, please sign the concurrence line, date, add any comments, and return this letter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

*Judy McDonald*  
Judy McDonald  
Office of Environmental Services  
judy.mcdonald@dot.state.ia.us

JM

Enclosure

cc: Jim Hemberger, District 2  
Leah Rogers, Tallgrass Historians  
Brenda Durbahn, Earth Tech  
Kris Riesenber, Location & Environment

Concur: *[Signature]*  
SHP Archaeologist

Comments: *Historian*

*October 16, 2002*  
Date



# Iowa Department of Transportation TRIBAL NOTIFICATION

Date January 24, 2003 IA DOT contact Math Donovan  
 IADOT project # STP-U-1185(625)--70-07 Phone # 515-239-1097  
 Location City of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County E-mail math.donovan@dot.state.ia.us  
 Description West Street -> West First Street Reconstruction

### Type of Project (see map)

- |                                                                                                   |                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VERY SMALL - Disturb less than 12 inch depth (plow zone)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> LARGE - Improve existing road from 2-lanes to 4-lanes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SMALL - Grading on existing road, shouldering, ditching, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> LARGE - New alignment                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SMALL - Bridge or culvert replacement                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER                                                 |

### Type of Coordination/Consultation Points

- |                                                                                      |                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1--Early project notification (project map and description) | <input type="checkbox"/> 3--Consultation regarding site treatment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2--Notification of survey findings (Phase I)     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4--Final Data Recovery Report            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2a--Notification of site evaluation (Phase II)              |                                                                   |

### Type of Findings

- |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No American Indian sites found<br>--Section 106 Consultation Process ends *                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially significant American Indian sites found<br>Phase II evaluation conducted (see map and list of sites) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No significant American Indian sites eligible for National Register listing found--Section 106 Consultation Process ends *                     | <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian sites eligible for National Register listing cannot be avoided (see map)                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoided American Indian sites eligible for National Register listing (see map and list of sites)<br>--Section 106 Consultation Process may or may not end | <input type="checkbox"/> Burial site found                                                                                                |
- \* in the event of a late discovery consultation will be reopened
- \_\_\_\_\_ # of non-significant prehistoric sites  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of potentially significant prehistoric sites  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of National Register eligible prehistoric sites,

### Affected National Register Properties

- |                                                                             |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Investigating avoidance or minimizing harm options | <input type="checkbox"/> Protected         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoided                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Data Recovery/MOA |

### Please Respond

Who should we contact for site/project related discussions?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know of any sensitive areas within or near the project the FHWA/DOT should avoid (please describe)? \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thank you for the information; however, we do not need to consult on this particular project. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thank you for the information. We are satisfied with the planned site treatment. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> We do not have a comment at this time but request continued notification on this project.     | <input type="checkbox"/> We have concerns and wish to consult.                                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please send a copy of the archaeology report.                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> We wish to participate in the Memorandum of Agreement for this project.                     |

Comments We prefer to receive copies of the archaeological reports rather than a synopsis.

Name Maureen Lg Tribal Name Iowa Tribe of OK Date 2-3-03

(Comments continued on back)

