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Federal Highway Administration
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For

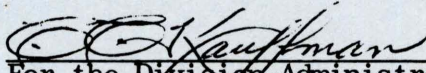
The Improvement Of
U.S. 63 From Denver To Iowa 3
Bremer County, Iowa
Project No. F-63-7

Notification of the availability of this environmental assessment was forwarded to state and areawide clearinghouses on September 27, 1983. Public availability of the assessment was included with the notice of the corridor public hearing. The review period for the attached environmental assessment expired on November 7, 1983. Comments received are attached beginning on page 23.

The FHWA has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment. This finding of no significant impact is based on the attached environmental assessment which has been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an environmental impact statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached environmental assessment.

Date

2-28-84


For the Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration


**U.S. 63
IMPROVEMENT FROM DENVER TO IOWA 3
BREMER COUNTY, IOWA
Project No. F-63-7**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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

By The
**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Highway Administration
and
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Planning and Research Division**

9-14-83
Date of Approval
For Public Availability


For The Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

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PROJECT ACTION
 AFTER THE AVAILABILITY OF THE
 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A corridor public hearing was held for this project, in Denver, on October 25, 1983. The hearing was attended by 127 people. The hearing transcript is available upon request.

The Denver City Council, the Bremer County Board of Supervisors, and the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments have all endorsed the Relocation Alternate. The Iowa Department of Transportation Commission on January 10, 1984, approved the corridor public hearing and selected the Relocation Alternate for further development.

In order to better compare the two "build" alternates presented in the Environmental Assessment the following table is provided.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATES					
<u>Alternate</u>	<u>Additional Right-of-Way (acres)</u>	<u>Prime Farmland (acres)</u>	<u>Displacements</u>		<u>Estimated Construction Costs</u>
			<u>Homes</u>	<u>Business</u>	
Present Alignment	52	47	3	0	\$3,650,000
Relocation	65	58	3	1	\$4,300,000

In addition to the displacements shown, the three vacant buildings just south of Iowa 3 and east of U.S. 63 are also proposed for removal with this project in order to improve the U.S. 63-Iowa 3 intersection and provide better sight distance.

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I. PROJECT BACKGROUND-ACTION CLASSIFICATION

The project discussed in this environmental assessment is an independent segment of the U.S. 63 improvement in Black Hawk and Bremer Counties which extends from Waterloo to Iowa 3 north of Denver. This environmental assessment discusses the U.S. 63 segment that extends from the south corporation line of Denver in Bremer County to Iowa 3, a distance of about 3.50 miles. See Figure 1 for the location of the project in Iowa.

The first segment of the U.S. 63 improvement is in Black Hawk County and includes widening and reconstruction to a five-lane with a continuous left-turn lane configuration from Donald Street in Waterloo to County Road C-66, a distance of about 3.5 miles.

The second segment is a four-lane divided facility with a 40-foot depressed grass median from Road C-66 north to Eagle Street in Denver, a 6.80 mile distance.

The third segment is this proposed project which extends the four-lane concept north 3.5 miles through Denver to Iowa 3. This segment would provide for a four-lane undivided section through Denver and a four-lane divided facility with a 40-foot median north of Denver to Iowa 3.

This concept requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) outlining anticipated impacts of the improvement on the human and natural environments within the project corridor to determine if a full Environmental Impact Statement is required. This report has been prepared to document such impacts in accordance with the Iowa DOT Action Plan and 42 USC (2)(c).

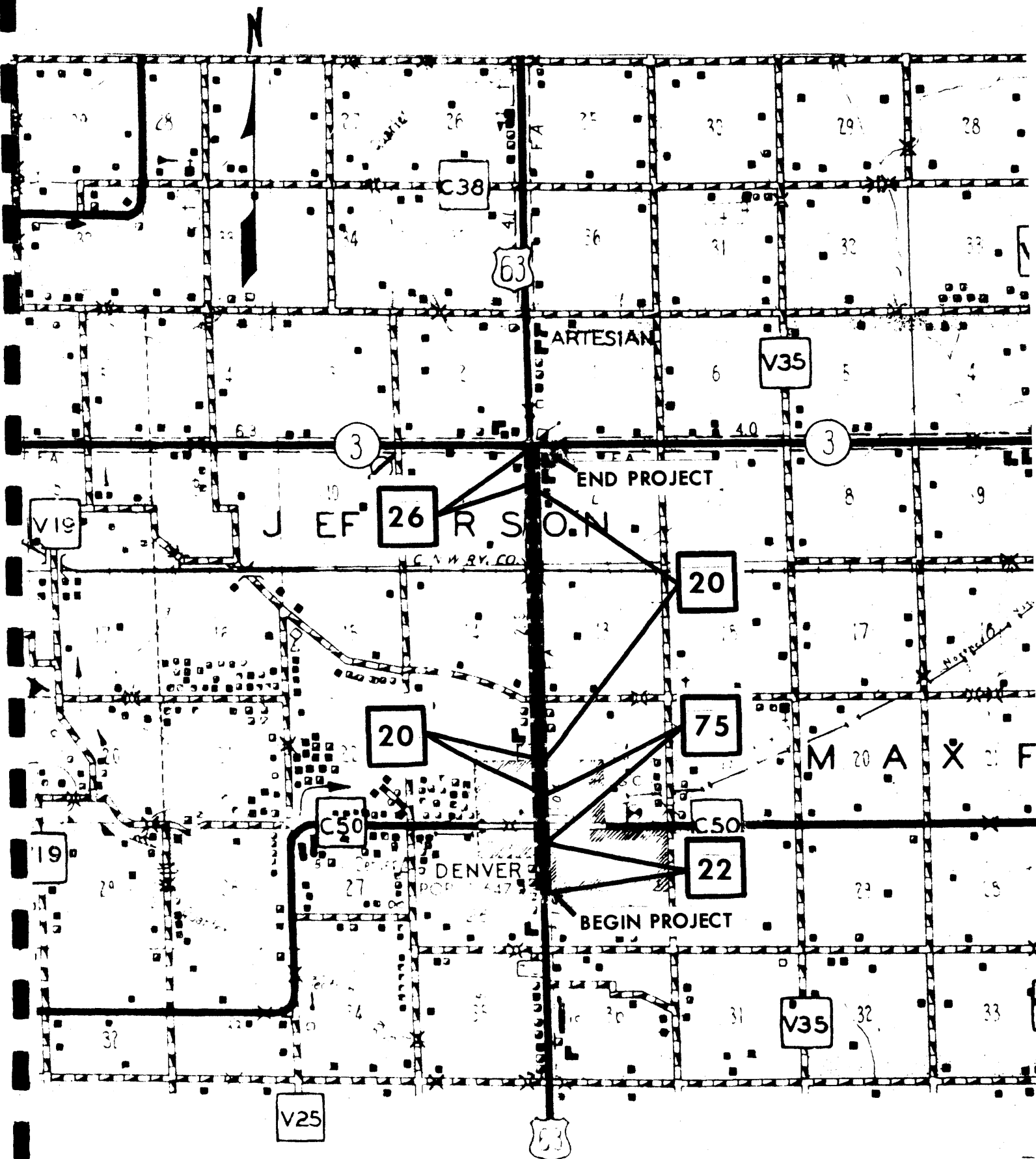
II. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The existing pavement in the project area was originally constructed in 1928, and widened and resurfaced in 1954 to a 24-foot travelway with 4-foot wide shoulders. It was resurfaced again in 1971. Currently U.S. 63 is classified as a major arterial under the Iowa DOT functional classification system.

The current highway sufficiency ratings for the section of U.S. 63 under study are shown in Figure 2. Sufficiency ratings in Iowa are composed of three major categories which measure the roadway's structural adequacy, safety, and capability to accommodate specific traffic volumes with a minimum of conflict. A rating of 90-100 is classified as excellent; 80-89 is good; 65-79 is fair; 50-64 is tolerable, and 0-49 is critical. Present and projected traffic volumes for the proposed project are shown in Figures 3 and 4.

A capacity study of U.S. 63 within the project area indicated the existing two-lane roadway is not capable of providing adequate levels of service under existing traffic volumes. Further analysis revealed that an improved two-lane highway within the project corridor would also fall short of delivering the desired level of service (level B) for future traffic volumes predicted to use this highway. Existing shoulders are narrow and there are several locations where the vertical alignment cause restricted sight distance. At the public hearing for segment 2, there was strong support to extend the four-lane section to Iowa 3.

