RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study

Public Meeting #4 Summary

Sept. 17 and 18, 2025

Level 2 alternatives screening results for public review and input

February 2026
Program: Planning and Environmental Linkages Study
Idaho Transportation Department: District 1
Project Area: Kootenai County

Recommendations from the study and the public and agency input received may be adopted or incorporated into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies per 23 United States Code (USC) 168 or Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.212 and 450.31.8.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

INTRODUCTION 1

Project Description 1

In-person Meetings 2

Online Meeting 2

COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING 2

Key Meeting Highlights 3

MEETING NOTIFICATION 3

In-person Meetings 4

Online Meeting 5

Meeting Content 7

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMENT THEMES 8

Alternative B 10

Alternative D 12

Alternative H 14

Alternative M 16

Alternative N 18

Alternatives Not Recommended for Advancement 21

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 23

APPENDICES 29

Appendix A - Notification Materials 29

Appendix B - Meeting Handouts 54

Appendix C - Meeting Displays 118

Appendix D - Sign-in Sheets 148

Appendix E - Online Meeting Website Metrics 165

Appendix F - Comment Forms 204

Executive Summary

This summary describes the public engagement efforts for the Idaho Transportation Department's Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. ITD is conducting the study to understand the transportation needs and environmental factors in northern Idaho. The results will help ITD find ways to reduce traffic, improve connections, and make travel easier across the region. The study will also guide future reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act.

In September 2025, ITD held the fourth round of public meetings to share Level 2 screening results, present early recommendations, and gather input on alternatives. The meetings included two in-person open-house meetings with 127 attendees and an online meeting available from Sept. 17 to Oct. 1, 2025, which drew 314 visitors and 81 online comments. In total, ITD received 99 comments received through in-person meetings, the online platform, email and mail.

ITD recommended four alternatives to be carried forward to Level 3 screening, including Alternatives D, H, M, and N, while Alternative B was recommended to be retained as an element. Public feedback focused on traffic flow and congestion, alternative routes and combinations, and property and land impacts, with additional concerns about safety, cost, and growth planning. This input will be considered along with technical, environmental, and engineering data to refine and combine alternatives for Level 3 screening.

Click for information about Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies and NEPA processes.

Introduction

Project Description

The Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study is a project focused on improving travel in the Rathdrum Prairie area. The goal is to make transportation safer and reduce traffic congestion. It also aims to improve connections between communities and make travel easier and more reliable now and in the future. The study considers environmental, community and economic goals early in the planning process. This approach, outlined by the Federal Highway Administration, weighs:

- Transportation issues and priorities
- Environmental resources and concerns
- Stakeholder and public concerns

Recommendations from this study, shaped by public and agency input, could move forward to the next step, which is a federal review process called the National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA reviews are required before major transportation projects are built.

In 2023, ITD hosted the first round of public meetings to ask the public for input on environmental concerns, growth, traffic congestion, and other community issues. Based on feedback from these meetings, ITD developed and reviewed more than 50 potential transportation improvement concepts that were proposed to address traffic issues. These Level 1 transportation improvement concepts were screened and presented in a second round of public meetings in June 2024. Those concepts, called Level 1 concepts, were either carried forward, retained as an element, or eliminated. After receiving public comments, several that were carried forward were combined into 13 Level 2 alternatives which were presented at the third round of in-person and online public meetings in November 2024.

In addition to presenting the 13 alternatives, the public meetings explained the criteria that would be used to evaluate the alternatives. These are called Level 2 screening criteria. Results from that evaluation,

combined with public input from the meetings, guided ITD's decisions about which alternatives should be eliminated, and which should advance to the next phase of the screening process. Public input led ITD to look at additional criteria and conduct additional analysis on the 13 Level 2 alternatives.

At a fourth round of public meetings held in September 2025, ITD shared the updated Level 2 evaluation results and presented preliminary recommendations for alternatives that could move forward to the next round of evaluation, called Level 3 screening. Details about the September 2025 meeting format and project information shared with the public are outlined in the sections below.

In-person Meetings

The public was invited to attend one of two in-person meetings. Display boards showed the Level 2 evaluation results and ITD's preliminary recommendations for which alternatives could move forward. Detailed information about the Level 2 screening results was also shared in an online meeting format.

Wednesday, September 17, 2025
4:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center
105 North 1st Street
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Sixty-one people signed in at the Sept.17 meeting, and seven submitted comment forms to the project team.

Thursday, September 18, 2025
4:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m.
Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center
12201 W Parkway Drive
Post Falls, Idaho

Sixty-six people signed in at the Sept.18 meeting, and eight submitted comment forms to the project team.

Several people at both meetings declined to sign in. The total number of participants at both meetings was 127.

Copies of the sign-in sheets are included in Appendix D.

Online Meeting

The online meeting and comment period opened to the public Sept. 17 and ran through Oct. 1, 2025, giving the public time to review materials and share feedback. The online meeting was available on the project webpage at https://itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel.

A total of 314 people visited the online meeting platform and 76 submitted comments through the online form.

Community Working Group Meeting

ITD hosted its fourth Community Working Group meeting on Aug. 26, 2025, to update members about key study milestones, gather input and prepare for upcoming public meetings. The group helps explain the benefits and challenges of transit and roadway options and shares public concerns and priorities for developing and evaluating alternatives.

The project team presented the benefits and challenges of each alternative and provided a status update on the screening process, noting that Level 2 screening is nearing completion. Input from the group helped shape the fourth round of public meetings in September 2025.

Key Meeting Highlights

The presenters outlined which alternatives are recommended to move from Level 2 to Level 3 based on the three-step screening process. They also shared figures showing how each alternative performs within the regional traffic model.

- **Stakeholder feedback**: A representative from the No Huetter Bypass Group raised concerns about the process and the lack of response to earlier design requests. The team explained that design options have not yet been incorporated because the process is still at Level 2. The stakeholder also asked about traffic performance on I-90 for Alternative H, which showed worse peak operations during morning and evening periods. This stakeholder expressed dissatisfaction with the process and left the meeting early.
- **Transit considerations**: The team noted that while no new transit alternatives have been studied yet, benefits to transit are being measured through reducing congestion and supporting transit service on existing and future corridors.
- **Map revisions**: The group recommended updates to the traffic map color scheme and legend and suggested including both AM and PM peak-hour data.

The group also discussed creating public-facing materials that would clearly summarize Level 2 screening results. These materials would help improve public understanding and ensure transparency during the next engagement phase.

The meeting was held at ITD District 1 Headquarters in Coeur d'Alene, with 21 people participating either in-person or online.

Meeting Notification

Before the in-person and online meetings, ITD made several efforts to notify the public, businesses, and other stakeholders about the meetings. Notification efforts included:

- **Postcards**: ITD mailed 54,200 postcards within the project area in Kootenai County and to other key stakeholders. Recipients were invited to attend in-person and online meetings and provide feedback during the public comment period, which ran from Sept. 17 through Oct. 1, 2025.
- **Display advertisements**: Ads were published in the *Coeur d'Alene Press* on Sept. 3 and Sept. 17, 2025.
- **News release**: ITD issued a news release on Sept. 10, 2025.
- **Digital advertisements**: Digital ads ran in the *Coeur d'Alene Press* from Sept. 2 through Sept. 10, 2025.
- **Email**: Constant Contact emails were sent on Sept. 9, 16, and 29, 2025.
- **Social media**: Posts were published on X and Facebook on Sept. 10, 16, and 29, 2025, to raise awareness.

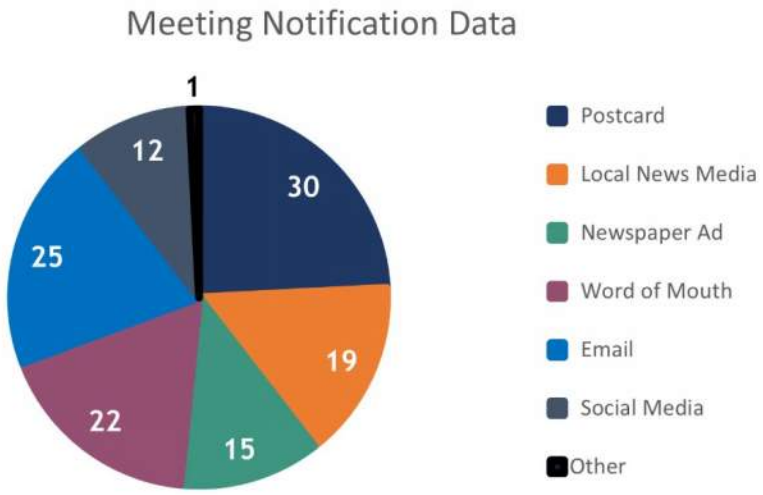
The following table details these notifications.

Event	2025 / Number of Stakeholders Reached
Postcards Mailed	Aug. 22: 54,200 addresses

<table>
<tr><td>Display Advertisements in Coeur d'Alene Press</td><td colspan="6">Sept. 3: 24,000
Sept. 17: 24,000
Total = 48,000 impressions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Digital Advertisements</td><td colspan="6">Sept. 2-10: 1,025,000 digital impressions</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Social Media Posts (X and FB)</td><td colspan="2">Sept. 10</td><td colspan="2">Sept. 16</td><td colspan="2">Sept. 29</td></tr>
<tr><td>Facebook
3,964 views
2,703 viewers
2 interactions (2 likes, reactions)
5 link clicks</td><td>X
481 views
1 like</td><td>Facebook
4,782 views
3,023 viewers
9 interactions (4 likes, reactions, 1 comment, 4 shares)
12 link clicks</td><td>X
319 views
1 like</td><td>Facebook
5,214 views
3,431 viewers
12 interactions (9 likes, reactions,3 comments)
14 link clicks</td><td>X
389 views
1 like
1 repost</td></tr>
<tr><td>Constant Contact Emails</td><td colspan="6">Sept. 10, 16, 29: 441</td></tr>
<tr><td>Press Release</td><td colspan="6">Sept. 29</td></tr>
</table>

Copies of notification materials are provided in Appendix A.

Of the 99 comments submitted, including comment forms submitted in person, online, via email, and by postal service, 39 answered the question about how the commenters heard about the project meetings. The numbers below represent the number of people notified by each method: 30 by postcard, 19 by local news, etc. Some participants listed multiple meeting notifications.



Meeting Summary

In-person Meetings

The in-person public meetings used an open house format, allowing attendees to review project details at their own pace. Level 2 screening results were shown on display boards and in a handout that was also linked to the online meeting.

Display boards were placed around the perimeter of the room and roll plot maps of each alternative were set up in the center. This layout encouraged attendees to review the materials and gave them space to leave comments or ask questions about each alternative. Study team members were available to explain the

Level 2 screening results and answer questions.

A PowerPoint presentation with detailed traffic data for each alternative played on a loop during both meetings, with project staff nearby to respond to questions. An area was designated for attendees to provide input using a comment form, which included questions about the study team's recommendations for each Level 2 alternative. These alternatives were outlined in the handout titled Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input.

A total of 127 people attended both meetings.

Staffing

Project team members in attendance at one or both meetings:

- Daniel Baker, North ID Transportation Lead, HDR
- Robert Beachler, Planner, ITD
- Zach Bentzler, Environmental Planner, ITD
- Yvonne Dingman, Senior Right of Way Agent, HDR
- Lisa Gray, Public Involvement Lead, HDR
- Eric Grossarth, Sr. Communications Specialist, HDR
- Carrie Ann Hewitt, Project Manager, ITD
- Megan Jahns, Sr. Public Information Officer, ITD
- Ali Marienau, Transportation Planner, KMPO
- Heather McDaniel, Public Information Officer, ITD
- Martin Plass, Project Engineer, DEA
- Chonne Sherman, Strategic Communications Coordinator, HDR
- Stacy Simkins, Right of Way, ITD
- Jerry Wilson, Planning & Services Engineer, ITD
- Justin Wuest, Planning, ITD
- Laura Winter, P.E., Ruen-Yeager & Associates

Online Meeting

The online meeting was an ArcGIS slide-based Story Map that was designed to be informative and interactive. The "Working Together" slide instructed participants about how to navigate the meeting and how to comment by clicking the comment icon to the left of the screen. The online meeting and public comment period were available from Sept. 17 to Oct. 1, 2025.

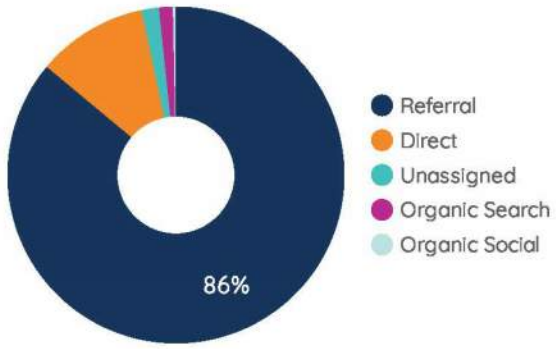
Web metrics show that 314 people visited the online meeting, most of which were new users. Most people accessed the meeting from a desktop computer. Additional web analytics are shown below.