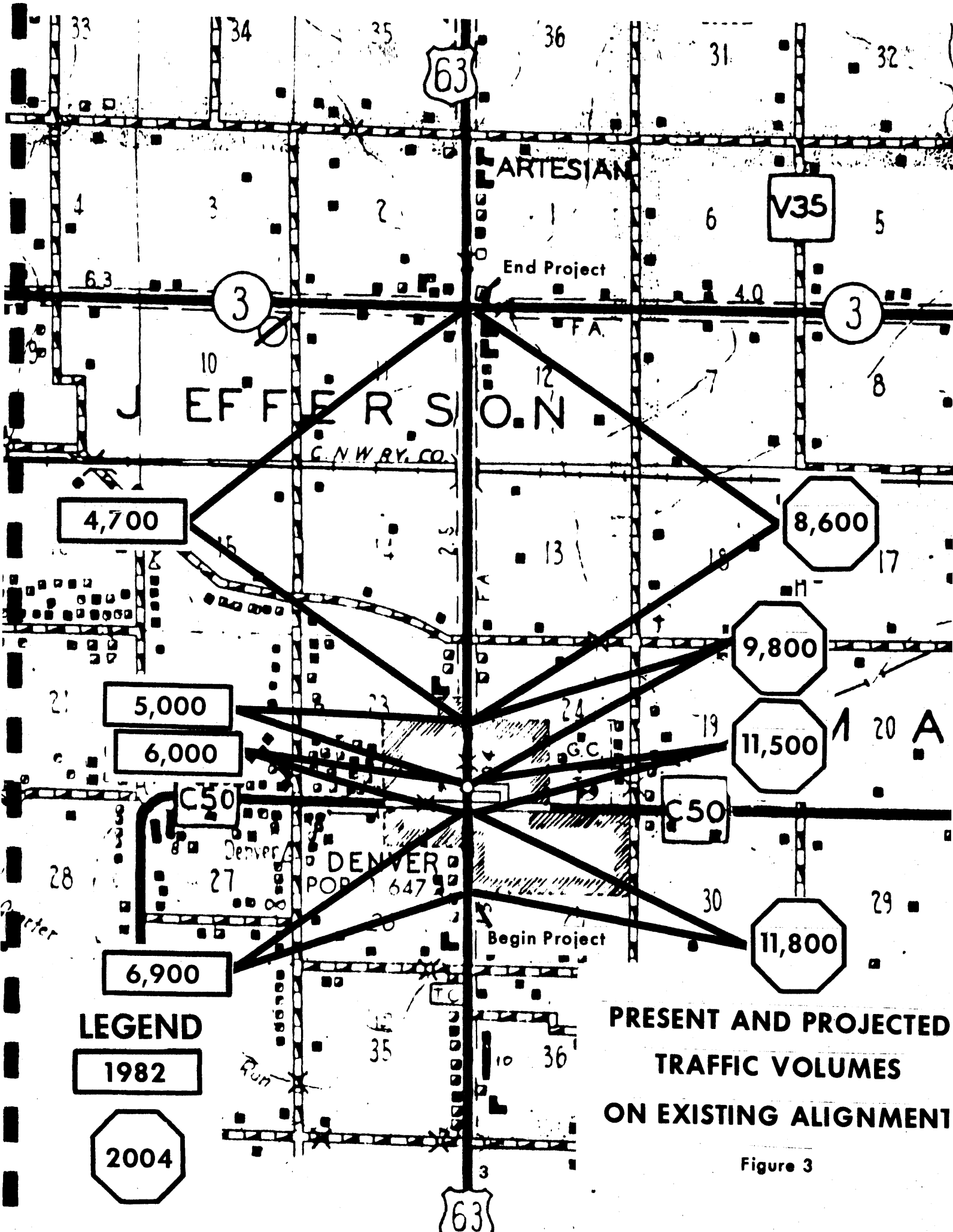
Accident history for the years 1979, 1980, and 1981 and shown in Tables 1 (rural) and 2 (urban).



U.S.63-BREMER COUNTY

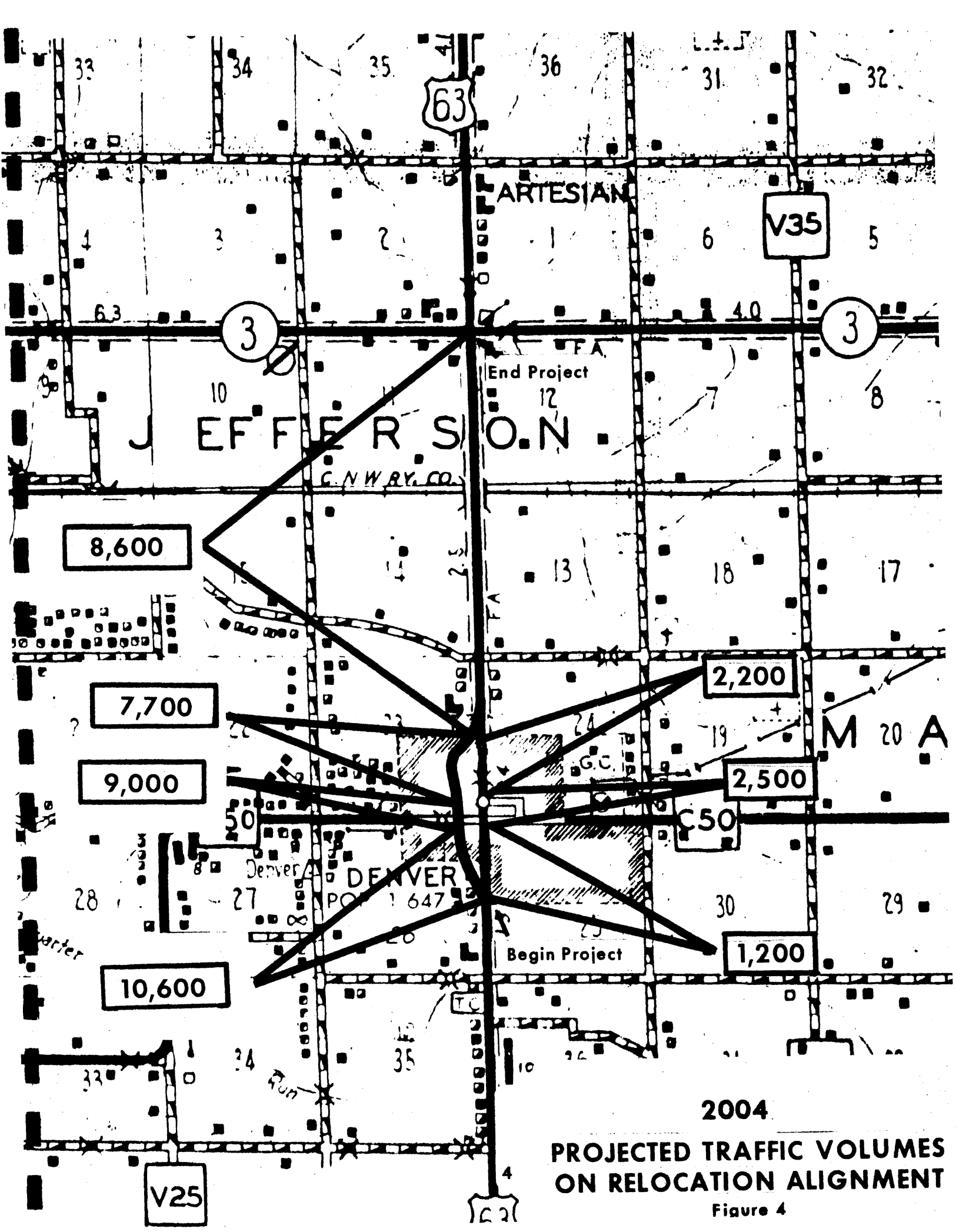
1983 Sufficiency Ratings

Figure 2



**PRESENT AND PROJECTED
TRAFFIC VOLUMES
ON EXISTING ALIGNMENT**

Figure 3



2004
**PROJECTED TRAFFIC VOLUMES
 ON RELOCATION ALIGNMENT**
 Figure 4

**PROJECT AREA ACCIDENT HISTORY
ACCIDENTS PER 100 MILLION VEHICLE MILES**

TABLE 1 (RURAL)

Year	Number of Accidents	Project Area Accident Rate	Iowa Statewide Accident Rate (Rural)
1979	5	118	145
1980	6	138	137
1981	5	112	125

TABLE 2 (URBAN)

1979	4	125	818
1980	6	182	732
1981	6	177	649

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed improvement consists of upgrading a 3.50 mile segment of U.S. 63 through the city of Denver north to Iowa 3 to a four-lane facility. Two alternatives are being considered, both beginning at the south corporation line of Denver and terminating at Iowa 3. One alternative is on the present alignment of U.S. 63 through Denver and the other is on a relocation alignment through Denver. Both are described in detail in Section IV, Alternatives, in addition to the "Do-Nothing" Alternative.

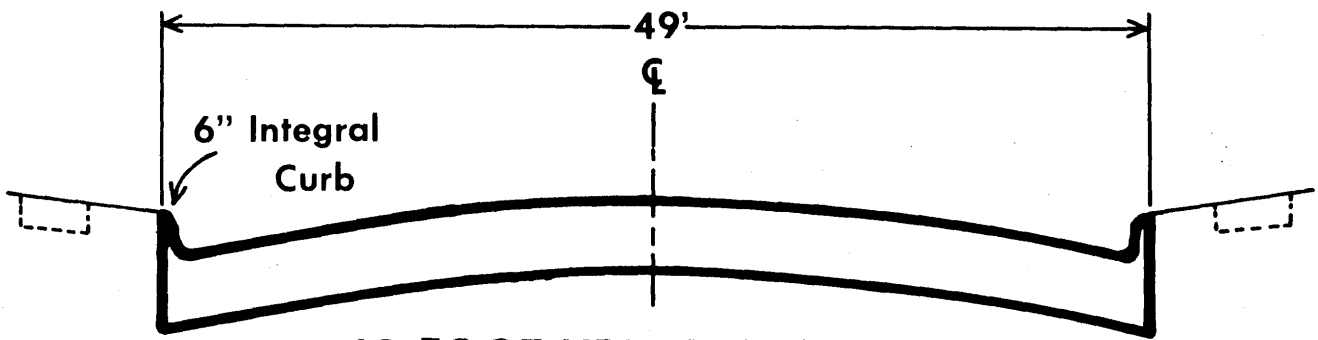
A preferred alternative has not been identified at this stage of project development. Neither construction alternate has a significant environmental impact nor is the impact of one over the other of any significance. After a 30-day review period for public comment on this environmental assessment has elapsed, a corridor public hearing will be held. At that time, after public review and comment, a preferred alternative will be selected. If comments received indicate that the proposed improvement will cause significant impacts, an environmental impact statement will be circulated. If no new impacts are identified, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) will be prepared for the project.

IV. ALTERNATIVES

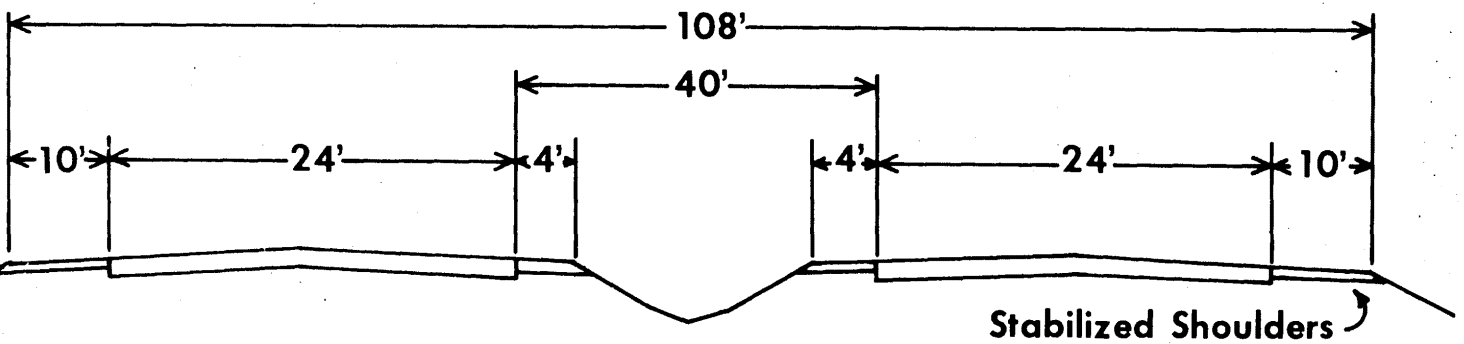
Two alternatives, in addition to the "do-nothing" alternative, are being considered for this project. These alternatives are outlined below.

Present Alignment Alternative

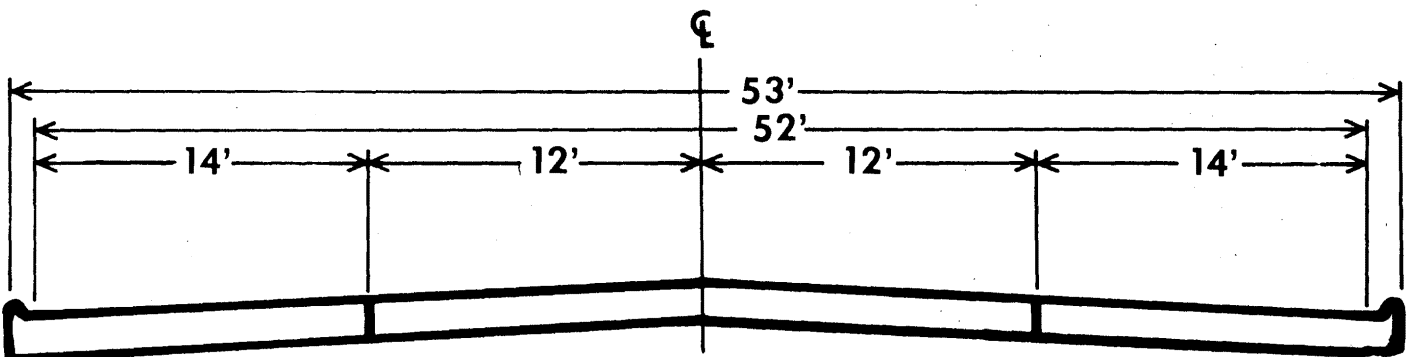
This alternate begins on State Street at the south corporation line of Denver. The existing 49-foot wide pavement would be reconstructed to a 49-foot width through Denver to near the bridge over Quarter Section Run. (See Figure 5 for the typical cross section.) This section would be reconstructed because of its poor structural condition. The 49-foot construction is appropriate because of right-of-way restrictions through



49-FOOT URBAN HIGHWAY



FOUR-LANE DEPRESSED MEDIAN



53-FOOT URBAN HIGHWAY

TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS

Not to Scale

Figure 5

the city and because the City is presently reconstructing several street returns which provide for a 49-foot facility. North of Washington Street the existing bridge (128'x54') over Quarter Section Run, built in 1969, will be used as constructed. A four-lane undivided rural section with stabilized shoulders is proposed north of the bridge to the north corporation line of Denver where a four-lane divided facility with a 40-foot median would begin. (See Figure 5 for a four-lane divided typical cross section.) This alternate terminates at Iowa 3. Two additional lanes will be constructed on the west, and existing U.S. 63 will be reconstructed with the exception of a 0.67 mile section at the C. & N.W. Railroad where a grade separation was constructed in 1978. A grade separation at the railroad is also proposed for the new southbound lanes. The length of this alternate is approximately 3.5 miles and the estimated costs are \$3,650,000.

Relocation Alternative

This alternative begins at the south corporation line of Denver and will provide for a 53-foot back-of-curb to back-of-curb urban facility (See Figure 5 for typical cross section) then curves westerly to follow Transit Street north through Denver. From the bridge over Quarter Section Run the alignment returns easterly through Forrest Avenue Park to tie into the existing U.S. 63 alignment just south of Denver's north corporation line. From here north the alternate is the same as the Present Alignment Alternate. A bridge will be constructed over Quarter Section Run. The length of this alternate is approximately 3.5 miles and the estimated costs are \$4,300,000. See the section "Parks and Recreation Facilities" on page 13 for the impacts on Forrest Avenue Park.

Do-Nothing Alternative

The level of service which a highway facility provides is a qualitative measure of the effect of a number of factors on the flow of traffic using the highway. These include travel speed and time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, driving comfort and convenience, safety and operating costs. Six levels of service have been established to identify traffic flow under various speed and volume conditions on a highway.

These levels of service, designated A through F, from best to worst, cover the entire range of traffic operations that may occur. Level of service B has been established as the desirable level of service for rural highways such as U.S. 63. This level describes a condition of efficient, free traffic flow with only minor effects on operating speed due to traffic conditions.

As traffic volumes and turning movements increase, however, vehicle flow and speed is reduced, as is the ability of drivers to maneuver. The aggregate effect of this condition is reduced efficiency of the facility to handle traffic leading to increased operating costs and loss of time for those motorists using the highway.

At the present time, traffic on U.S. 63 in the project area is at the level where a higher capacity facility is needed in order to provide an adequate level of service. Moreover, this traffic volume along with future predicted increases justifies additional lanes in order to maintain the desired level of service.

For these reasons and those presented in the "Need for the Project" the "do-nothing" option is not considered a viable alternative, and accordingly, this alternative has been eliminated from further consideration.

Additional Alternatives Studied

Other alternatives were evaluated to minimize right-of-way impacts along the existing highway while providing an acceptable level of service for motorists using U.S. 63. The following is a description of these alternatives and a discussion of why they were eliminated from further study and consideration.

Four-Lane Undivided Alternate

Under this proposal the existing U.S. 63 pavement would be removed and a new 48-foot wide pavement section with 10-foot shoulders constructed on present alignment. See Figure 6 for a typical cross section.

Four-lane undivided highways have generally been used in rural locations where severe right-of-way restrictions limit a wider facility design, where future traffic volumes are expected to remain relatively low, and where a high degree of access control is maintained.

The accident and fatality rates along four-lane undivided rural highways with traffic volumes near or above 10,000 vehicles per day have been found to be twice the rates along a four-lane divided highway with similar traffic volumes and access control.

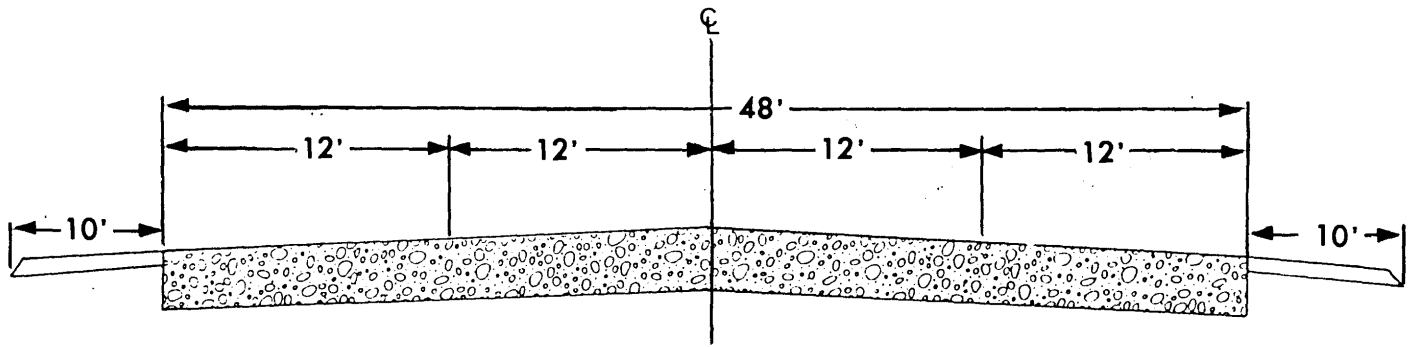
Construction of a four-lane undivided facility would not provide the level of service acceptable for safe and efficient transportation through the entire U.S. 63 corridor.