Rathdrum PEL4
Web Analytics

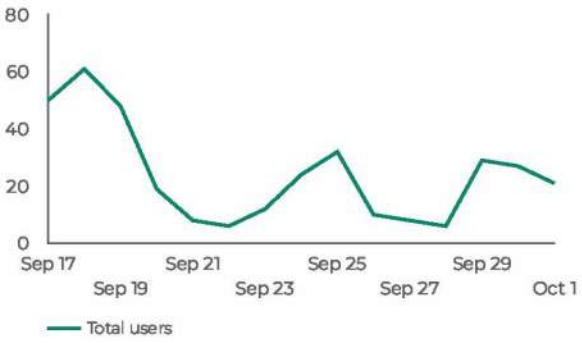
Sep 17, 2025 - Oct 1, 2025

Total users	New users	Engaged sessions	Views	Average Session Duration
314	298	301	446	00:00:22

Sessions by Acquisition Type



Users per Day



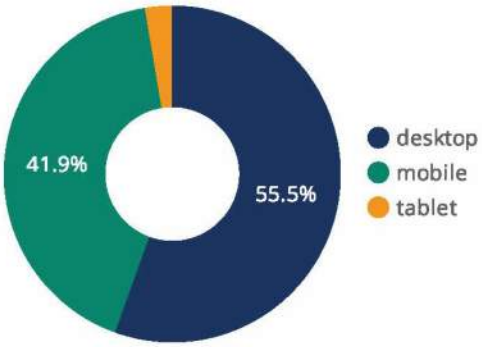
Referrals & Social Media Sources

	Session source	Engaged sessions
1.	itdprojects.idaho.gov	256
2.	statics.teams.cdn.offic...	3
3.	facebook.com	1

Sessions by Regional Cities (ID)

	City	Engaged ...	Total users
1.	Coeur d'Alene	51	50
2.	Post Falls	42	43
3.	Rathdrum	21	22
4.	Hayden	20	20
5.	Spirit Lake	10	10

Sessions by Device Type



Meeting Content

The following materials were presented to the public during the in-person and online meetings, including key project information and data to help attendees understand and provide informed feedback.

Display Boards

- Welcome
- Working together for a safer, more connected future
- Purpose of the study
- What is a planning and environmental linkages study
- What is the evaluation process used in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
- Level 2 alternatives
- We heard you
- What is included in a Level 2 screening evaluation
- Level 2 screening evaluation
- Traffic level of service
- Performance: traffic benefits
- Where are we in the process
- What's next
- Comments are encouraged
- Thank you for joining us today

Meeting displays are provided in Appendix C.

Meeting Handouts

1. Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input
   This handout included:
   - Level 2 screening evaluation and steps: The screening process compared each alternative in a set order, looking first at performance, then impacts and benefits, and finally implementation.
   - Alternative descriptions, benefits and challenges, maps and recommendations:
     - Recommended to carry forward: The alternative performed well and is recommended for Level 3 evaluation.
     - Recommended to be retained as an element: The alternative did not perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative for Level 3 screening.
     - Not recommended: The alternative did not perform well and is not recommended for further study.
2. Screening Matrix, Traffic Analysis and Cover Letter
   To compare options and their benefits to the region, the study team used the tools below:
   - Cover letter-Understanding the Screening Matrix and Traffic Analysis: The cover letter was provided to explain to the public that the screening matrix serves as a comparison tool for evaluating each alternative. It was included alongside traffic analysis maps and tables to help readers understand how the alternatives were assessed.
   - Screening matrix: The screening matrix is a comparison tool used to evaluate each alternative side by side. It shows trade-offs by using data on safety, travel times, property impacts, environmental

considerations and other factors. This matrix helps the study team and the public understand how each option would perform if built and supports informed decision-making during the screening process.

- Traffic analysis maps and tables: These maps use computer modeling from the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization to show how each alternative could affect future traffic across the region, not just along the project route.

  The tables next to the maps show how much travel time would change compared to doing nothing ("no build"). Green means drivers would save time and experience less congestion, while red means congestion would get worse. Darker colors show bigger changes—darker green for greater improvements and darker red for greater impacts.

3. Roll plots
   Large-format roll plots of each alternative were displayed on tables for detailed review.
4. Screening matrix wall chart
   A visual comparison of the Level 2 evaluation matrix helped attendees see how alternatives were scored.
5. Traffic data PowerPoint
   Slides showed projected traffic outcomes for each alternative.
6. Business card with QR code
   The QR code linked to the online meeting platform and related materials for easy access and continued engagement.
7. Comment form
   Questions asked for feedback on the study team's recommendations for each Level 2 alternative and assessed how well the meeting improved public understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study.

Meeting handouts are provided in Appendix B.

Public Comments and Comment Themes

ITD invited the public to provide feedback on its preliminary recommendations for which alternatives should move forward for further study. Input was collected through a comment form that included multiple-choice questions and space for written responses.

The public shared feedback at both in-person and online meetings. Comments were also submitted by email and U.S. mail. In total, 99 comments were received:

- Online comments: 81 (including 5 by email)
- In-person comments: 18 (including 3 by U.S. mail)
- Total comments: 99

Participants shared their opinions on the alternatives that ITD recommended for advancement — Alternatives B, D, H, M and N — and explained their selections. They also provided feedback on alternatives that ITD did not recommend for further study — Alternatives A, C, E, F, I, J, K and L.

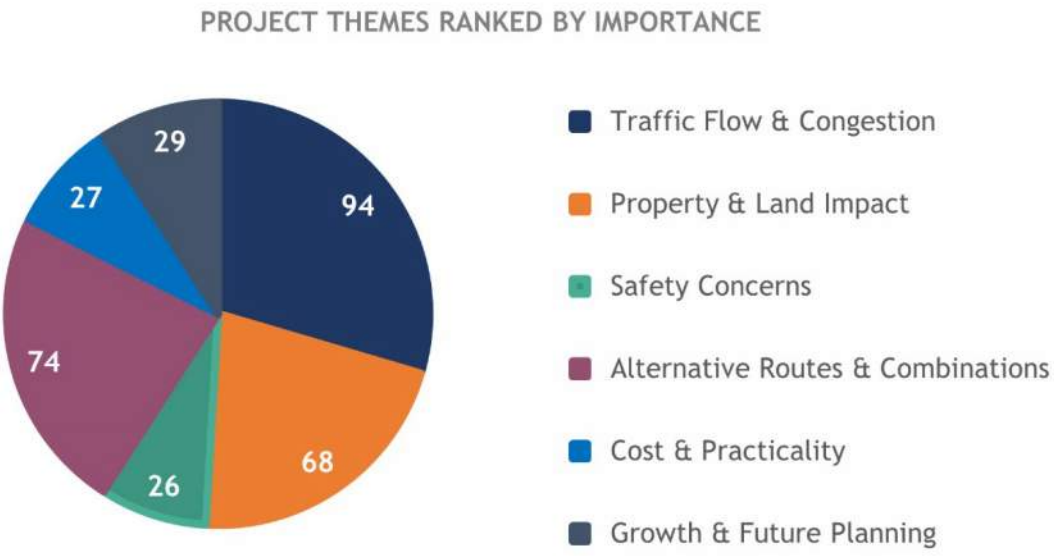
The form also allowed respondents to ask general questions and share how helpful the public meeting was in improving their understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Transportation Study.

Note: Not all questions were answered on each form and many respondents identified more than one important theme.

The following six themes emerged from public comments:

- Traffic flow and congestion
- Property and land impact
- Safety concerns
- Alternative routes and combinations
- Cost and practicality
- Growth and future planning

The numbers shown in the pie chart below were calculated by combining participant feedback on themes identified for each alternative (B, D, H, M, and N). Many participants identified more than one theme. A higher number means more people ranked that theme as a top priority.

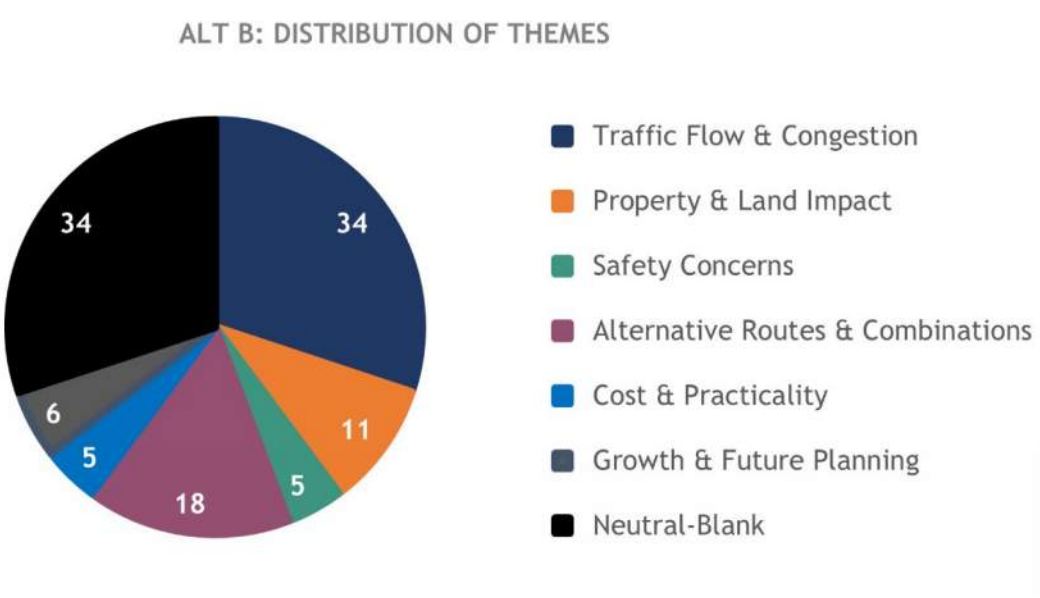


The descriptions and benefits of the alternatives in the public feedback section below are brief summaries. Complete descriptions of each alternative can be found in Appendix B.

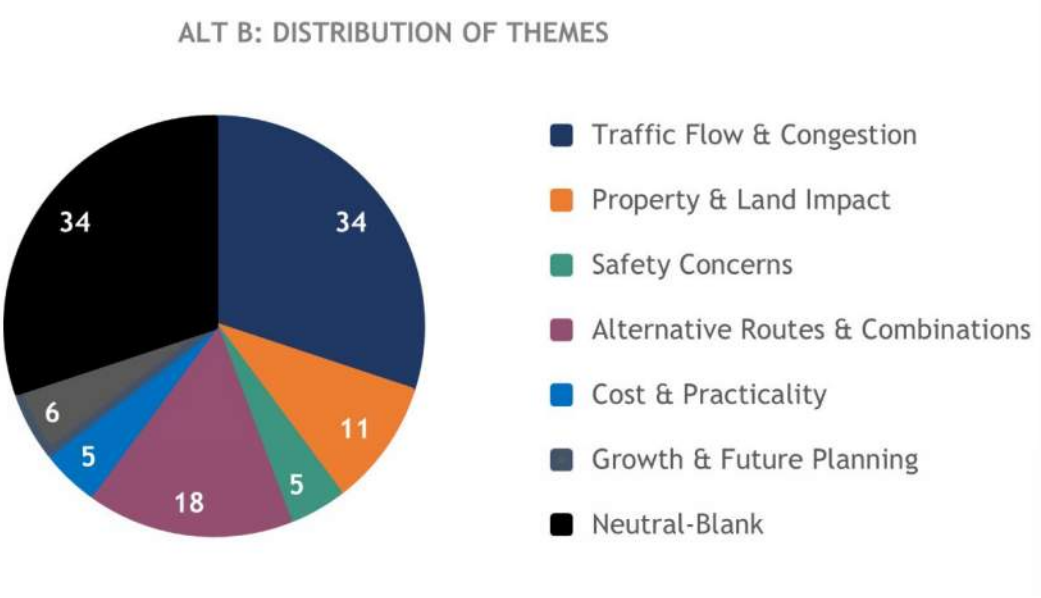
Comments have not been edited for grammar, spelling, capitalization, or punctuation. These comments are representative of those submitted. Full comments are provided for review in Appendix F.

Alternative B

U.S. Highway 95 (US-95) Expanded Highway (expanded to three lanes in each direction) is recommended to be retained as an element for Level 3. Following are responses from meeting participants about Alternative B.



The following themes emerged from public comments about Alternative B, reflecting the issues most important to meeting participants. Please note: Not all participants who responded to the Alternative B recommendation question above provided a comment explaining their answer or sentiment.



The following themes were identified as important:

- Traffic Flow and Congestion
- Alternative Routes and Combinations
- Property and Land Impact

Additional areas of concern identified through public feedback include:

- Too many stop signs/traffic lights
- Improving north-south and east-west connectivity
- Alternative B lacks impact across corridors

Alternative B Feedback Overview

Alternative B focuses on widening US-95 to reduce traffic congestion and improve travel flow. Public feedback on this option was mixed. Many people agreed that something needs to be done because traffic is already a problem. Some comments said Alternative B only partly solves the issue, which follows ITD's recommendation to include it as an element of a larger prairie-wide solution. They felt it does not fix choke points or handle future traffic growth. Some were worried that it does not improve northbound traffic enough and might keep congestion problems going.

Supporters liked that Alternative B could help traffic flow and have less impact on homes and landowners. Others were concerned it might bring more traffic and disrupt neighborhoods. Several participants expressed concerns that the number of stop signs and traffic signals could negatively affect traffic flow. Several comments thanked the team for planning but suggested combining Alternative B with other options for a bigger impact.

Examples of public comment received:

- "This is great because it has the least impact to homes and landowners. Please consider this one."
- "Keep the investment of this road, improve the signalization for better flow of traffic through town."
- "This is the best option to improve traffic on US-95 and Government through Hayden and CDA."
- "This is the only option that is being looked at that does not impact agriculture and other acreage. Should be considered as alternative not just an element."
- "US 95 through this area is largely used as a local arterial serving the local street system, so adding capacity makes sense. It should be combined with additional access to I-90 to further ease congestion as development between Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene progresses. Interchanges at both Huetter and Atlas would serve to redistribute traffic in such a way that both US 95 and SH 41 are used less by those people who live/work between Highway 41 and Ramsey Road."
- "Even if I am in support of the project, I do love the old saying that widening roads to cure congestion is like adding a new hole to your belt to cure obesity."
- "It will of course help some but it doesn't help alleviate the issue of the choke points at Hwy 95/I-90 and Ramsey Rd/ I-90. This is a band-aid fix and will just lead to the problem being re-addressed in the very near future. I think this is spending money in the wrong area."
- "Only addresses Hwy 95, with little regard for the rest of the Rathdrum Prairie. Not recommended."
- "I'd rather see the money spent on the Huetter bypass."
- "Adding more lanes will not address this; an access-controlled solution is needed."