Five-Lane Undivided Alternate

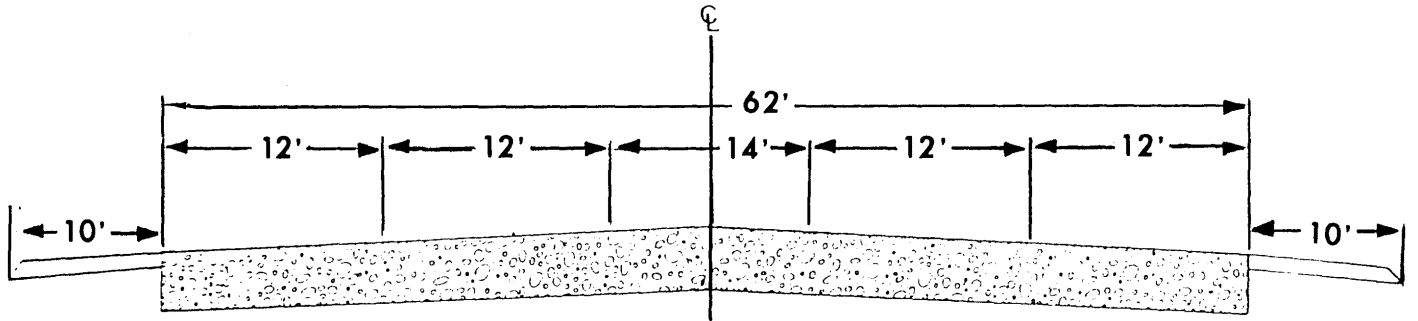
A more recent development in the area of highway design has been the use of a center lane designated for use by left-turning vehicles only. This cross section is often referred to as five-lane highway. (See Figure 6 for typical cross section.) To date there has been limited use of this design in rural areas. This highway cross section has generally been used along highway corridors which have been developed extensively, where the construction of a four-lane divided highway with a depressed median and the necessary frontage road system would result in major environmental and right-of-way damage.

The advantages listed below for a divided highway are reason to eliminate the five-lane concept from further consideration:

1. Separates opposing traffic.
2. Provides a recovery area for vehicles leaving the left edge of the roadway.
3. Provides an area for snow storage resulting in less expensive snow removal operations.
4. Provides for storage of vehicles at median breaks allowing safer crossing of and entrance to the highway.
5. Limits two-way access points to predetermined locations.
6. Reduces headlight glare.
7. Discourages u-turns.



FOUR-LANE UNDIVIDED ALTERNATIVE



FIVE-LANE DIVIDED

TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS

Not to Scale

FIGURE 6

V. PROJECT IMPACTS

Socio-Economic Impacts

The primary beneficial impact of the proposed improvement would be the significant increase in operating safety, capacity and convenience provided by an upgraded roadway.

The improvement of U.S. 63 is not expected to significantly affect the social or economic environment in this corridor; there are no unique social or economic conditions in the area, except for the distinction that the area serves as a commuter district for Waterloo-Cedar Falls. Any improvement to the existing transportation system would be both beneficial and necessary toward maintaining a commuter facility at an acceptable level of service as traffic demands increase in the future.

The project commences in the city of Denver through residential and business property and extends north into primarily agricultural land interspersed with a few farmsteads. The Present Alignment Alternate displaces three homes, while the Relocation Alternate displaces one business and three homes. The business is a local gasoline bulk plant with an estimated one or two employees. The above-ground tanks could be easily moved to another location. The number of acres required for new right-of-way is 52 for the Present Alignment Alternate, 47 acres of which is considered prime farmland, and 65 for the Relocation Alternate, 58 acres of which is prime farmland. The project is not expected to precipitate change in land use along the corridor.

To reduce any potential hardships which might be caused by the displacements, eligible property owners will receive compensation through acquisition payments and through the Iowa Department of Transportation's comprehensive relocation assistance program.

No minority group would be affected by the right-of-way acquisition and displacement accompanying the location and design of this project.

Public service facilities will not be significantly impacted. Any adjustment in local utilities will be coordinated to maintain essential services during the time of project construction. Temporary inconveniences during the construction phase of the project would result; however, staged construction will allow access for emergency vehicles through the area during construction.

Environmental Impacts

Natural Habitat - Project impacts will not present a significant threat to area wildlife or wildlife habitat. The Relocation Alternate and Present Alignment alternate begin in the city of Denver, affecting residential property, and both have a common alignment in the rural section north of Denver. Since the proposed project adds two lanes to an already existing rural facility any impact would be on wildlife now living in the right-of-way which would reinhabit the area after construction. The bridge over Quarter Section Run proposed with the relocation alternate would not significantly affect wildlife or water quality as the area is urban in nature.

Air Quality - Based on the experience of modeling and monitoring activity on other highway projects with comparable traffic volumes in both small urban areas and rural areas, the air quality effects of the reconstruction of U.S. 63 are expected to be minimal. The National Ambient Air Quality Standards would not be approached as a result of

traffic operating on the new facility, thus the project conforms to the state implementation plan for maintaining those standards. Further, 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.

Short term air quality effects, primarily in the form of fugitive dust would be expected during construction operations. Standard construction specifications for dust control will be followed to assure against significantly adverse effects.

Noise - Three homes were selected to represent noise sensitive receivers which are located adjacent to the proposed project alignments. The existing Leq (time averaged equivalent noise level) noise levels at the three homes was compared to the predicted Design Year (2004) noise levels in order to determine what impact this project would have on future noise levels. The noise level predictions were made with the aid of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) SNAP 1.0 noise prediction model. Design Year noise levels were predicted for the three different alternates being considered: 1. Relocate U.S. 63 in Denver with four-lane reconstruction in rural areas, 2. Improve the existing roadway in Denver with four-lane reconstruction in rural areas and, 3. "Do Nothing."

The Federal Aid Highway Program Manual 7-7-3, July 1982, established Leq (h) noise abatement criteria levels for sensitive areas affected by highway traffic noise. These noise levels are considered to be the highest noise levels desirable without resulting in significant interference with normal outdoor activities. All identified noise sensitive receivers adjacent to U.S. 63 will fall under what is referred to as land use/activity category B. The noise abatement criteria level for this category is an Leq of 67 dBA for the exterior of the structure. The following table lists the existing Leq noise levels at each site and the predicted design year Leq noise levels. The location of these sites are shown on aerial photo Plates 2, 3 and 7.

TABLE 3

Site No.	Existing Leq	2004 Leq Present Alignment	2004 Leq Relocation	2004 Leq "No Build"
1	68 dBA	71	56	71
2	45-50 dBA	45-50	68	45-50
3	69 dBA	70	70	72

At the present time noise levels in areas adjacent to the existing U.S. 63 alignment are already quite high. Most of these areas have noise levels that are equal to or exceed the noise abatement criteria level of 67 dBA.

Site 1 is a home located in Denver, adjacent to U.S. 63 between Lincoln Street and Hoover Street. This site represents noise sensitive receivers located along the present U.S. 63 alignment through Denver. As can be seen on Table 3 the noise level at this site exceeds the 67 dBA criteria level. If U.S. 63 stays on the present alignment, noise levels will continue to increase in future years; with a predicted Leq of approximately 71 dBA by the year 2004. However, if U.S. 63 were to be relocated over to Transit Street a significant reduction in noise levels will occur. It is predicted that the Leq at Site 1 will drop to approximately 56 dBA. A similar noise reduction can be expected to occur in all areas adjacent to the existing U.S. 63 alignment through Denver.

Site 2 is a home located on the south side of Forrest Avenue approximately one block west of U.S. 63. The centerline of relocated U.S. 63 would be approximately 85 feet west

of this home. This home represents the six homes which have been identified as most likely to be impacted by noise from relocated U.S. 63. If U.S. 63 were relocated all of these homes would experience an increase in the Leq level in excess of 15 decibels. Noise levels could increase by 20 or more decibels at Site 2 itself.

Site 3 is a rural farm home located approximately one quarter mile south of the intersection of U.S. 63 and Iowa 3 north of Denver. This site represents rural homes located adjacent to U.S. 63 north of Denver. Existing noise levels at this site are already relatively high, but are likely to increase only slightly if the proposed project were completed. Future noise levels would increase somewhat more if the additional lanes were not built. These new lanes would place southbound traffic at a greater distance from this site.

It is quite evident that the proposed project could have a significant impact on future noise levels in the City of Denver. Whether this impact is positive or negative depends on the future location of U.S. 63. Relocating U.S. 63 will result in the introduction of highway traffic noise into an area of town which is now relatively quiet. However, those areas adjacent to existing U.S. 63 would experience a dramatic reduction in traffic noise. Alternatively, keeping U.S. 63 on its existing alignment would result in somewhat higher noise levels in areas that are already exposed to high noise levels without introducing significant noise increases into areas which are now quiet. In order to determine which of the two proposed alternate alignments in Denver would be better from a noise impact standpoint, three important factors must be considered. The factors to consider are: how much will noise levels increase or decrease; how many people are affected by the noise increase or decrease; and if noise levels increase can they effectively be reduced or mitigated. Considering the number of people that will be adversely affected by the increase in noise along the existing roadway, a much larger number will be positively affected compared to the number negatively affected. It would appear that the overall affect or relocating U.S. 63 in Denver would be a positive one from a noise impact standpoint. Assuming U.S. 63 were relocated in Denver and noise levels increased significantly in the areas adjacent to the new alignment, what type of noise mitigation measures could be implemented? It was determined that since those homes which would be adversely impacted by this realignment are so few in number and are located large distances from one another, normal noise abatement measures such as solid walls or berms, would be ineffective from either a noise or cost standpoint.

In addition to the three homes which were selected as noise sampling sites, one additional site was analyzed for noise impacts. This site is the Forrest Avenue Park on the north side of Denver. At the present time U.S. 63 runs along the east edge of the park. If U.S. 63 were relocated, the new alignment will pass through the western side of the park. That portion of the park which would remain after the relocation would experience an increase in traffic noise levels. However, the increase will be small, because the remaining portion of the park is already being exposed to relatively high noise levels from the existing U.S. 63 alignment. Since the relocation alignment will pass through that portion of the park which is now relatively free of traffic noise, the entire area of the park remaining will be exposed to traffic noise. An Leq of 66-70 dBA will be experienced throughout the park.

Summary and Conclusion

Three sites were selected to represent noise sensitive land uses adjacent to the U.S. 63 project corridor. The existing ambient Leq noise levels at each site were compared to

the predicted 2004 Leq level for both the "Build" and "No Build" alternates. The "Build" alternate considered two different alignments in the city of Denver. It is predicted that if U.S. 63 were reconstructed on the existing alignment, noise levels which are already close to or exceeding the applicable abatement criteria level will increase about three more decibels by the year 2004. This increase would occur whether the project were completed or not. If U.S. 63 is relocated through Denver, noise levels will decrease significantly along the existing U.S. 63 alignment, but will increase significantly in areas adjacent to the new alignment. From an overall noise impact standpoint the benefits to be gained by the relocation are greater than the adverse impacts of introducing traffic noise into an area which does not now experience this noise. In addition, it is recommended that no noise abatement structures be incorporated into the project design.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

Approximately one acre of parkland will be required from Forrest Avenue Park for this project. The Mayor of Denver has determined that the park is not significant with respect to recreational use. The mayor's letter providing this determination is contained on page 21.

Since no federal funds have been used and there are no covenants, restrictions or conditions affecting the title, consideration under section 4(f) is not required for this park. The park's primary use is as a roadside rest area. It contains a waste disposal facility for travel trailers, a picnic table, and some playground equipment.

The Iowa DOT will replace the amount of parkland taken with excess right-of-way north of Forrest Avenue and west of U.S. 63. There are several parks in Denver east of U.S. 63 which are used much more by the citizens of Denver than Forrest Avenue Park. None of these parks will be adversely affected by the project.

VI. SUMMARY

This environmental assessment indicates that the proposed project will have no significant adverse social, economic or environmental impacts and that the improvement is necessary for safe and efficient travel within the project area.

Unless significant impacts are identified as a result of the public availability of this assessment or the public hearing, a formal Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued.

VII. COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

This project has been coordinated with the State Office for Planning and Programming, the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments, the City of Denver, and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Comments received are included on the following pages.

A corridor public hearing is tentatively scheduled for this project in the fall of 1983.

STATE OF IOWA

Office for Planning and Programming

523 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 Telephone 515/281-3711

TERRY E. BRANSTAD
Governor

EDWARD J. STANEK, PhD
Director

July 25, 1983

Harry S. Budd
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Re: IA 830617-309

Dear Mr. Budd:

The Iowa State Clearinghouse has completed the A-95 review of the notice of the work planned in Bremer County on U.S. 63 from the south corporation line of Denver to Iowa 3.

The review:

- did not generate any comment from those who examined the file.
- found no serious environmental problems which may result from the project or program.
- indicated that the proposal conforms to pertinent planning in 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.

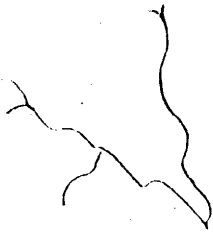
Sincerely,



A. Thomas Wallace
Federal Funds Coordinator

ATW/sb

NRCCOG



IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Suite N Russell Lamson Building 209 West Fifth Street Waterloo, Iowa 50701 Telephone: 319-235-0311

July 21, 1983

Mr. Harry S. Budd
Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Budd:

The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments, acting as the areawide clearinghouse, reviewed your Project Notification and Review Statement for widening U.S. 63 in Bremer County to four lanes from Iowa 3 to the south corporate limits of Denver at its regular meeting of July 14, 1983. This review was completed in accordance with the provisions of the Office of Management and Budget, Circular A-95. A copy of the review is enclosed.

It is the recommendation of the Regional Council of Governments that this request for funding be approved.

If there are any questions relative to this matter, please feel free to contact us.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rod Larsen".

Rod Larsen
Director of Transportation

RL/jc

Enclosures

NOTE: It is the responsibility of you, as the applicant, to forward this letter and other pertinent information with your application to the appropriate agency.

A-95 Official Review

1. Name of proposal: Widening U.S. 63 in Bremer Co. to Four Lanes from Iowa 3 to South Corporate Limits of Denver - PRNS
2. Name of applicant: Iowa Department of Transportation
3. Name of contact person: Harry S. Budd
4. Date received: June 22, 1983
Staff Reviewer: Rod Larsen
5. Purpose of project:

The Iowa Department of Transportation proposes to improve U.S. 63 in Bremer County beginning at the south corporation line of Denver and extending northerly 3.5 miles to Iowa 3. Two alternatives are being considered which will provide for a four-lane divided facility with one alternate following the existing alignment through Denver, and the other alternate bypassing the business district on the west on the existing alignment of Transit Street.

6. Length of project: 3.5 miles
7. Cost of project and source of funding:

Federal	<u>\$3,225,000</u>	<u>(75%)</u>
State	<u>1,075,000</u>	<u>(25%)</u>
Local	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Misc.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total	<u>\$4,300,000</u>	<u> </u>

8. Date reviewed by Staff Review Committee: _____
Date reviewed by Professional Advisory Comm. _____

9. Action taken:

	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Disapproved</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Date</u>
Staff Review Comm.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Professional Advisory Comm.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Executive Comm.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Council	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>7/14/83</u>

10. Date of notification of action transmitted to applicant: July 21, 1983

COMMENTS

Staff Review Committee:

Professional Advisory Committee:

Council or Executive Committee:

The Council requested the Iowa DOT to provide for close coordination with the City of Denver and INRCOG during the development of this project, for both the establishment of specific alternates and assessment of associated impacts.

City of Denver

Box 394

Denver, Iowa 50622

December 15, 1982

Mr. Harry Budd, Director
Office of Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

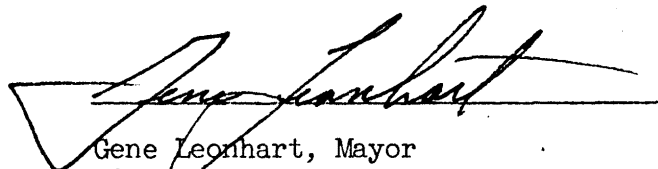
Dear Mr. Budd:

I am writing you regarding the analysis to be made for a four-lane Highway 63 corridor through Denver. I have previously corresponded with Odell Solem, your District Transportation Planner, regarding this subject.

The City of Denver had requested that two four-lane corridors be reviewed -- those being State Street and Transit Street. In reply to that request, Mr. MacGillivray had stated that the State Street corridor would be studied, as well as an alternative of a one-way pair using Transit Street. We are curious as to why Transit Street is to be studied as a one-way pair in tandem with State Street and not as a single four-lane corridor, as had been requested.

Your reply to this matter will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,


Gene Leonhart, Mayor
City of Denver

GL:bj

THE FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT PRESENTED BY MAYOR GENE LEONHART OF DENVER AT THE APRIL 19, 1983, CORRIDOR PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE U.S. 63 PROJECT FROM COUNTY ROAD C66 IN BLACK HAWK COUNTY TO EAGLE STREET IN DENVER.

The Denver City Council has reviewed the preliminary planning for upgrading Highway 63, and by virtue of this Public Hearing, would like to express their initial thoughts on the program as presented.

First, all agree that a multi-lane replacement of the Highway along the existing corridor is a long overdue improvement. The facts of traffic count, past, present, and future, do not need to be reiterated. IDOT statistics verify what we, the daily users, already know -- the designed-for use has been exceeded. A question does remain as to which surfacing alternative would be optimum. We feel that the safety factor of a four-lane divided roadway, with grassed median, outweighs its drawback of slightly added cost. We are totally cognizant that this alternative does require additional farm acres, but again feel that safety should be the overriding determinate. The five-lane idea is not a tried and true concept as it relates to Iowa highway planning. The total facts are not in, and we do not feel ~~that~~ now, with funding finally available, that this project should be a test site.