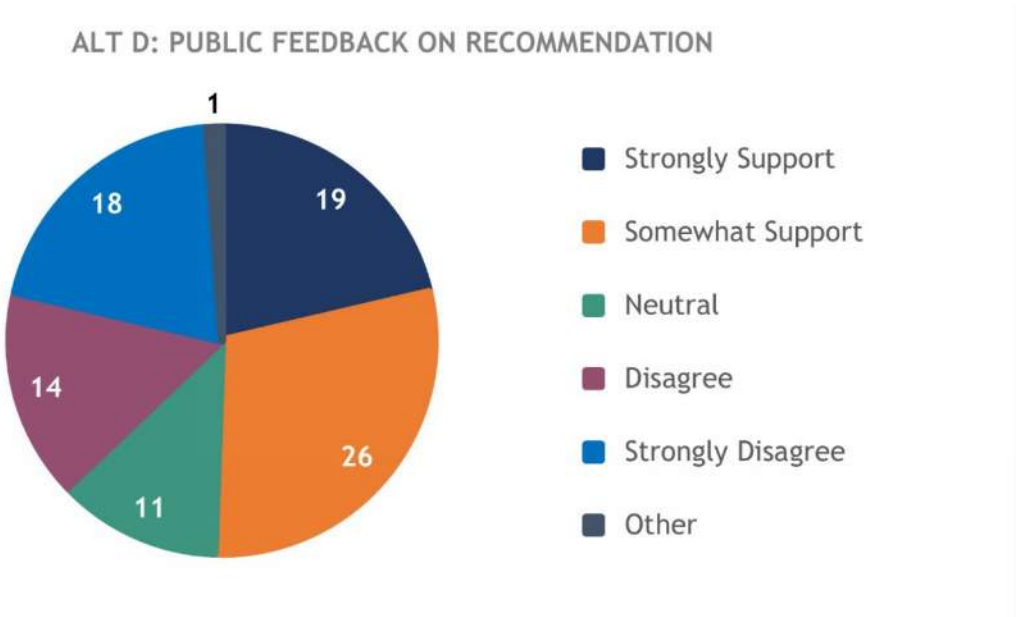
Meeting participants suggested alternative combinations:

- Alt B + Huetter Bypass
- Alt B + Hwy 41 upgrades
- Alt B + I-90 interchanges (Atlas & Huetter)
- Alt B + improved access to Hwy 95
- Alt B + N (multiple mentions)

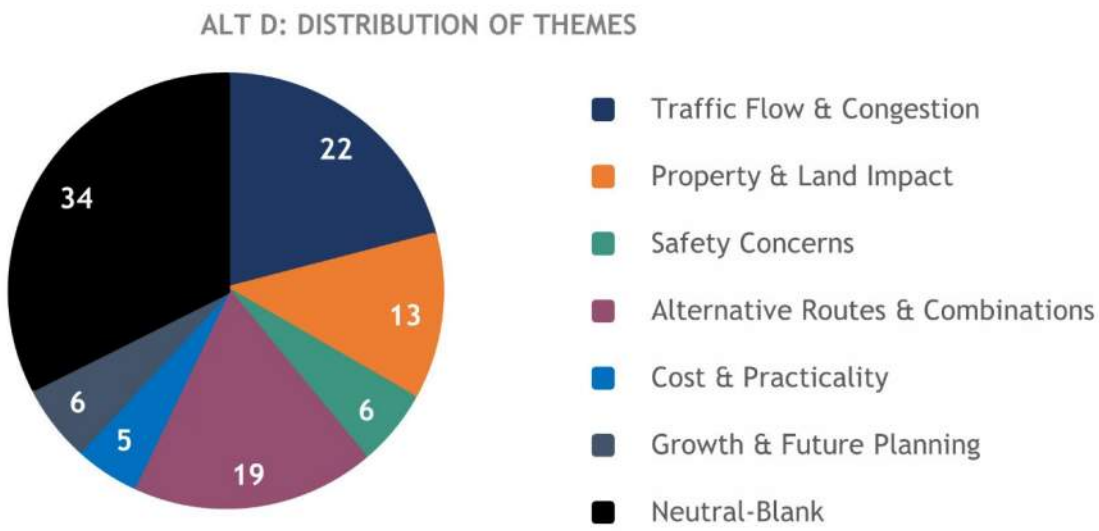
- Alt B + Overpasses / frontage roads

Alternative D

Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, two lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is recommended to carry forward to Level 3. Following are responses from participants about Alternative D.



The following themes emerged from public comments about Alternative D.



The following themes were identified as important:

- Traffic Flow and Congestion
- Alternative Routes and Combinations
- Property and Land Impact

Additional areas of concern identified through public feedback include:

- Too many stop signs/traffic lights
- Improving north-south connectivity
- Alternative D lacks impact across corridors

Alternative D Feedback Overview

Alternative D would construct a new four-lane arterial road with a 35–45 mph speed limit and a center turn lane, extending from I-90 to US-95 along the Huetter Road alignment. This option is designed to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow.

Public feedback was generally positive. Many commenters agreed that Alternative D could ease congestion and improve traffic on Highways 41 and 95. Some highlighted the benefit of a new interchange that would let traffic move north without going through cities.

Several comments said Alternative D might be the most affordable option with the least impact on homes. Others worried about the high cost and disruption of adding a new interchange to I-90. Some felt that relying on traffic signals could be only a short-term fix given the area's rapid growth.

Supporters focused on better traffic flow and improved connectivity. However, some expressed conditional support or uncertainty about long-term benefits. Concerns included impacts to farmland and significant effects on neighborhoods along Huetter Road. A number of commenters suggested using a phased approach or combining Alternative D with Alternative H for future scalability.

Examples of public comment received:

- "I think this alternative makes the most sense for the prairie. I wish it addressed improvements to 53."
- "Keep the investment of this road, improve the signalization for better flow of traffic through town."
- "This should be the least impactful to existing business and homeowners. With correct traffic light programming it should also be the most effective at handling increased traffic. Improving an already existing road should also be the least expensive alternative."
- "Though this seems to be a positive choice now, when homes are built out this will become a quagmire. There should also be consideration if the airport increases in size."
- "This will negatively impact the residential communities along Huetter road in a very significant way."
- "Alternative D doesn't solve enough of the congestion problems of the other corridors, so not enough corridor road safety is addressed. I like that it doesn't have any historical site impacts and that it adds an interchange on I 90 between H 41 and Northwest Blvd."
- not the best alternative as much of the 95 traffic is simply trying to get north and should be diverted to another route to keep congestion on 95 from I90 to Hayden down.
- "More capacity is needed, but turning 95 into a wide boulevard will just perpetuate the same problems of congestion, red-light running, poor pedestrian safety, and vehicle crashes."
- "Impacts too much farming ground which impacts families."

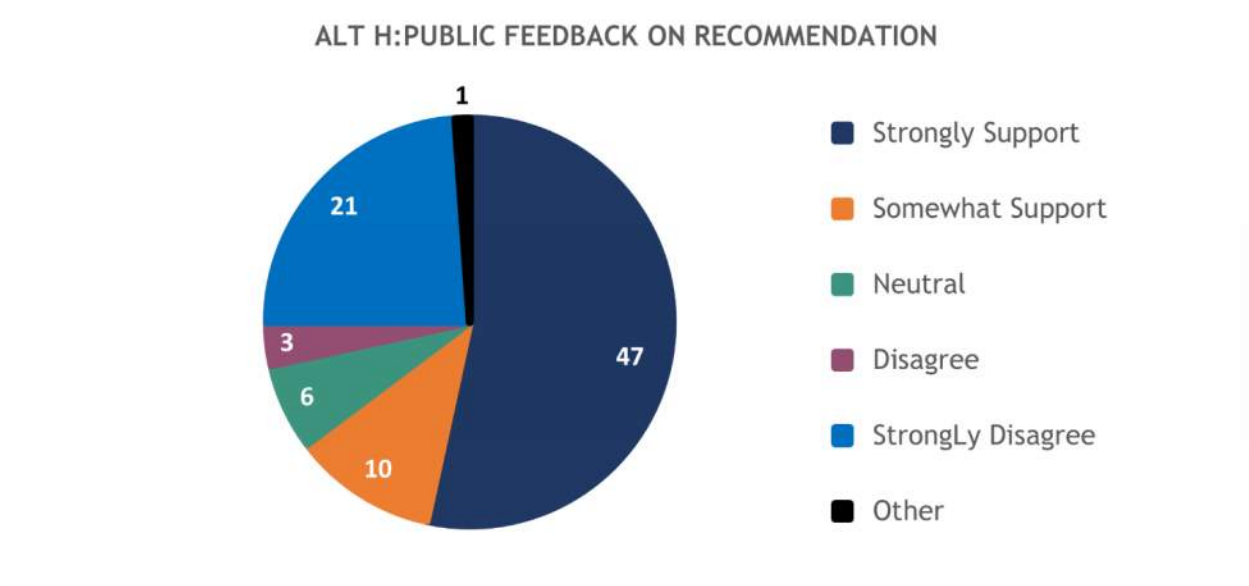
Meeting participants suggested alternative combinations:

- Alt D + H (phased approach)
- Alt D + Alt B + Alt H + Alt N (melded approach)

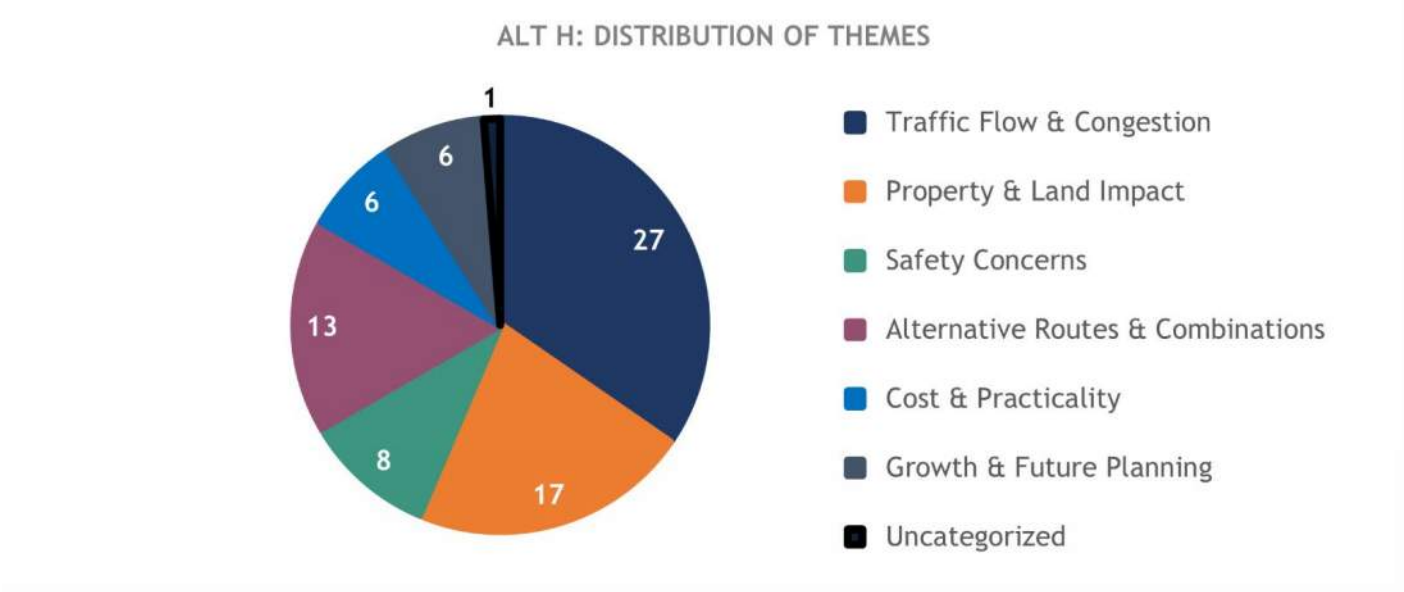
- Alt D + Overpasses (grade separation)
- Alt D + I-90 interchange at Huetter and Atlas
- Recommend using Hwy 41 with improved access to Hwy 95

Alternative H

Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access-controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is recommended to carry forward to Level 3. Following are responses from participants about Alternative H.



The following themes emerged from public comments about Alternative H.



The following themes were identified as important:

- Traffic Flow and Congestion
- Property and Land Impact
- Alternative Routes and Combinations

Additional areas of concern identified through public feedback include:

- Impact across corridors
- Improving north-south connectivity
- Noise impact

Alternative H Feedback Overview

Alternative H would create an access-controlled highway with two lanes in each direction, reducing congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby roads. Most commenters gave positive feedback and supported Alternative H. They felt it would provide nonstop access for through traffic while still keeping good local connections. Many said this is the best long-term solution for congestion and would benefit the entire area. Some noted that it could encourage drivers coming from north of Hayden to use this route, easing pressure on other roads.

However, there were concerns. Some commenters said Alternative H would negatively affect their land and homes, causing disruption and noise in nearby neighborhoods. Others worried about tearing down homes to make room for multiple lanes. Additional concerns included the high cost, possible encouragement of growth, and the fact that it may not fully address traffic increases in Rathdrum, Spokane, and in northern areas.

Alternative H received the strongest public support, indicating a clear preference among community members, particularly for its potential to support long-term growth and traffic relief. Alternative H is the most preferred option for addressing regional transportation needs.