Secondly, but in keeping with our approval of the multi-lane project, is that the work should be continued to a more logical terminus, that being Highway 3. The traffic count, while not demanding multi-lane at this time, is certainly sufficient to warrant this improvement. With the already approved upgrading of 63 North of Highway 3, it would be shortsighted planning to leave the section North of Denver for only shoulder improvements. Further, the highway planning reversal is due to the sizeable increase in anticipated funding. Give us what's due. Such an opportunity may not come again. It has been 60 years coming, and we would shudder to think how long a re-work would take if only half a job is done now.

The third, and for Denver, most important consideration is what the planners have in store within ~~the~~ Denver proper. The suggested concept of stopping the improvement at Eagle Street is totally unacceptable. This would involve work being cut one block short of a lighted intersection. Where would traffic go from there? The world cannot stop at Eagle Street. Saying that directional lanes will solve the problem seems at best to be over simplifying. Why improve to 49 feet and then bar its use? This is an action contrary to logical sequence. This whole discussion brings us to the root of our concern; if four lanes are brought into the corporate limits, surely there must be a plan for its continuance. Therein lies the great conundrum -- how do we get four lanes stuffed through Denver?

Our initial concept, and one we feel should receive closer study, is to use the Transit Street area one block West of the existing right-of-way. This would best be accomplished by relocating those businesses which line the West portion of the right-of-way, thereby provide more than adequate area for a highway improvement. This would require swinging the highway through the Frohwein property on the South and Bidwell property on the North, both areas of marginal ag land, and a new bridge over Quarter Section Run. The move to the West side of Transit would also alleviate garnering any park ground for Highway use.

Obviously, we don't regard this option as a panacea. The existing corridor must also be closely reviewed. Laying the problems of narrow right-of-way and gutter-to-gutter traffic aside, there could be a positive side to the ledger. The traffic increase would benefit those businesses requiring drive-by traffic, the business core would retain its vitality, current parallel parking problems would be alleviated, and off-street parking could be developed, and bridge expansion would be less demanding.

These are problems which can't be simply answered during the course of one hearing. We, as a representative body, must meet with all those affected. We feel that our people can develop a final concept agreeable to the majority. Of primary importance is that our voice must be heard. Whatever happens in Denver will have long-range effects on our future. We request the privilege of this spot in time to prepare what is best for us, as well as the traveling public. This is a community of which we are justifiably proud, and whatever happens should be influenced by our guiding thoughts.

**IOWA STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

SEP 7 1983

September 2, 1983

ADRIAN D. ANDERSON, Executive Director
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

David L. Cook
Historic Preservation Specialist
Office of Project Planning
Planning and Research Division
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Re: F-63-7 Bremer County, U.S. 63
SCL Denver to Iowa 3


Dear David:

Following a review of the archaeological documentation and discussions with you on September 1, 1983, we have determined that the project corridor, as proposed, will not disturb any archaeological resources. If, however, the relocation alternate at the City of Denver is chosen, then additional archaeological survey work will be necessary. It is our understanding that the archaeological work has already been scheduled. We will review the results of the additional survey when it has been completed.

In reference to the historical and architectural resources we offer the following comments. Based upon our discussion and review, there are four buildings at the U.S. 63 and Iowa 3 intersection that require more historical information before their significance can be determined. At present, these structures will not be impacted by the project. If the status of these structures changes, the buildings will need a more intensive historical and architectural assessment to determine their significance.

Based on the above comments and conditions, we find the project, as designed, to have no effect upon significant cultural resources. If the project is altered, please contact our office for further comments.

Sincerely,



Adrian D. Anderson, Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

ADA/crv

September 13, 1983

Mr. Harry Budd, Director
Office of Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Sir:

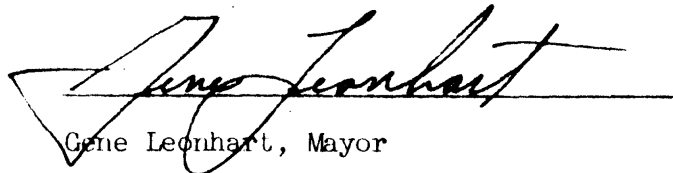
On the evening of September 6, 1982, the Denver City Council reviewed with DOT Tom Welch and Jerry Solbeck, preliminary plans for Highway 63 routing through Denver. One suggested alternative involves the Transit Street re-route which, at its North end, would violate the property of Forest Avenue Park. This park is municipally owned. After review of various options, the Council voted unanimously to allow planning to continue on the through-park concept. This decision was based on the following factors:

1. The park does not have facilities for large group sports; therefore, the area is not recreationally significant.
2. The park is used primarily for small family picnics and the adjacent highway users.
3. The existing sanitary facilities for public and recreational vehicles can be relocated within the remaining available park area.
4. If the highway by-pass is accepted, additional properties would become available for expansion of the park in a Northerly direction, which would offset the ground lost for highway development.

The Council feels that the by-pass should be given utmost consideration, due particularly to the narrow existing corridor, and also, in consideration of the cost difference as opposed to rebuilding the existing right-of-way.

Thank you and the staff for sharing the preliminary plan with our local Council.

Sincerely,



Gene Leonhart, Mayor

GL:b,j

Copies to: Mr. Thomas M. Welch
Mr. Robert Bortle

**COMMENTS RECEIVED
AFTER THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**



IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Suite N Russell Lamson Building 209 West Fifth Street Waterloo, Iowa 50701 Telephone: 319-235-0311

November 1, 1983

Mr. Harry Budd, Director
Office of Project Planning
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

Dear Mr. Budd:

The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments acting as the areawide clearinghouse, reviewed Project #F-63-7, Environmental Assessment for Improvements to U.S. 63, from Denver north to Iowa 3 at its regular meeting of October 13, 1983. This review was completed in accordance with the provisions of the Office of Management and Budget, Circular A-95. A copy of the review is enclosed.

It is the recommendation of the Regional Council of Governments that this request for funding be approved. (See attached comments.)

If there are any questions relative to this matter, please feel free to contact us.

Very truly yours,

Kevin I. Petersen
Senior Planner

KIP/kg
Enclosures

NOTE: It is the responsibility of you, as the applicant, to forward this letter and other pertinent information with your application to the appropriate agency.

COMMENTS

Staff Review Committee:

Professional Advisory Committee:

The Transportation Policy Board supports the City of Denver regarding the Transit Street Alternate. No other comments were forthcoming.

Council or Executive Committee:

The Council supports the City of Denver's desire to relocate U.S. 63 to the Transit Street Alternate. The Council also forwarded this assessment for the Policy Board's review at its October 26, 1983 meeting.

A-95 Official Review

1. Name of proposal: Environmental Assessment for Improvement to U.S. 63 from Denver to Iowa 3

2. Name of applicant: Iowa Department of Transportation

3. Name of contact person: Harry S. Budd

4. Date received: October 3, 1983
Staff Reviewer: Kip Petersen

5. Purpose of project:

This document details the environmental impacts which have been identified on the two alternates studied. This document is being made available for public review and comment. If, after 30 days, no other impacts have been identified, a finding of no significant impact will be prepared. The two alternates under consideration are: widening existing U.S. 63 through Denver in existing 49' R.O.W.; construction of a 53' facility along Transit Street.

6. Length of project: NA

7. Cost of project and source of funding:

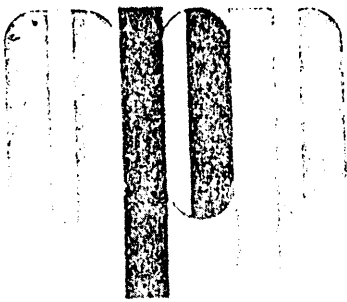
Federal NA
State _____
Local _____
Misc. _____
Total NA

8. Date reviewed by Staff Review Committee: _____
Date reviewed by Professional Advisory Comm. October 26, 1983

9. Action taken:

	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Disapproved</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Date</u>
Staff Review Comm.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Professional Advisory Comm.	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	<u>10/26/83</u>
Executive Comm.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Council	<u>X</u>	_____	_____	<u>10/13/83</u>

10. Date of notification of action transmitted to applicant: November 1, 1983



STATE OF IOWA

Office for Planning and Programming

523 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 Telephone 515/281-3711

TERRY E. BRANSTAD
Governor

EDWARD J. STANEK, PhD
Director

December 1, 1983

Harry S. Budd
Office of Project Planning
Planning and Research Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

RE: IA 840930-096
Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Budd:

The State Clearinghouse has completed the review of the Environmental Assessment - F-63-7 Denver to Iowa 3. Agencies and individuals that may have an interest in it have had the opportunity to examine and comment upon its contents. As no objections, recommendations or statements of support were received concerning the information contained in it were received, the Clearinghouse has completed its review and has no comments concerning the environmental assessment.

A copy of this letter should accompany the document when it is forwarded to the federal agency as evidence that the State of Iowa has had the opportunity to examine it.

Sincerely,

A. Thomas Wallace
Federal Funds Coordinator

ATW/sb

IOWA STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

February 10, 1984

ADRIAN D. ANDERSON, Executive Director
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

Mr. David L. Cook, Historic Preservation Specialist
Planning and Research Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

RE: F-63-7: Denver to Iowa 3
Bremer County, Primary Roads


Based on the information provided,

1. _____ we find the above proposed project to have no effect upon known historic or other cultural resources and therefore we recommend approval. However, if construction work uncovers an item or items that may be of historic, archaeological, or architectural interest or if important new historical data come to light in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office and to allow the significance of the discovery to be determined.
2. XXX on structures proposed for rehabilitation, removal or demolition in your letter of 1/30/84 our records show no sites with historic values that we think would be affected in the project area. However, if the proposed work discovers an item or items that may be of historic or archaeological interest or if important new historical data come to light about properties in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office so that the significance of the discovery can be determined.
3. _____ and the report:

we find this project to have no effect upon historic or cultural resources and therefore, we recommend approval. However, if construction work uncovers an item or items that may be of historic or archaeological interest or if important new historical data come to light in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office and to allow the significance of the discovery to be determined.

Your assistance and cooperation in completing the review of the proposed project is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,


Adrian D. Anderson, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

ADA/clm

cc: George Sisson, Road Design
Bob Bortle, District 2 Engineer
Cay Kauffman, FHWA

Historical Building-East 12th & Grand-Des Moines, Iowa 50319 - (515) 281-6825/6826

Received
FEB 24 1984
Office of
Project Planning

IOWA STATE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

February 22, 1984

ADRIAN D. ANDERSON, Executive Director
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER


Mr. David L. Cook, Historic Preservation Specialist
Research and Planning Division
Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010

RE: F-63-7
Denver Bypass
Bremer County, Primary Roads
Based on the information provided,

1. _____ we find the above proposed project to have no effect upon known historic or other cultural resources and therefore we recommend approval. However, if construction work uncovers an item or items that may be of historic, archaeological, or architectural interest or if important new historical data come to light in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office and to allow the significance of the discovery to be determined.
2. XXX on structures proposed for rehabilitation, removal or demolition in your letter of 2/14/84 our records show no sites with historic values that we think would be affected in the project area. However, if the proposed work discovers an item or items that may be of historic or archaeological interest or if important new historical data come to light about properties in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office so that the significance of the discovery can be determined.
3. _____ and the report:

we find this project to have no effect upon historic or cultural resources and therefore, we recommend approval. However, if construction work uncovers an item or items that may be of historic or archaeological interest or if important new historical data come to light in the project area, the work should be delayed sufficient time to notify our office and to allow the significance of the discovery to be determined.

Your assistance and cooperation in completing the review of the proposed project is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Adrian D. Anderson, Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

ADA/clm
cc: George Sisson, Road Design
Bob Bortle, District 2 Engineer
Cay Kauffman, FHWA