Examples of public comment received:

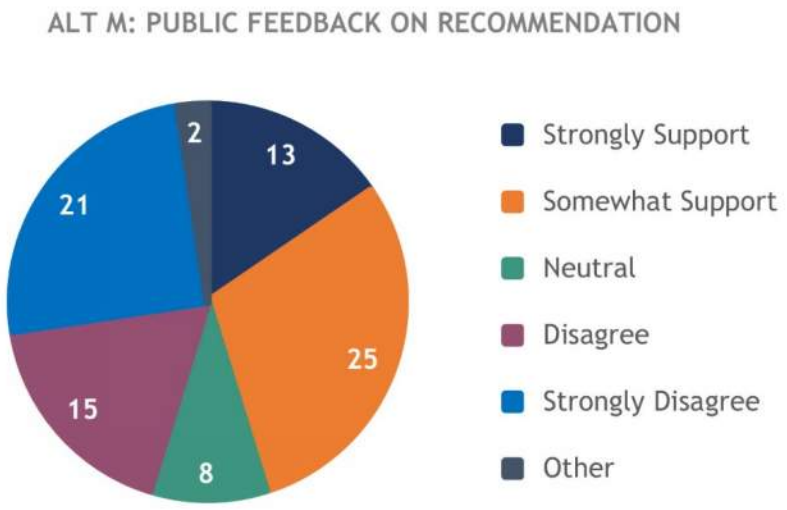
- “Good placement between 41 & 95; freeway or access controlled highway will avoid the future problem of becoming Hwy 95 in 2025! Best to meld B, H and N.”
- “It would take away a lot of the semi and larger truck traffic which is one of the major factors with congestion.”
- “This is the project we have ALL been waiting for -- except for those few loud voices along existing Huetter. Fantastic design and plan to help move traffic north of CDA and connect us to 95.”
- “I think the Huetter bypass is WAY OVERDUE and should be our transportation department's TOP PRIORITY!!!!”
- “This is a great idea. We need an access-controlled north-south corridor, and no existing routes satisfy this.”
- “Huetter Road is already too congested and too loud. There is no room to expand the road into multiple lanes without tearing down homes.”
- “I do not agree with the high speeds through the residential areas.”
- “We don't need a noisy high speed highway in a residential area or another interchange on I90.”
- “This north south alternative is the best fix for the current transportation needs. Bypassing CDA and Rathdrum will be the most efficient use of taxpayer funds to help the congestion. Taking traffic off of 41 53 and routing it to US95 up Hutter south of the tracks bypasses the most homes and businesses and already congested areas. It will also relieve a LOT of traffic off of Hwy 53 without having to widen it.”

Meeting participants suggested alternative combinations:

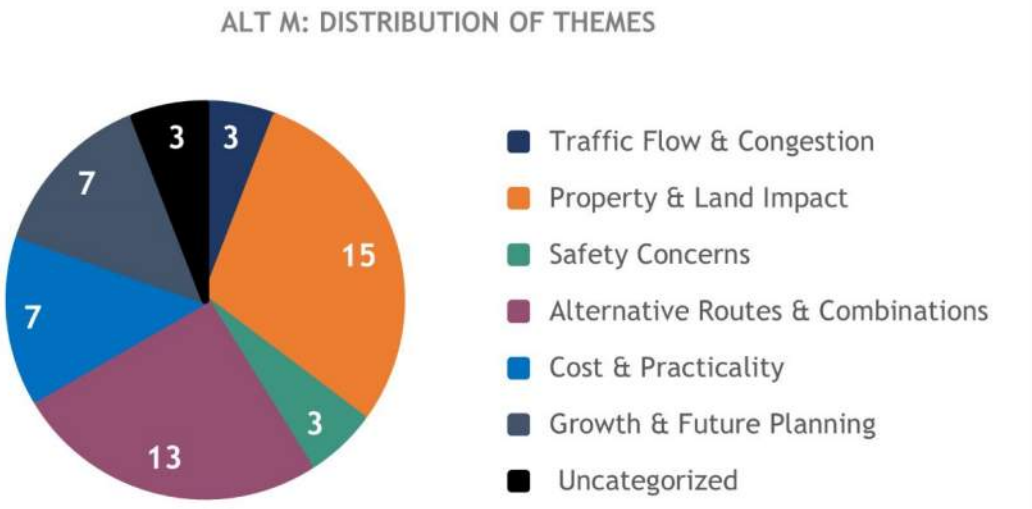
- Better to meld B + H + N
- Phase Alt H + D
- Alt H + M + N

Alternative M

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonally across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is recommended to carry forward to Level 3. Following are responses from participants about Alternative M.



The following themes emerged from public comments about Alternative M.



The following themes were identified as important:

- Property and Land Impact

- Alternative Routes and Combinations
- Cost and Practicality
- Growth and Future Planning

Additional areas of concern identified through public feedback include:

- Impact across corridors
- Improving north-south and east-west alignment
- Removing traffic from local roads

Alternative M Feedback Overview

Alternative M would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as an access-controlled highway with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads from I-90 to SH-53. It would add a new high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonally across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue, and Lancaster Road. SH-53 would be expanded with two lanes in each direction and a new Meyer Road overpass over the railroad would be added. This option aims to address congestion, travel time and travel efficiency and provides network redundancy during incidents.

Positive feedback includes improved east-west connectivity supporting residential and commercial growth. Others see the benefit of diverting traffic and truckers away from Rathdrum. Several comments supported the higher implementation cost of this option as it would provide the greatest long-term benefits.

Supporters feel this option will help freight movement from Canada and improve emergency response. Other commentors were concerned about the high cost, funding challenges and the significant impacts to property and farmland, flood plains, wetlands and historical sites.

Examples of public comment received:

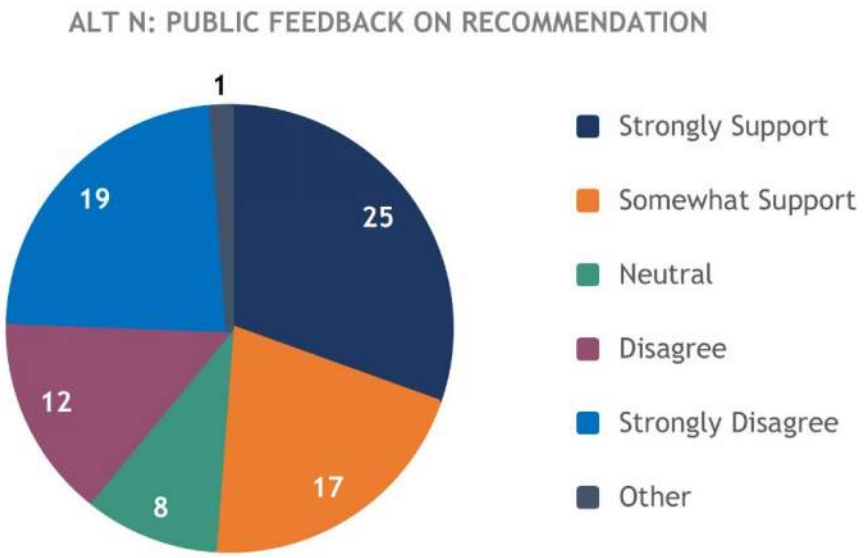
- “This alternative will cross into a brand new subdivision that is being created today in the City of Rathdrum.”
- “Funding for a project of this scope seems far more than other options.”
- “Too convoluted, too far away from CDA to get most people to use it. Has to be more expensive.”
- “Does not help US-95 congestion!”
- “I do not like the impact on the flood plains, wetlands and historic sites. Don't destroy the beauty of the plains.”
- “Expensive and we need to spend the money on Huetter bypass instead.”
- “This alternative even though a high cost to implement should provide the greatest long term benefit.”
- “This is a good alternative to reroute I-90 traffic from between Silverwood/N Idaho/Canada away from the congested I 95 corridor.”
- “This plan certainly helps with the east/west movements across the county.”
- “Traffic thru the town of Rathdrum needs to be diverted. Especially for the truckers.”
- “This plan addresses bypass for the north/south traffic for areas north of Rathdrum. Similar to N but with earlier curve to Wyoming it will congest the area south of 53 and west of Greens Ferry; better option: B, H and N.”

Meeting participants suggested alternative combinations:

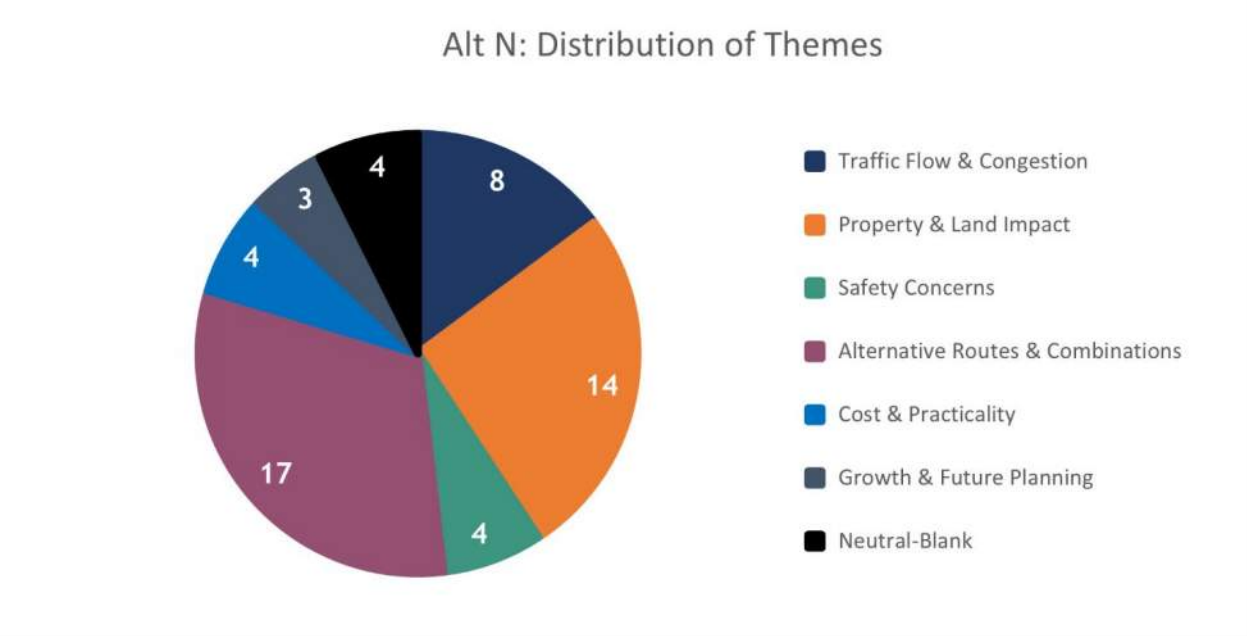
- Alt M + B
- Alt B + H + N
- Alt M + D
- Alt M + H + N
- Alt M + N
- Alt M + Hwy 53 improvements

Alternative N

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is recommended to carry forward to Level 3. Following are responses from participants about Alternative N.



The following themes emerged from public comments about Alternative N.



The following themes were identified as important:

- Alternative Routes and Combinations
- Property and Land Impact
- Traffic Flow and Congestion

Additional areas of concern identified through public feedback include:

- Improving impact across corridors
- Improving east-west and north-south alignment
- Removing traffic from local roads

Alternative N Feedback Overview

Alternative N would rebuild Pleasant View Road as an access-controlled highway from I-90 to SH-53. It would add a new high-speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonally across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road, zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road. SH-53 would be expanded with two lanes in each direction and a new Meyer Road overpass over the railroad would be added. This option aims to reduce congestion, improve travel time, and increase efficiency compared to most other east–west alternatives.

Supporters say this option has less negative impact on residential areas. Some commenters believe Alternative N does a better job of improving travel times and reducing impacts across all corridors. Others feel the design is too complicated and too far from Coeur d'Alene for people to use effectively.

Examples of public comment received:

- "Seems the most beneficial and straight forward of the options."
- "This alternative even though a high cost to implement should provide the greatest long term benefit. I think we should plan for the long term and thus that is why I support this alterative.

- “This Alterative should not just help with East/West traffic but North/South as well from the changes to Pleasant View Road. I think with this alterative you would not need to create a new North/South alternative.”
- “East West movement through metro area would be improved. Will be centered on area of greatest residential/commercial growth. This is even better than M.”
- “This will favor connections to Washington state and provide comfort for travel around Post Falls, Rathdrum Hayden and will benefit surface roads through the rest of the prairie. This in connection with Alternative H at Huetter is what the future of the Coeur D'Alene will need for safety and reduce travel time.”
- “Will have lesser negative impact on residential communities.”
- “Too many challenges! 326 properties and 731 acres effected!!”
- “Expensive and we need to spend the money on Huetter bypass instead.”
- “Does not help 95 problems.”
- “I do not like the impact on the flood plains, wetlands and historic sites.”
- “Disturbs existing neighborhoods and more turns means potentially more accidents.”
- “Do not like the high cost and property impacts.”

Meeting participants suggested alternative combinations:

- Alt N + B + H (mentioned multiple times)
- Alt N + B
- Alt N + D
- Alt N + Hwy 53 improvements
- Hwy 41 with improved access to Hwy 95

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision-making as we complete the study and continue analysis under NEPA and design. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental and engineering information, and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

Alternatives Not Recommended for Advancement

The comment form included a multiple-choice question about Alternatives A, C, E, F, I, J, K and L, which were not recommended for further study. Following are the responses from participants.

ALT A	ALT C	ALT E	ALT F
strongly support - 33 somewhat support - 8 Neutral - 11 Disagree - 3 strongly disagree - 4 other answer - 0	strongly support - 34 somewhat support - 5 Neutral - 10 Disagree - 4 strongly disagree - 8 other answer - 0	strongly support - 34 somewhat support - 5 Neutral - 10 Disagree - 4 strongly disagree - 6 other answer - 0	strongly support - 31 somewhat support - 6 Neutral - 12 Disagree - 3 strongly disagree - 7 other answer - 0
ALT I	**ALT J**	**ALT K**	**ALT L**
strongly support - 29 somewhat support - 7 Neutral - 12 Disagree - 3 strongly disagree - 8 other answer -0	strongly support - 27 somewhat support - 5 Neutral - 12 Disagree - 6 strongly disagree - 6 other answer - 0	strongly support - 29 somewhat support - 8 Neutra - 11 Disagree - 4 strongly disagree -6 other answer - 0	strongly support - 31 somewhat support - 7 Neutral - 11 disagree: 6 strongly disagree -5 other answer - 0

EXAMPLE NOTE: The data above indicating that 33 people "strongly support Alt A" means that 33 respondents strongly support Alternative A **not** being recommended for advancement, as stated in the title.

Meeting participants were asked to explain their answers. Following is an overview of the feedback received.

- "Thank you! Please also do what you can to educate local officials and residents about view corridors. We need an east-west one in the prairie before it's all developed. An east-west view corridor would maintain sunset and sunrise views for people. The corridor could be a park/bikeway. Please also work to set up future light rail lines or express bus lanes."
- "Need more east-west options."
- "I agree, none of the Alternatives listed above should be carried forward. Put them in the waste bin and move on. Good work!"
- "Untimed lights on the 95. Optimize the 41 and 95 lights that give priority to north-south traffic. Side streets should wait instead of tripping the light to turn immediately."
- "They don't meet the objectives as well as not having a significant enough impact on all corridor travel times."
- "I do not think any of the alternatives recommended to not be carried forward provide enough benefit for the cost of implementation."
- "In Rathdrum the citizens are fighting to slow down the growth of this small city, we do not need highways through the Rathdrum Prairie."

Meeting participants submitted general questions and comments for the study team. Following is an overview of the feedback and questions received.

- "Thank you! Please also do what you can to educate local officials and residents about view corridors."

- “Good job and working on this ongoing issue and coming up with some solutions to the congestion issues we are facing as a county on these state highways.”
- “Good job. Thank you for seeking our input!”
- “I went to the meeting in Post Falls, it was well organized and the staff was helpful to answer any questions.”
- “Thank you for the information and materials. The materials show how complex this project and the project goals are to achieve a good product for future generations.”
- “Consider removing all traffic signals on Hwy 95 through town with the exception of those affecting on and off ramps at the I90 intersection.”
- “Construct over-passes at certain intersections on Hwy 95 (Neider, Kathleen, Dalton, Prairie and Hayden).”
- “Use Government Way and Ramsey streets as arterials to move traffic north and south.”
- “Will the Huetter options have lights at the intersections on Prairie, Hayden, and Lancaster?”
- “None of the info presented discussed the projected growth that was assumed in this nor how any variance in the assumptions would affect the needs/effect of each alternative.”
- “Because this study process takes so long, and then there are design and funding challenges ahead, I want to make sure that whatever combination of alternatives go forward address the traffic needs of the Prairie for the next 50 years.”
- “We desperately need another way across the train tracks that is not in town.”
- “Local congestion, including on US-95 and SH-41 is largely a result of lack of adequate access to I-90.”
- “Any new housing developments added in the study area should have an added cost to the developers that would be used to create whatever alternative is selected.”
- “The PEL Study is not intended to facilitate future developmental growth.”

Input was collected through a comment form that included multiple-choice questions and space for written responses. Participants were asked to mark how effective the public meeting was in improving their understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study.

The following are responses from 78 participants:

- 17: I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study
- 44: I have a good understanding of the study
- 15: I have limited understanding of the study
- 2: I have limited understanding of the study. I didn’t like the format, but it got the job done with a lot of questions.

Participants were asked why they provided their answers. The following is an overview of some of those responses.

- “The materials are good but I do not have confidence that all relevant criteria and metrics were used.”

- “I have been to the meetings and looked at the options.”
- “I work for the City of Rathdrum and I have been involved through the whole process.”
- “The information provided was not enough to understand Alt. A, Alt. C, Alt. E, Alt. F, Alt. I, Alt. J, Alt. K, Alt. L., so I was not able to comment on those. But the information for Alt. B, Alt. D, Alt. H, Alt. M, Alt. N was very well documented, hence my preferences.”
- “was not able to attend a in person meeting where I can ask questions. Thanks for this online opportunity to view the study.”
- “Information was well laid out and described. Would have been better if the maps were zoomable to the point where you could see the exact areas impacted.”
- “My understanding is limited because the information I am seeking about the individual historical site impacts is not in what has been provided for public review within the online forum.”
- “"I appreciate the clear plans, both descriptions and maps. They really helped to understand the alternatives.
- “What is missing is the traffic numbers and studies showing how much traffic goes up north on 95 and to the east of 53 to 95 vs 53 to north 41/Twin Lakes."
- “Everything was laid out well and was moderately easy to follow along.”
- “As noted above, the lack of discussion on the presumed/assumed growth.”
- “After reviewing the information provided, I feel like I’m starting to understand more about traffic flow, expenses, how housing would be impacted, and why certain plans could be better than others. I’m not a specialist but I’m glad to be a part of my community.”
- “Thank you to the staff at the open house in Post Falls which I was able to attend in person. They did a good job of explaining the project and alternatives and talking me through the various scenarios.”

Frequently Asked Questions

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) address public questions or concerns submitted during the public comment period.

What are the impacts to historical sites in Alternatives M and N?

Environmental and cultural resource sites, including historical locations, will be reviewed as part of the NEPA process. Cultural resource experts will identify and describe possible impacts and include their findings in the NEPA documents. These reviews will help protect important places and include needed mitigation measures (or reduce harm) early in the planning process. Note: see the Existing Conditions Report on the project website.

Can alternatives be combined to solve both north-south and east-west access issues?

Yes, combinations of alternatives are being explored in Level 3 to address multiple transportation challenges. This approach helps create more flexible and effective solutions that meet regional travel needs. For example, a north-south highway option could be paired with an east-west highway option to improve connectivity.

Will developers contribute to infrastructure costs?

Funding strategies, including developer contributions, may be considered during specific project planning or design phases. These strategies can help with project costs and support long-term growth improvements. Final decisions on funding will be made in coordination with relevant agencies and stakeholders.

Have upgraded interchange designs like SPUIs (single point urban interchange) and DDIs (diverging diamond interchange) been considered in the study?

The alternatives in the study include interchange locations for access-controlled highways, but they do not specify the type of interchange design. SPUIs and DDIs are not mentioned in the current alternatives. These design details are usually evaluated later during the engineering phase. At that stage, engineers may consider advanced interchange designs if they improve traffic flow and safety.

Will traffic signals be removed from U.S. 95 through town?

Under the expanded highway alternatives, the existing signals would remain. However, some intersections could be redesigned or upgraded during later engineering phases to improve traffic flow and safety.

Are traffic circles being considered at key intersections like SH-41 and Scarcello?

Roundabouts are not specified in the Level 2 alternatives. The proposed concepts focus on adding lanes, improving intersections, or building access-controlled highways with interchanges. While roundabouts are not part of the study at this stage, they could be evaluated later during detailed design if they offer safety or traffic flow benefits.

Will overpasses be built at major intersections on U.S. 95?

Overpasses are not included in the expanded highway alternative. They may be considered in future phases if traffic volumes or safety needs justify grade separation. Overpasses are typically added when they significantly improve safety or reduce congestion at high-traffic intersections. A concept for highway overpasses on U.S. 95 was considered during the Level 1 screening.

How will Government Way and Ramsey Road be used in future traffic planning?

Government Way and Ramsey Road will continue to serve as important routes for local and regional travel. Improvements may include upgrading intersections or adjusting traffic signal timing to handle increased traffic and coordinate with alternatives that move into more detailed design.

Will the Huetter alternatives include traffic signals at Prairie, Hayden and Lancaster?

Yes. The Huetter arterial alternative would include signalized intersections at Prairie, Hayden and Lancaster. The access-controlled highway alternative would use interchanges instead of signals at these locations.

Is there a plan for another crossing over the train tracks outside of town?

Both Alternative M and Alternative N include a new Meyer Road bypass that would cross over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad line. This grade-separated crossing would reduce delays caused by train traffic and improve safety by eliminating at-grade conflicts. It would also provide a direct connection to an interchange with the alternative east-west access-controlled highway, improving regional mobility.

Can viewshed corridors and east-west sunset views be protected?

A NEPA study includes a review of visual resources, which covers viewsheds, scenic corridors and aesthetic features. The process identifies key viewpoints and evaluates how each alternative might affect them. If impacts are expected, the environmental document will consider ways to reduce or avoid them, such as adjusting roadway alignments, adding landscaping or using design elements that blend with the surrounding environment.

What percentage of people will use buses instead of cars?

The estimate that 2 percent of people would switch from personal vehicles to buses is a rule of thumb based on a review of existing data, not a formal calculation. For a smaller metropolitan area like Coeur d'Alene, the project team believes 2 percent is a reasonable assumption.

The geographic boundaries are generally defined by the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. For this project, no assumptions have been made about specific transit usage. The Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization model used models motor vehicle travel, which includes assumed bus vehicles with current service and routes.

Given the limited size of the existing transit system, the lack of dedicated funding, and the absence of planned major transit expansion in Kootenai County and Idaho, a significant shift to public transit is not anticipated.

What are the next steps for implementing future transit options like light rail or express bus lanes?

Future transit options, such as light rail or express bus, would need a planning process and dedicated funding. This usually includes feasibility studies to look at demand and cost, environmental reviews to understand possible impacts, and coordination with local and regional transit agencies. A major transit project would also need long-term funding, space for new routes, and partnerships between state, local and federal agencies.

Public input would help shape priorities and make sure future transit investments meet community needs. Current Level 2 alternatives are being shaped by public input to keep the option open for future transit use.

How does projected growth affect the alternatives?

Projected growth is included in the traffic modeling. Planned land uses from the cities and county in the Rathdrum Prairie area are part of the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization model. The estimated traffic volumes reflect these assumptions. The alternatives are being designed to handle the estimated traffic volumes based on those planned land uses.

Will the final alternatives address traffic needs for the next 50 years?

The study looks ahead to 2045, which is about 20 years into the future. This matches the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization model and includes growth and land use plans from the cities and Kootenai County. The alternatives are being designed to meet traffic forecasts for that year. Many alternatives can handle that demand and have extra capacity for more.

What's Next?

ITD will continue developing and evaluating alternatives that move into Level 3 using the following steps:

- **Explore combinations** of Level 2 alternatives and consider design adjustments to alignments and cross sections.

- **Assess benefits, impacts, costs, and right of way needs** in greater detail for each alternative.
- **Spring 2026:** Conclude the alternatives screening, prepare recommendations and hold one more public meeting to share Level 3 alternatives and gather feedback to help identify which alternatives should be recommended for development.
- **Summer 2026:** Prepare the final report and documentation for agency review. Begin moving the recommended alternatives into the NEPA process, pending funding and other unforeseen factors.

Appendix: A
Notification materials

Postcards
Print advertisements
News Release
Digital advertisements
Emails
Social media

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Community Invitation!

Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie.

ITD District 1
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Join us—either in person or online—for a community conversation about the future of our region's transportation system. This is your opportunity to:

- Learn how each of the 13 preliminary alternatives were evaluated and which alternatives ITD recommends moving forward.
- Ask questions and connect with the study team.
- Share your ideas and priorities for what matters most to you and your neighbors.

We're listening! Your feedback will help us shape the direction of the study.

Join us at one of two in-person public meetings:
September 17 and September 18.

Follow the study or join the online meeting.
Scan the QR code or visit
itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

Questions?
Email the study team at info@rathdrumprairiepel.com

*Individuals who need special accommodations should contact **CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov** or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users Dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.*

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study

Working Together for a Safer, More Connected Future

We're planning for a transportation system that works for everyone—today and tomorrow. This study aims to:

- Improve safety in areas with high crash rates.
- Address current and future traffic challenges as our region grows.
- Expand safe, accessible options for people walking, biking, using transit, or driving.

Your input helps shape solutions that reflect the needs of the whole community.

In-Person Meetings

Wednesday, September 17, 2025
4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center
105 North 1st Street
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Thursday, September 18, 2025
4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center
12201 W Parkway Drive
Post Falls, ID

Drop In Anytime! Stop by at your convenience to learn about study updates. Staff will be on hand to walk you through the plans, answer your questions, and listen to your ideas. Parents, feel free to bring your kids along!

Note: *Identical information will be presented at each public meeting and online.*

Join the Conversation Online

September 17 – October 1, 2025

Can't make it in person? No worries! The online meeting will be open from September 17 to October 1, for you to explore the study information and share your thoughts at your convenience.

Public Comment Period

Submit your feedback between September 17 and October 1. All comments will be documented and shared with the study team for finalizing the Level 2 alternative evaluations.

DNA
from C6

also not involved in the case, disagreed, suggesting the "mathematical quibble" didn't warrant dismissing the evidence outright.

"The bottom line is that there are genuine scientific concerns with the way that the statistics are computed, but not with the laboratory techniques," he said. "The concerns are real, but the likelihood ratios still look very damning for the defense, no matter how they are computed."

Prosecutors have other evidence

Prosecutors have amassed other evidence against Heuermann, who is accused of killing women as early as 1993.

In court filings, they say cellphone call information and tracking data show that Heuermann arranged meetings with some of the victims shortly before their disappearances.

Last year, prosecutors revealed they had recovered from Heuermann's computer files what they describe as a "blueprint" for the killings, including a series of checklists with reminders to limit noise, clean the bodies and destroy evidence.

They also have a second DNA analysis completed by a separate crime lab that used more traditional methods long accepted in New York courts. They say those findings, from Mitotyping Technologies, also convincingly link hairs found on some victims to either Heuermann or members of his family.

Investigators say that as he disposed of his victims, Heuermann used items from his house — including tape, belts, bags and a surgical drape — that had traces of hair from his wife and daughter.

In Brainard-Barnes' case, though, only the advanced DNA tests performed by Astrea identified a match, finding the hair found with her remains belonged to Heuermann's wife.

New York State Supreme Court Justice Timothy Mazzei is expected to announce whether he'll allow Astrea's DNA work into the trial during a Wednesday hearing in Riverhead.

JOIN US!