T-91N R-13W

Prestien Street

Donna Street

City of Denver

Corporation Line

BEGIN PROJECT

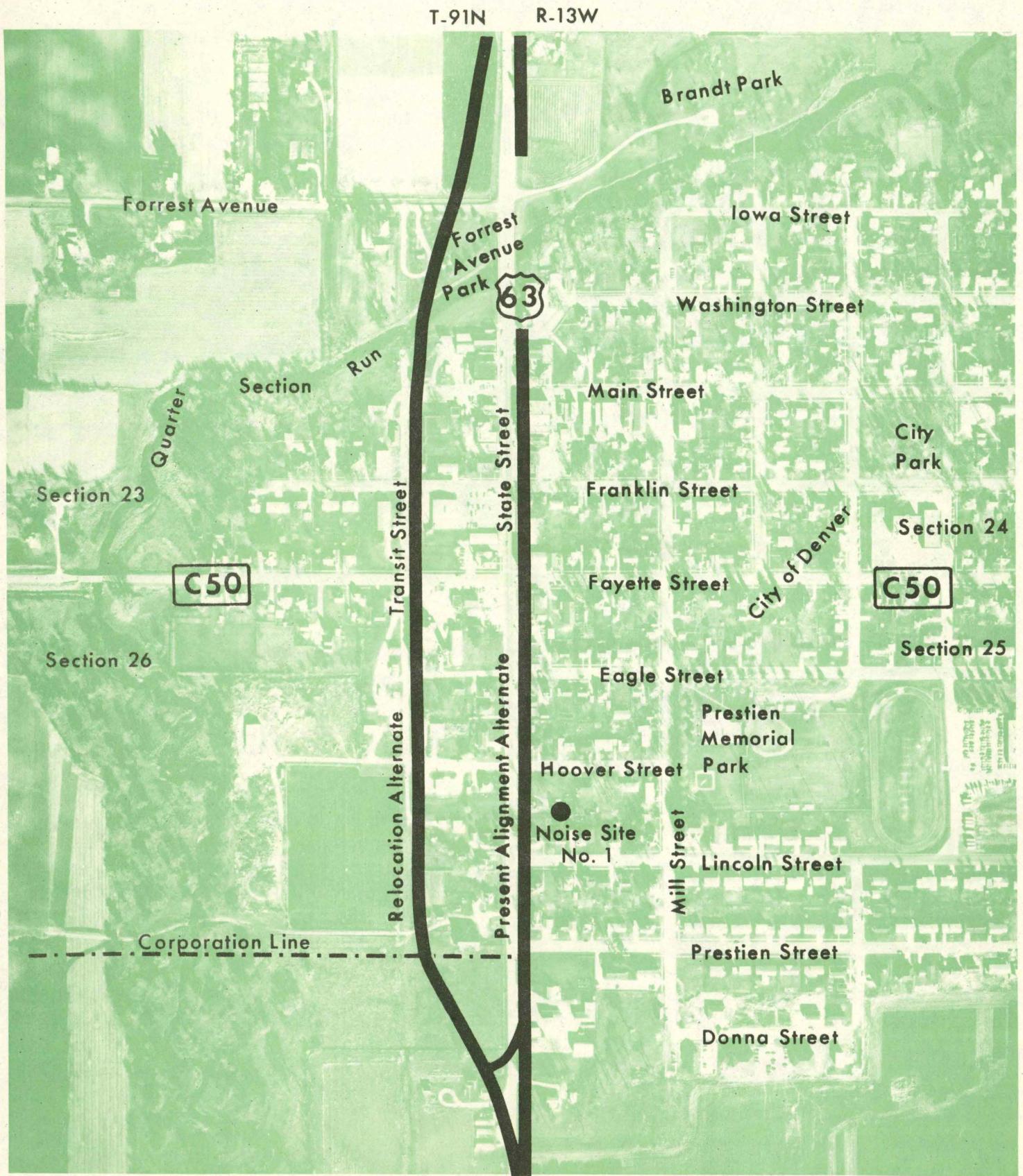


Section 26

Section 25

SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET

PLATE 1



T-91N R-13W

Section 23

Section 24

Corporation Line

Forrest Avenue

Noise Site
No. 2

Relocation Alternate

Forrest
Avenue
Park

Present Alignment Alternate

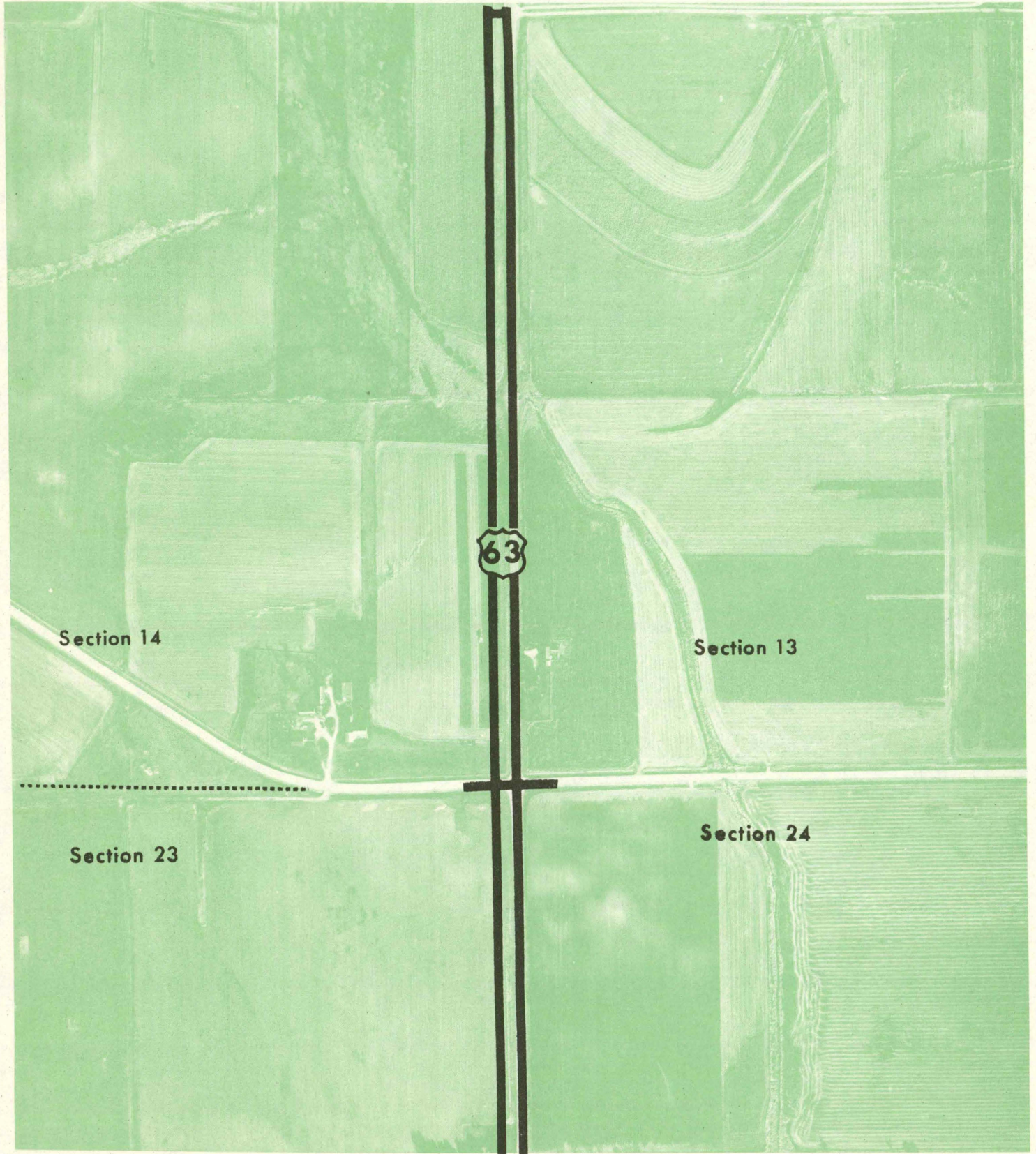
Iowa Street

SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET

PLATE

3

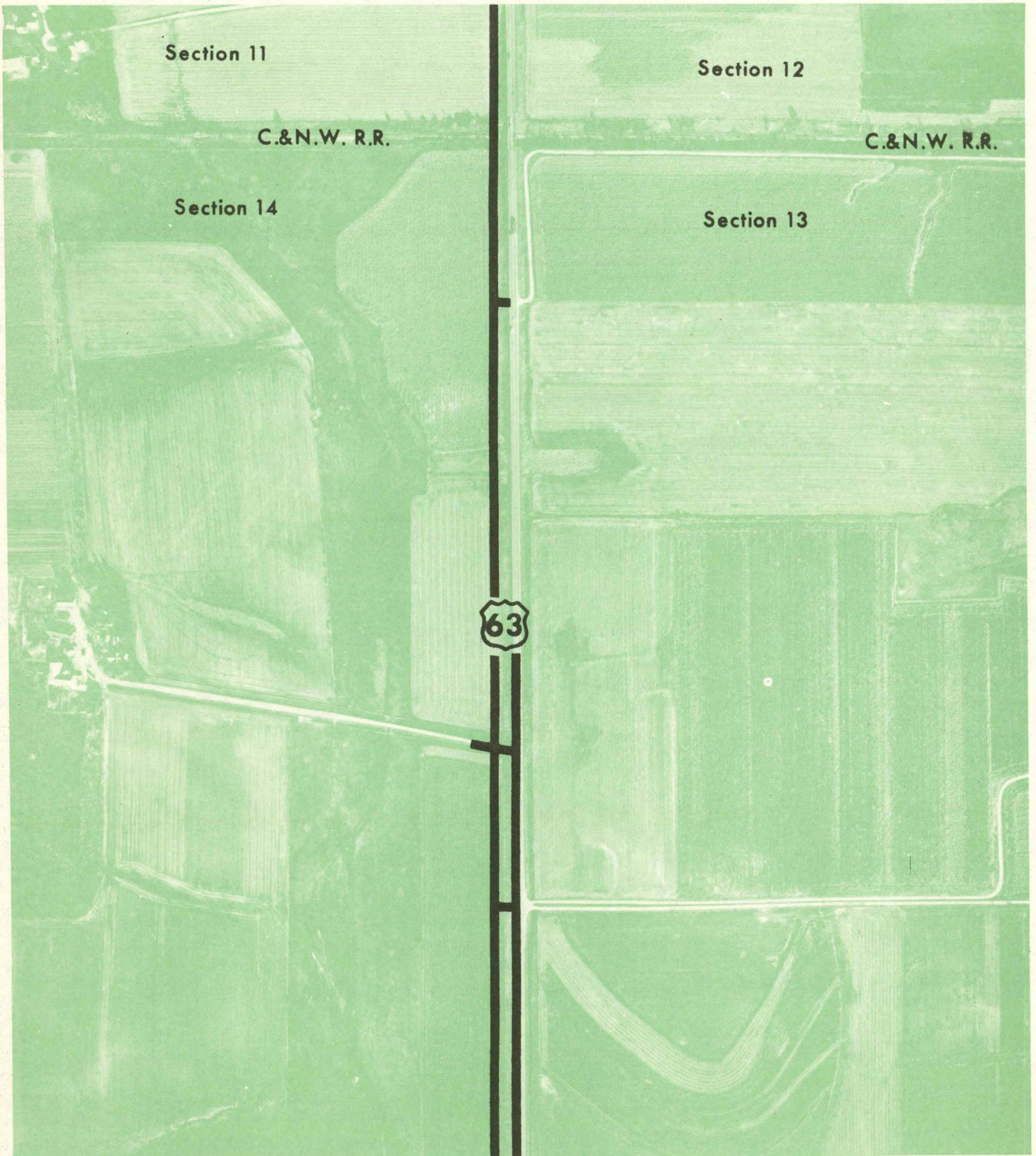
T-91N R-13W



SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET

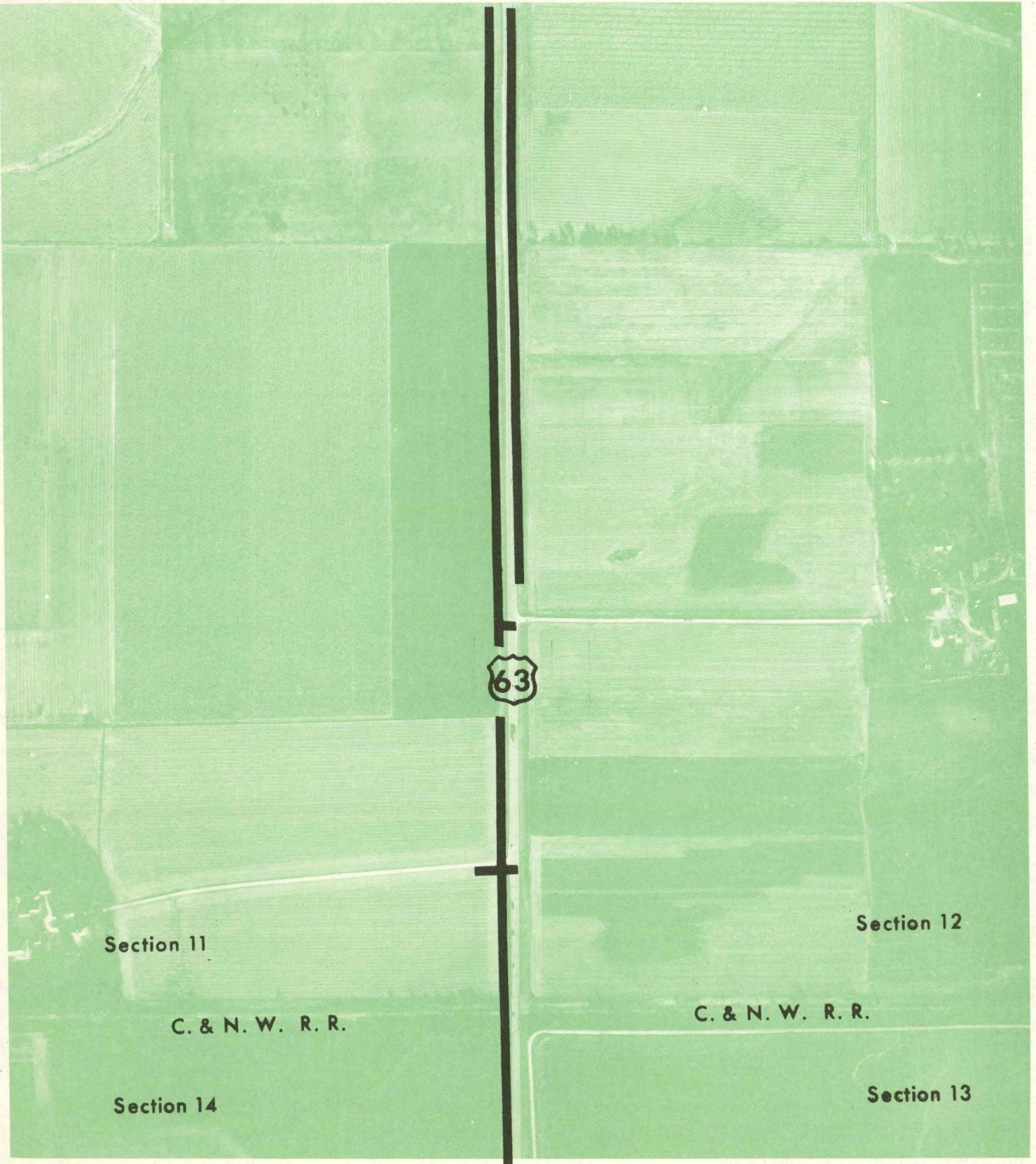
PLATE 4

T-91N R-13W



SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET	PLATE 5
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T-91N R-13W



Section 11

Section 12

C. & N. W. R. R.

C. & N. W. R. R.

Section 14

Section 13

SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET

PLATE 6

T-91N R-13W



Section 2

Section 1



END PROJECT

Section 11

Section 12

Noise Site
No. 3

SCALE: 1 INCH = 500 FEET

PLATE 7

STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA



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