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The Idaho Transportation Department invites you to learn more about the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study, which aims to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity, and keep traffic moving efficiently throughout the Rathdrum Prairie. This is your opportunity to:

» Learn how 13 preliminary alternatives were evaluated and which ones ITD recommends to move forward.
» Ask questions and connect with the study team.
» Share your ideas and priorities for what matters most to you.

Join us at one of two public meetings:

Sept. 17, 2025
4:30–7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept. 18, 2025
4:30–7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park Trailhead
Event Center
12201 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID

Drop in Anytime!
Parents, feel free to bring your kids along.

Join the conversation online: Sept. 17 – Oct. 1, 2025
Can't make it in person? No worries! The same information shared at the meetings will be available online **Sept. 17 to Oct. 1** for your convenience. Take a look at the study's progress and share your comments at **itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel**.

Public comment period
Submit your feedback between Sept. 17 and Oct. 1. All comments will be documented and shared with the study team for finalizing the Level 2 alternative evaluations.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

NORTHWEST GENERATORS
SALES SERVICE REPAIR

When was your generators last service?

Services we offer...

- Onsite evaluation.
- Replace generators oil & Oil Filter.
- Check generators coolant level and condition.
- Check the condition of the glow plugs or spark plugs.
- Replace fuel filters. Replace air filters.
- Indicator lights and panel gauges.
- Battery, battery cables and charger condition.
- Fluid leaks. Fuel level.
- Up to 20 minutes of onsite training.
- Priority placement on emergency service calls.
- Preventative Maintenance (PM)
- Emergency Maintenance (EM)
- Fuel Delivery
- Load Bank Testing

GENERAC

208-719-2001 6640 N Government Way
sales@northwestgenerators.com
www.northwestgenerators.com
VETERAN OWNED BUSINESS

Legals

Your Right To Know: Be an informed citizen: Read the Legals for information important to you

NOTICE OF HEARING ON NAME CHANGE (Minor)
Case No. CV28-25-5695
IN THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT FOR THE STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF KOOTENAI
IN RE: **Sayla Paige Cherrstrom**,

A petition to change the name of Sayla Paige Cherrstrom, a minor, now residing in the City of Hayden, State of Idaho, has been filed in the District Court in Kootenai County, Idaho. The name will change to Sayla Paige Cabe. The reason for the change in name is: Mother and father are now married.

A hearing on the petition is scheduled for **1:30 o'clock p.m. on 9/22/2025** at the Kootenai County Courthouse. Objections may be filed by any person who can show the court a good reason against the name change.
Date: August 8, 2025
Jennifer Locke
CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT
/s/Mary Seevers
Deputy Clerk
Legal#14818 AD#39759
Aug. 13, 20, 27, & Sept. 3, 2025

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE
T.S. No. 137683-ID Parcel No.: C2565015013B On 12/16/2025 at 10:00 AM (recognized local time), at the VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA NORTH ENTRANCE ADMIN BUILDING 451 N GOVERNMENT WAY, COEUR D'ALENE, ID 83815, in the County of Kootenai, SYDNEY K. LEAVITT, ESQ., a member of the State Bar of Idaho, of ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP as trustee, will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash, in lawful money of the United States, all payable at the time of sale, the following described real property, situated in the County of Kootenai, State of Idaho, and described as follows, to wit: THE SOUTH 62 FEET OF THE WEST 100 FEET OF LOT 13, BLOCK 15, EAST LACROSSE ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT RECORDED IN BOOK "B" OF PLATS, PAGE 119, RECORDS OF KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO. The Trustee has no knowledge of a more particular description of the above referenced real property, but for purposes of compliance with Idaho Code Section 60-113, the Trustee has been informed that the address of: 1113 W DAVIDSON AVE, COEUR DALENE, ID 83814, is commonly associated with said real property. Said sale will be made without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession or encumbrances to satisfy the obligation secured by and pursuant to the power of sale conferred in the Deed of Trust executed by RONALD AYERS, AN UNMARRIED MAN, as Grantor(s), to ALLIANCE TITLE & ESCROW CORPORATION, as Trustee, for the benefit and security of CHASE BANK USA, N.A., as Beneficiary, dated 1/19/2006, recorded 1/25/2006, as Instrument No. 2009799, official records of Kootenai County, Idaho. Please note: The above named Grantors are named to comply with Idaho Code Section 45-1506(4)(a); no representation is made that they are, or are not, presently responsible for the obligation. The default for which this sale is to be made is the failure to make monthly payments when due from 2/14/2025 and all subsequent monthly payments thereafter, including installments of principal, interest, impounds, advances, plus any charges lawfully due under the note secured by the aforementioned Deed of Trust, Deed of Trust and as allowed under Idaho Law. The sum owing on the obligation secured by said Deed of Trust as of 8/6/2025 is $37,694.08 including interest, costs, fees, including trustee and/or attorney fees and costs, and expenses actually incurred in enforcing the obligation thereunder or in this sale and to protect the security associated with the Deed of Trust, as authorized in the Note, Deed of Trust or as allowed under Idaho Law. Because interest, late charges, fees, costs and expenses continue to accrue, the total amount due varies from day to day. Hence, if you pay the amount shown above, an adjustment may be necessary after receipt of funds to satisfy the debt. For further information, write the Trustee at 4375 Jutland Drive, Ste. 200, San Diego, CA 92117, or call (866)931-0036 DATED: 8/6/2025 Signature/By: SYDNEY K. LEAVITT, ESQ., a member of the State Bar of Idaho, of ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP
Legal#14879 AD#40150
Aug. 20, 27, & Sept. 3, 10, 2025

NOTICE OF HEARING ON NAME CHANGE
Case No. CV28-25-5734
IN THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT FOR THE STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF KOOTENAI
IN RE: **Trinity Dunghoang Do**,

A petition to change the name of Trinity Dunghoang Do, now residing in the City of Post Falls, State of Idaho, has been filed in the District Court in Kootenai County, Idaho. The name will change to **Braxyn Vane Hel Morrigan**. The reason for the change in name is: cutting ties with toxic family.

A hearing on the petition is scheduled for **1:30 o'clock p.m. on September 22, 2025** at the Kootenai County Courthouse. Objections may be filed by any person who can show the court a good reason against the name change.
Date: 8/11/25
Jennifer Locke
CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT
/s/Lori Grilley
Deputy Clerk
Legal#14881 AD#40153
Aug. 20, 27, & Sept. 3, 10, 2025

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE
T.S. No. 132325-ID Parcel No.: P46500010050 On 1/6/2026 at 10:00 AM (recognized local time), at the VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA NORTH ENTRANCE ADMIN BUILDING 451 N GOVERNMENT WAY, COEUR D'ALENE, ID 83815, in the County of Kootenai, SYDNEY K. LEAVITT, ESQ., a member of the State Bar of Idaho, of ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP as trustee, will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash, in lawful money of the United States, all payable at the time of sale, the following described real property, situated in the County of Kootenai, State of Idaho, and described as follows, to wit: LOT 5, BLOCK 1, KELLOGG'S SECOND ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT RECORDED IN BOOK "E" OF PLATS, PAGE 97, RECORDS OF KOOTENAI COUNTY, IDAHO. The Trustee has no knowledge of a more particular description of the above referenced real property, but for purposes of compliance with Idaho Code Section 60-113, the Trustee has been informed that the address of: 515 E 23RD AVE, POST FALLS, ID 83854, is commonly associated with said real property. Said sale will be made without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession or encumbrances to satisfy the obligation secured by and pursuant to the power of sale conferred in the Deed of Trust executed by JOE ALLEN JESSUP AND ALESHA MARIE JESSUP, HUSBAND AND WIFE, AS COMMUNITY PROPERTY WITH RIGHT OF SURVIVORSHIP, as Grantor(s), to NORTH IDAHO TITLE INSURANCE, INC., as Trustee, for the benefit and security of MORTGAGE ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION SYSTEMS, INC., AS BENEFICIARY, AS NOMINEE FOR IDAHO CENTRAL CREDIT UNION, ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, as Beneficiary, dated 6/11/2021, recorded 6/14/2021, as Instrument No. 2839873000, official records of Kootenai County, Idaho. Please note: The above named Grantors are named to comply with Idaho Code Section 45-1506(4)(a); no representation is made that they are, or are not, presently responsible for the obligation. The default for which this sale is to be made is the failure to make monthly payments when due from 6/1/2024 and all subsequent monthly payments thereafter, including installments of principal, interest, impounds, advances, plus any charges lawfully due under the note secured by the aforementioned Deed of Trust, Deed of Trust and as allowed under Idaho Law. The sum owing on the obligation secured by said Deed of Trust as of 8/13/2025 is $423,329.75 including interest, costs, fees, including trustee and/or attorney fees and costs, and expenses actually incurred in enforcing the obligation thereunder or in this sale and to protect the security associated with the Deed of Trust, as authorized in the Note, Deed of Trust or as allowed under Idaho Law. Because interest, late charges, fees, costs and expenses continue to accrue, the total amount due varies from day to day. Hence, if you pay the amount shown above, an adjustment may be necessary after receipt of funds to satisfy the debt. For further information, write the Trustee at 4375 Jutland Drive, Ste. 200, San Diego, CA 92117, or call (866)931-0036 DATED: 8/13/2025 Signature/By: SYDNEY K. LEAVITT, ESQ., a member of the State Bar of Idaho, of ALDRIDGE PITE, LLP
Legal#14922 AD#40434
Aug. 27, & Sept. 3, 10, 17, 2025

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING RATHDRUM CITY COUNCIL "NEW FEES & FEE INCREASE"

The Rathdrum City Council will hold a Public Hearing on **September 10, 2025** commencing at 5:30 PM.

The purpose of this Public Hearing, pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-1311A, is to hear testimony regarding the adoption and implementation of the updated City of Rathdrum Fee Schedule, which said updated schedule will include any proposed fee increase beyond 5%, or the proposed imposition of a new fee and will explain the reasons for such action. Generally, the City must increase fees to cover increasing costs and new services that the City is providing.

A copy of the proposed updated City of Rathdrum Fee Schedule is available for inspection by the public at the Finance Department at Rathdrum City Hall or can be provided electronically upon request. The City invites you to provide written comment to be included in the public record to the City by no later than **5:30 PM on September 10th** either through the city's website at www.rathdrum.gov, going to the "Pending Public Hearings" page, and then clicking on "Update to Rathdrum Fee Schedule- September 2025" then click the link to the public

PBS, NPR stations struggle with government funding cuts

By DAVID BAUDER
AP Media Writer

Photo by Willy Sanjuan/Invision/AP, File

Paula Kerger, president and CEO at PBS, speaks at the executive session during the PBS Winter 2020 TCA Press Tour at The Langham Huntington, Pasadena, on Jan. 10, 2020, in Pasadena, Calif.

NEW YORK — Coping with a sudden loss in federal funding, PBS affiliate KSPS in Spokane faced a surprise extra hurdle. Many of its contributing members — at one point almost half — lived in Canada, and they were withdrawing support out of anger at President Donald Trump's desire to make the country the 51st member of the United States.

When Congress decided this summer to eliminate $1.1 billion allocated to public broadcasting, it left some 330 PBS and 246 NPR stations, each with unique issues related to their communities and history, to figure out what that means.

Many launched emergency fund drives and are heartened by the response. The national NPR and PBS networks are reducing expected dues payments, and a philanthropic effort focused on the hardest-hit stations is taking shape. No stations have shut down, but job and programming cuts are already beginning.

In Spokane, KSPS has always tried to keep its requests for member donations separate from appeals for public funding. Not anymore. Congress left the station with a $1.2 million hole to fill, about 18% of its budget, and the station is using that as a pretext to seek help from listeners.

"We have definitely seen some attrition from our Canadian members," said Skyler Reep, the station's interim general manager.

Pleas for donations exceed expectations in many parts of country

Long suspicious of a liberal bent to public media news coverage, Republicans in Congress responded to President Donald Trump's wishes in July and eliminated funding for the systems. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which distributes the funding, has taken steps to shut down.

In some parts of the country, the answer to pleas for help have exceeded expectations. Public radio station WHQR in Wilmington, N.C. raised more than $200,000 in three days, filling a $174,000 hole and then some. It's a small community growing fast with an influx of retirees, many who depend on the station's news to learn about their new home, said general manager Kevin Crane.

With $525,000 gone from its budget, Hawaii Public Radio has already raised $650,000 in an emergency fund drive. "It's a validation that what you're doing is essential to the community and is appreciated by the community," said Meredith Artley, president and CEO. The 2023 wildfires in Maui and their aftermath were covered steadily by Hawaii Public Radio news reporters.

"The initial response in terms of support for both stations and the NPR network has been extraordinary," said Katherine Maher, NPR president. "People did a lot of work leading up to the vote, in actions and calls. When that did not prove convincing, they turned to direct support."

Stations across the country have stories that make them smile: the youngster from Florida who collected money for public stations in Alaska, sending a note written in crayon; the regular $300 donor who came in to PBS SoCal with a $100,000 check, one of three six-figure donations the station has received.

Most stations aren't in areas with so many wealthy donors. Most station managers are like Jeff Hanks of PBS' LPTV in Lakeland, Minnesota. He lies awake wondering where he will find $1 million to pay for things like his station's nightly newscast, a primary news source for central and northern Minnesota.

"These are extremely, extremely challenging times," Hanks said. "We're fighting hard every way we can."

He knows membership donations won't make up for what is missing. Both PBS and NPR have taken steps to reduce the annual dues that stations pay for programming and other services. At PBS, it's an average 15% reduction, but needy stations get more — in one case, more than half of next year's dues will be forgiven, said PBS president Paula Kerger.

Adopting stations in poorer, more rural areas

NPR is encouraging donors in wealthier areas to adopt stations in poorer ones, perhaps in an area where a contributor has emotional ties.

Public media leaders are also working with a group of philanthropists led by the Knight and MacArthur foundations that is hoping to raise some $50 million to support stations in areas hardest hit be the cuts. Ed Ulman, president and CEO of Alaska Public Media, which represents nearly two dozen radio and television stations in the largest state, said he'll be seeking money from this fund.

Ulman said he's been buoyed by the response from Alaskans in their effort to raise $15 million through various sources by October. The services their stations provide is free, and citizens see its value.

"I've never been worried about the future of public television or radio because our community needs us," he said, "and what we've seen in Alaska is an outcry about that."

Still, Alaska Public Media has suspended the weekly public affairs television show "Alaska Insight," which isn't returning after a summer hiatus. The future of "Indie Alaska," a weekly video series highlighting the lives of Alaskans, is also in danger.

Some stations are already making the difficult decisions of cutting staff, In Spokane, for example, 12 of KSPS's 35 staff members have either been laid off, had their hours reduced or pay cut. Reep is also considering that future seasons of local shows like "Northwest Profiles" or the arts showcase "Inland Sessions" will have fewer episodes.

Similar programming decisions are also being weighed on a national level. While several upcoming shows, like Ken Burns' six-part miniseries "The American Revolution" scheduled for November, are completed, PBS will have to consider making shorter seasons of its series, Kerger said.

"We're working very hard so that the public doesn't feel that there's a change," Kerger said.

Looking for ways to share services

Between an increase in donations and "rainy day" resources set aside, the initial impact of the government action may be minimized. But that brings its own worries: It's unlikely public media will be able to count on sympathy donors to the same extent in the future. And there's a risk that some politicians will feel the response proves that public support isn't necessary.

The bigger reckoning may come a year from now, Kerger said. "I am a realist," she said. "I have to believe that there are some vulnerable stations that are not going to make it."

The crisis is forcing some public stations to work together, searching for ways to share services in areas not before contemplated, in things like finances, management and programming, said Andy Russell, president and CEO of PBS SoCal. Public stations in Washington are meeting to see if they can get state financing.

In Los Angeles, PBS SoCal has shared some of its templates for fundraising appeals with other stations. Several celebrities — people like Kerry Washington, Jack Black, Ziggy Marley, John Lithgow and John Leguizamo — have volunteered to film pitches, and the station is making them available nationwide, too, said Maura Daly Phinney, senior vice president for membership engagement and strategy.

"We're going to make it," Phinney said. "The system is going to be different. But we're going to make it."

MEDI-WEIGHTLOSS®
Weight loss that *works!*
Backed by experts at Medi-Weightloss®
- Prescribed Medication (Including GLP-1s)*
- Individualized Plans and In-Person Support
- Medically Supervised with Proven Results

Book your *free* assessment
plus **1 free month of vitamin injections*** when you become a patient!

Scan me!

Visit us in Coeur d'Alene! Call (208) 269-5311
2201 N Ironwood Suite 200, Coeur d' Alene, ID 83814
MediWeightloss.com

*Medication prescriptions are up to the medical provider's discretion. †On average, Medi-Weightloss® patients lose 29 pounds in 13 weeks. Medical supervision required. Results may vary. Offer valid at Coeur d'Alene Medi-Weightloss®. Reference: Journal of Public Health © 2025 Medi IP, LLC.

JOIN US!
RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The Idaho Transportation Department invites you to learn more about the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study, which aims to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity, and keep traffic moving efficiently throughout the Rathdrum Prairie. This is your opportunity to:

» Learn how 13 preliminary alternatives were evaluated and which ones ITD recommends to move forward.
» Ask questions and connect with the study team.
» Share your ideas and priorities for what matters most to you.

Join us at one of two public meetings:

Sept. 17, 2025
4:30–7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept. 18, 2025
4:30–7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park Trailhead
Event Center
12201 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID

Drop in Anytime!
Parents, feel free to bring your kids along.

Join the conversation online: Sept. 17 – Oct. 1, 2025
Can't make it in person? No worries! The same information shared at the meetings will be available online **Sept. 17 to Oct. 1** for your convenience. Take a look at the study's progress and share your comments at **itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel**.

Public comment period
Submit your feedback between Sept. 17 and Oct. 1. All comments will be documented and shared with the study team for finalizing the Level 2 alternative evaluations.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Your Safety • Your Mobility
Your Economic Opportunity

itd.idaho.gov

News Release

9/10/2025

Heather McDaniel
ITD Communication
208-772-8084
heather.mcdaniel@itd.idaho.gov

Public meetings planned to gather input on Rathdrum Prairie transportation study

COEUR d'ALENE — The Idaho Transportation Department is inviting the public to provide feedback that will help shape the future of roads and highways across the Rathdrum Prairie.

The Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study began with more than 50 ideas for improving travel across Kootenai County. Through earlier rounds of public input and technical review, those concepts have been narrowed to 13 alternatives. These options focus on improving safety, reducing congestion, and keeping traffic moving as the region grows.

Two upcoming public meetings will give community members a chance to see how the alternatives were compared and which ones are recommended to move forward. Feedback from this round will help the study team narrow the list of alternatives even further and shape the recommendations that will guide future projects across the Rathdrum Prairie.

Meeting details

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025

4:30 – 7 p.m.

Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce

105 N. 1st St.

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

-

Thursday, Sept 18, 2025

4:30 – 7 p.m.

Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

12201 W. Parkway Dr.

Post Falls, Idaho

Both meetings will be held in an open-house style so people can drop in anytime. Displays will show updates, and staff will be available to answer questions and gather feedback. The events are open to everyone, including families.

Those who cannot attend in person can review identical information online from Sept. 17 through Oct. 1 at https://itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE

AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

JOIN US!

Public Meetings

Please join the Idaho Transportation Department for a conversation about the future of our region's transportation system.

Sept. 17-18, 2025

Learn More »

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meetings

We want your input!

Please join the Idaho Transportation Department for a conversation about the future of our region's transportation system.

Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center
12201 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID

Online Meeting

View the same content Sept. 17- Oct. 1.

Learn More»

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meetings

Sept. 17-18, 2025

Learn More»

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE

AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meetings

Sept. 17-18, 2025

JOIN US!

Help shape the future of our region's transportation system.

Learn More»

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meetings

Help shape the future of our region's transportation system.

▶ **Sept. 17, 2025**
4:30-7 p.m.

▶ **Sept. 18, 2025**
4:30-7 p.m.

JOIN US!

Learn More »

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Learn More »

We want your input!

Help shape the future of our region's transportation system.

JOIN US!

▶ Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

▶ Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
O'emiln Park Trailhead
Event Center
12201 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meetings

Learn More »

We want your input!

Help shape the future of our region's transportation system.

JOIN US!

Sept. 17 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
O'emiln Park Trail head
Event Center
12201 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

Join us for one of two public meetings on Sept. 17 or Sept. 18

The Idaho Transportation Department invites you to learn more about the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study and provide input about the future of our region's transportation system. The study will help identify ways to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity and keep traffic moving efficiently throughout the Rathdrum Prairie.

The study began with more than 50 ideas for improving travel across Kootenai County. Through earlier rounds of public input and technical review, those concepts have been narrowed to 13 alternatives. These options focus on improving safety, reducing congestion, and keeping traffic moving as the region grows.

Two upcoming public meetings will give community members a chance to:

- See how the alternatives were compared and which ones are recommended to move forward.
- Ask questions and talk directly with the study team.
- Share ideas for what matters most to you.

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park
Trailhead Event Center
12361 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID 83854

Both meetings will be held in an open-house style so people can drop in anytime. Displays will show updates, and staff will be available to answer questions and gather feedback.The meetings are family-friendly, children are welcome to attend with their parents.

Join the conversation online

Sept. 17 to Oct. 1, 2025

Visit the online meeting anytime during this period to review study materials and share your feedback at **itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel**.

- The same information will be presented at both the public and online meetings.
- Although your comments are always welcome, the public comment period for providing official feedback closes **Oct. 1.**

We're listening! Your feedback will help us shape the direction of the study.

Questions?

Email the study team at **info@rathdrumprairiepel.com**

Study Area

Your Safety • Your Mobility • Your Economic Opportunity

Project Website

Sign up for study updates

Idaho Transportation Department | itd.idaho.gov

*Individuals who need special accommodations should contact **CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov** or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.*

Idaho Transportation Department | 600 W. Prairie Ave. | Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815 US

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

Try email marketing for free today!

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

MEETING REMINDER

Join us for one of two public meetings: Sept. 17 or Sept. 18

Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

Community input is important in helping shape solutions that reflect the needs of the whole community. Join us—either in person or online—for a conversation about the future of our region's transportation system. This is your chance to:

- See how the alternatives were compared and which ones are recommended to move forward.
- Ask questions and talk directly with the study team.
- Share ideas for what matters most to you.

We're listening! Your feedback will help us shape the direction of the study.

Public Meetings

Wednesday Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Thursday Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park
Trailhead Event Center
12361 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID 83854

Both meetings will be held in an open-house style so people can drop in anytime. Displays will show updates, and staff will be available to answer questions and gather feedback.The meetings are family-friendly, children are welcome to attend with their parents.

Join the Conversation Online

Sept. 17 to Oct. 1, 2025

Can't make it in person? No worries! The online meeting will be open from Sept.17 to Oct. 1 for you to explore the study information and share your thoughts at your convenience at **itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel.**

- The same information will be presented at both the public and online meetings.
- Although your comments are always welcome, the public comment period for providing official feedback closes **Oct. 1.**

We want to hear from you!

Questions?

Email the study team at **info@rathdrumprairiepel.com**

Study Area

IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Your Safety • Your Mobility • Your Economic Opportunity

Project Website | **Sign up for study updates**

Idaho Transportation Department | itd.idaho.gov

*Individuals who need special accommodations should contact **CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov** or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.*

Idaho Transportation Department | 600 W. Prairie Ave. | Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815 US

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

Try email marketing for free today!

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

COMMENT PERIOD ENDS ON OCT. 1

Share your input

If you missed one of our public meetings or want another chance to look at the materials, visit the online meeting at the link below.

We want to hear from you

At the end of the online meeting, submit your feedback through our comment form.

Go to the online meeting

Community input is important in helping shape solutions for the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie.

Questions?

Email the study team at **info@rathdrumprairiepel.com**

Working together for a safer, more connected future.

Study Area

IDAHO TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Your Safety • Your Mobility • Your Economic Opportunity

Project Website

Sign up for study updates

Idaho Transportation Department | itd.idaho.gov

*Individuals who need special accommodations should contact **CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov** or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.*

Idaho Transportation Department | 600 W. Prairie Ave. | Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815 US

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

Try email marketing for free today!

Idaho Transportation Department
September 10 ·

You're invited! Help shape the future of transportation across Rathdrum Prairie.

Join ITD for a conversation about improving safety, accessibility and connectivity in our region.

📍 Public Meetings:

Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Trailhead Event Center at Q'emiln Park
12361 W. Parkway Drive
Post Falls, ID 83854

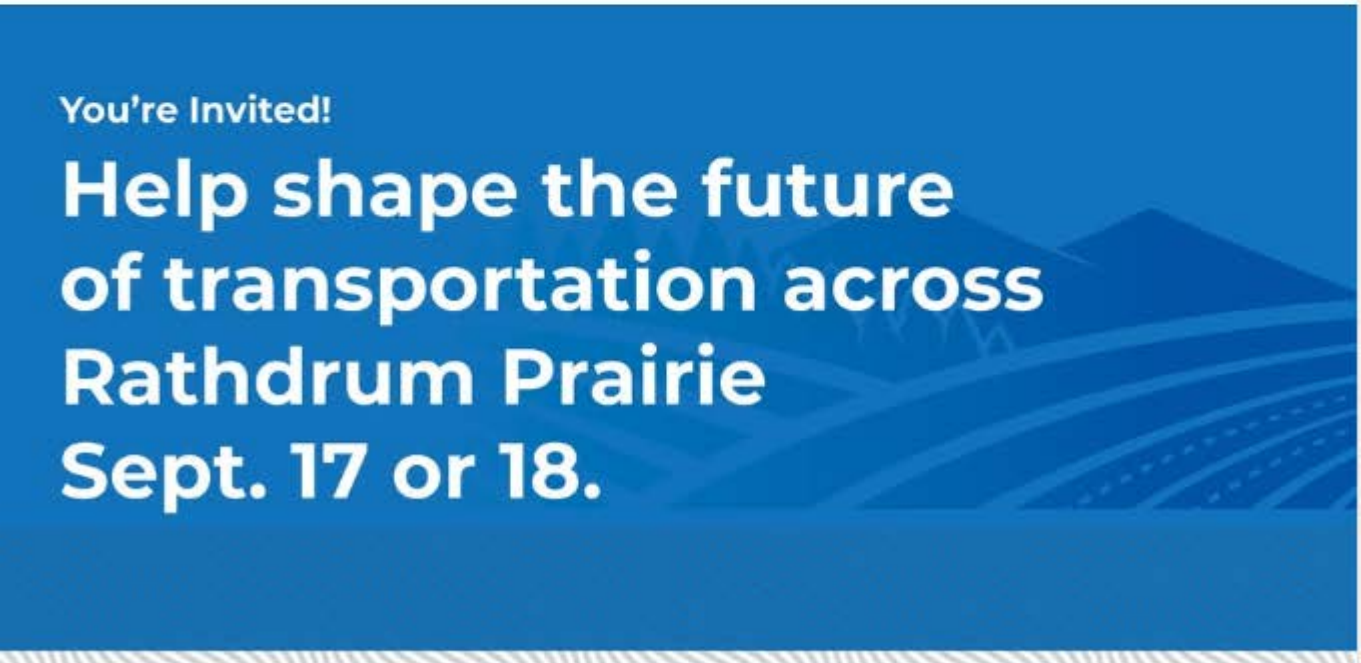
🕒 Drop in anytime!

💻 Prefer online? Visit: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

✅ Learn about the 13 alternatives
✅ Share your ideas and priorities
✅ Talk with the study team

👨‍👩‍👧 Family-friendly & open to all!

#RathdrumPrairiePEL #IdahoTransportation #CommunityPlanning #ITDListens



2

Like Comment Share

Idaho Transportation Department
September 16 ·

📣 Reminder! Our public meetings are coming up fast!

🕒 Drop in anytime Sept. 17 and or 18! Details at:
https://itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

✅ Learn about transportation alternatives
✅ Share your feedback
✅ Help shape a safer, more connected future

Can't make it in person? Join online: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel. anytime between Sept. 17 and Oct. 1, 2025, to learn more about the study and share your thoughts.

#RathdrumPrairiePEL #CommunityVoice #IdahoTransportation

4 1 comment 4 shares

Like Comment Share

Idaho Transportation Department
September 29 at 5:49 PM ·

Couldn't make it to one of the public meetings for the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study? Provide your input online instead! 💻
🕒 Last Chance to Share Your Voice!
Online feedback for the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation study closes Oct. 1, 2025.

✅ Review transportation alternatives
✅ Share your ideas and priorities
✅ Help shape the future of transportation in our region

Visit: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

Your input matters—don't miss out!

#RathdrumPrairiePEL #TransportationPlanning #IdahoVoices

9 3 comments

Like Comment Share

Idaho Transportation Department @IdahoITD · Sep 10

You're invited!

Join ITD at one of two public meetings, Sept. 17 or 18, to shape the future of Rathdrum Prairie transportation.

Drop in anytime or join online: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum...

#ITDListens #RathdrumPrairiePEL

1 487

Idaho Transportation Department @IdahoITD · Sep 16

📣 Reminder!

Join ITD on Sept. 17 or 18 to share your input on transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie. Drop in or join online: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum...

#ITDListens #RathdrumPrairiePEL

1 322

Idaho Transportation Department @IdahoITD · Sep 29

Final call!

Online feedback for Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study preliminary alternatives closes Oct. 1.

Share your input now: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum...

#ITDListens #RathdrumPrairiePEL

1 1 396

Appendix: B
Public meeting handouts

Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input Screening Matrix and Traffic Analysis

Comment form

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input

Share your input.

Visit the online meeting by scanning the QR code and submitting a comment form or mailing one to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Recommendations from the study and the public and agency input received may be adopted or incorporated into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies per 23 United States Code (USC) 168 or Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.212 and 450.318.

Table of Contents

4 . . . . . Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps

7 . . . . . Level 2 Alternatives

Alternatives recommended to be retained as an element or carried forward to Level 3

8 . . . . . Alternative B – US-95 Expanded Highway

10 . . . . . Alternative D – Huetter Road Improved Arterial

12. . . . . Alternative H – Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road

14 . . . . . Alternative M – Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming...

16 . . . . . Alternative N – Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, and Lancaster...

Alternatives NOT recommended to be carried forward to Level 3

18 . . . . . Alternative A – SH-53 Expanded Highway

20 . . . . . Alternative C – US-95 Express Lanes

22 . . . . . Alternative E – Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53

24 . . . . . Alternative F – Access Controlled Highway, SH-41, Greensferry, and SH-53

26 . . . . . Alternative I – Access Controlled Highway, US-95

28 . . . . . Alternative J – Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95

30 . . . . . Alternative K – Access Controlled Highway, State Highway 41 to US-95

32 . . . . . Alternative L – Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

34 . . . . . Typical sections – Alternatives L, M, and N

Note: Alternative G was consolidated with Alternative E.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Public Meeting #4

Sept. 17 and 18, 2025

Level 2 Alternatives Screening

Project Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. The study will help identify ways to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity and improve mobility throughout the Rathdrum Prairie. We're planning for a transportation system that works for everyone—today and tomorrow.

This study aims to:

- **Improve safety in areas with high crash rates.**
- **Add capacity to address current and future traffic challenges as our region grows.**
- **Consider new connections to make it easier for people to get where they need to go.**

The study considers environmental, community, and economic goals early on while planning future projects. This process is outlined by the Federal Highway Administration and weighs:

- **Transportation issues and priorities**
- **Environmental resources and concerns**
- **Stakeholder and public concerns**

Recommendations from this study, shaped by public and agency input received, could move forward to the next step, into a federal review process called the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, which is required before major transportation projects are built.

Your input helps shape solutions that reflect the needs of the whole community.

We invite you to take a look at the transportation improvement options that came out of our Level 2 screening review process.

We Heard You

Since 2022, the Idaho Transportation Department has gathered input from community members, stakeholders, and agencies through interviews, workshops, and public meetings. The feedback received has helped to shape the screening criteria, alternatives and recommendations you see today. Some alternatives were originally suggested and drawn out by the public at previous meetings.

This is our fourth round of public meetings for this study and each one has helped the team understand how public needs and priorities are focused as alternatives are developed and screened. During our last public meeting, held in November 2024, we introduced the Level 2 screening process to show how alternatives would be evaluated and heard the following from you:

- **The community wants to protect existing neighborhoods and resources.**
- **Avoiding cultural and historic sites is a priority.**
- **A combination of the alternatives may be needed to address the regional traffic issues.**

Today, we're back to share the results of that evaluation and ITD's preliminary recommendations for which alternatives could move forward. Your feedback will help shape the final recommendations and decisions for the study.

Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps

Level 2 screening was comparative — in other words, we examined how each alternative compared to one another

The Level 2 screening process compared to each alternative in a deliberate sequence, looking first at performance, then impacts and benefits, and finally implementation.

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.

Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.

Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

STEP 1: Performance

We considered:

- **Safety**
- **Congestion**
- **Travel time and efficiency**
- **Network redundancy** (multiple routes to get to destinations)
- **Multimodal options** (walking, biking, transit)

East-west and north-south travel patterns were evaluated. Some that perform poorly on their own but improve overall results when combined with other alternatives could still move forward to Level 3 evaluation.

STEP 2: Impacts and Benefits

We looked at how each alternative supports the goals of the study in terms of:

- **Compatibility with local and regional planning**
- **Impacts and benefits to environmental resources**
- **Impacts and benefits to communities, neighborhoods and local infrastructure**

This step helped identify trade-offs between performance and potential impacts.

STEP 3: Implementation

We looked at how difficult each alternative would be to build, considering construction impacts and project costs relative to other alternatives.

Alternative Descriptions

Alternative A
SH-53 expanded highway

Alternative B
US-95 expanded highway

Alternative C
US-95 express lanes

Alternative D
Huetter Road improved arterial

Alternative E
Access controlled highway, Pleasant View and SH-53

Alternative F
Access controlled highway, SH-41, Greensferry, and SH-53

Alternative H
Access controlled highway, Huetter Road

Alternative I
Access controlled highway, US-95

Alternative J
Access controlled highway, Pleasant View to US-95

Alternative K
Access controlled highway, State Highway 41 to US-95

Alternative L
Access controlled highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 expanded highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Alternative M
Access controlled highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 expanded highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Alternative N
Access controlled highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 expanded highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Alternatives that were not recommended did not proceed to the next step.

LEVEL 2 ALTERNATIVES	STEP 1 Performance	STEP 2 Impacts & Benefits	STEP 3 Implementation
A	⊗		
B	⊖	⊖	⊖
C	⊖	⊗	
D	✓	✓	✓
E	✓	⊗	
F	⊗		
H	✓	✓	✓
I	⊖	⊗	
J	✓	⊗	
K	⊗		
L	✓	⊗	
M	✓	✓	✓
N	✓	✓	✓

See individual alternatives for screening rationale

KEY:

North-South Alternative | East-West Alternative | Recommend to Carry Forward | Recommend to Retain as Element | Not Recommended | Not evaluated further

Notes:

Level 2 Alternatives

Results for public comment

Alternative B
US-95 Expanded Highway

Level 2 Alternative ID: B (North-South)
Recommended to Retain as Element

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative B would add travel lanes to the outside of the existing lanes and improve intersections on US-95 through the study area.

US-95 would include three lanes in each direction with a center median, matched to existing speed limits.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

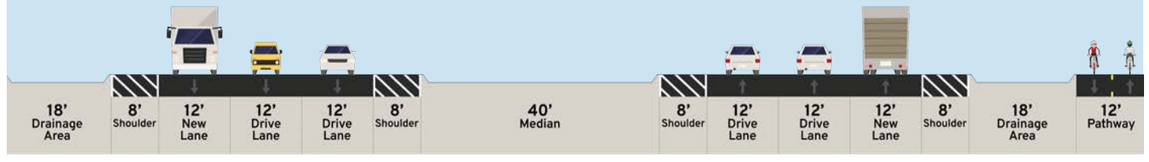
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby key corridors.
- Fewer right of way (0 acres) and environmental impacts than other north-south alternatives.
- Maintains existing access points.

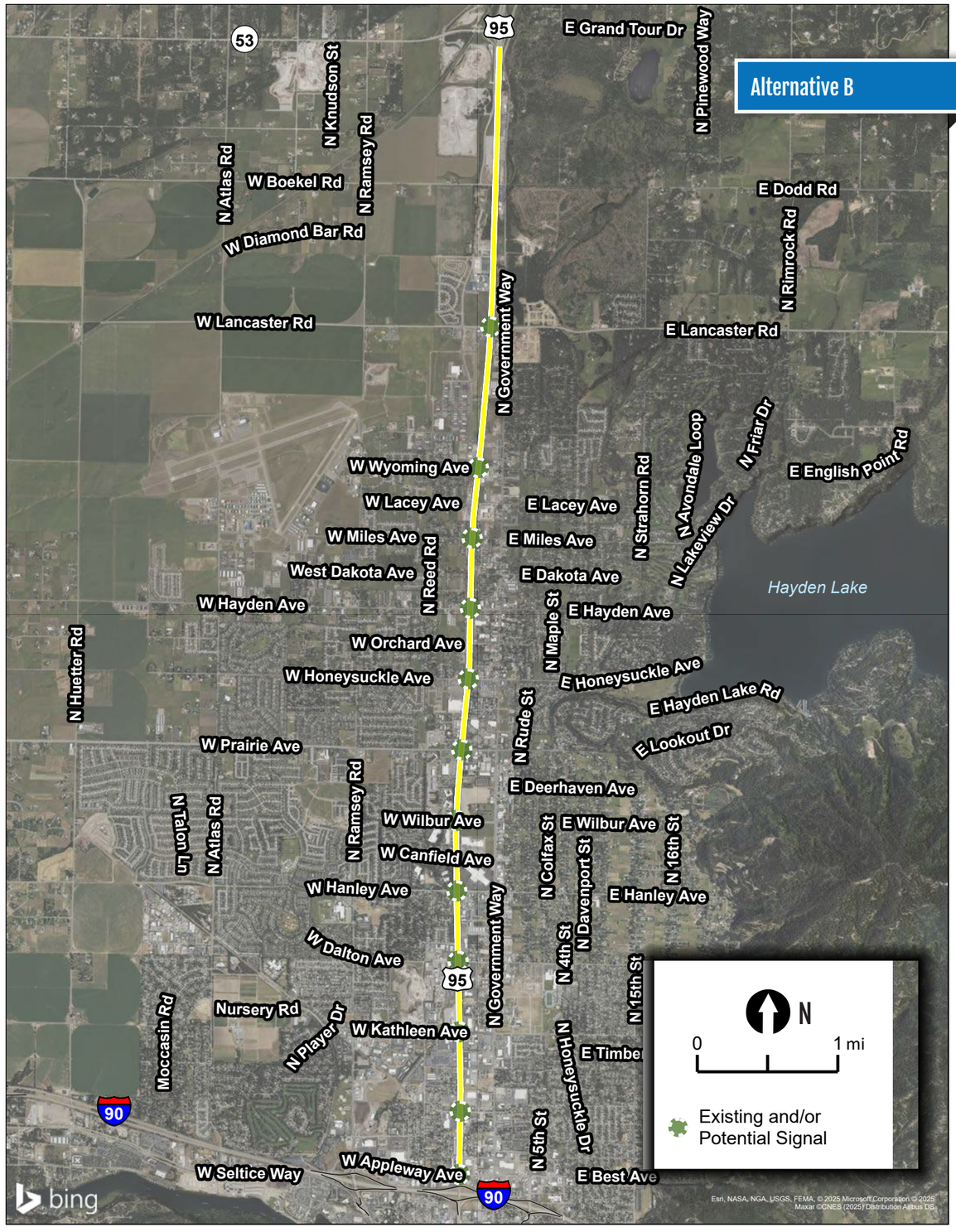
Challenges:

- Does not address study area performance issues as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not reduce potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.

Typical Section

US-95 Expanded Highway





Alternative D
Huetter Road Improved Arterial

Level 2 Alternative ID: D (North-South) Recommended to Carry Forward

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative D would add a new four-lane arterial with a median/turn lane from I-90 to US-95 following the Huetter Road alignment.

The alternative would add two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane, and a 35-45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

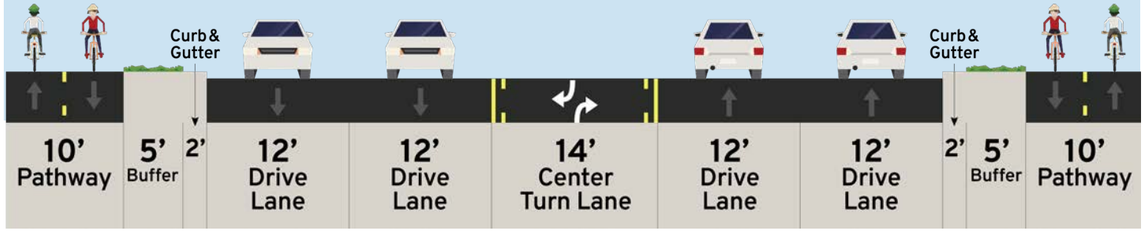
- Addresses study area congestion, travel efficiency, and network redundancy better than most other north-south alternatives.
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Fewer right of way (56 properties, 107 acres) than most other north-south alternatives.
- Maintains existing access points.
- Adds new I-90 interchange access.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

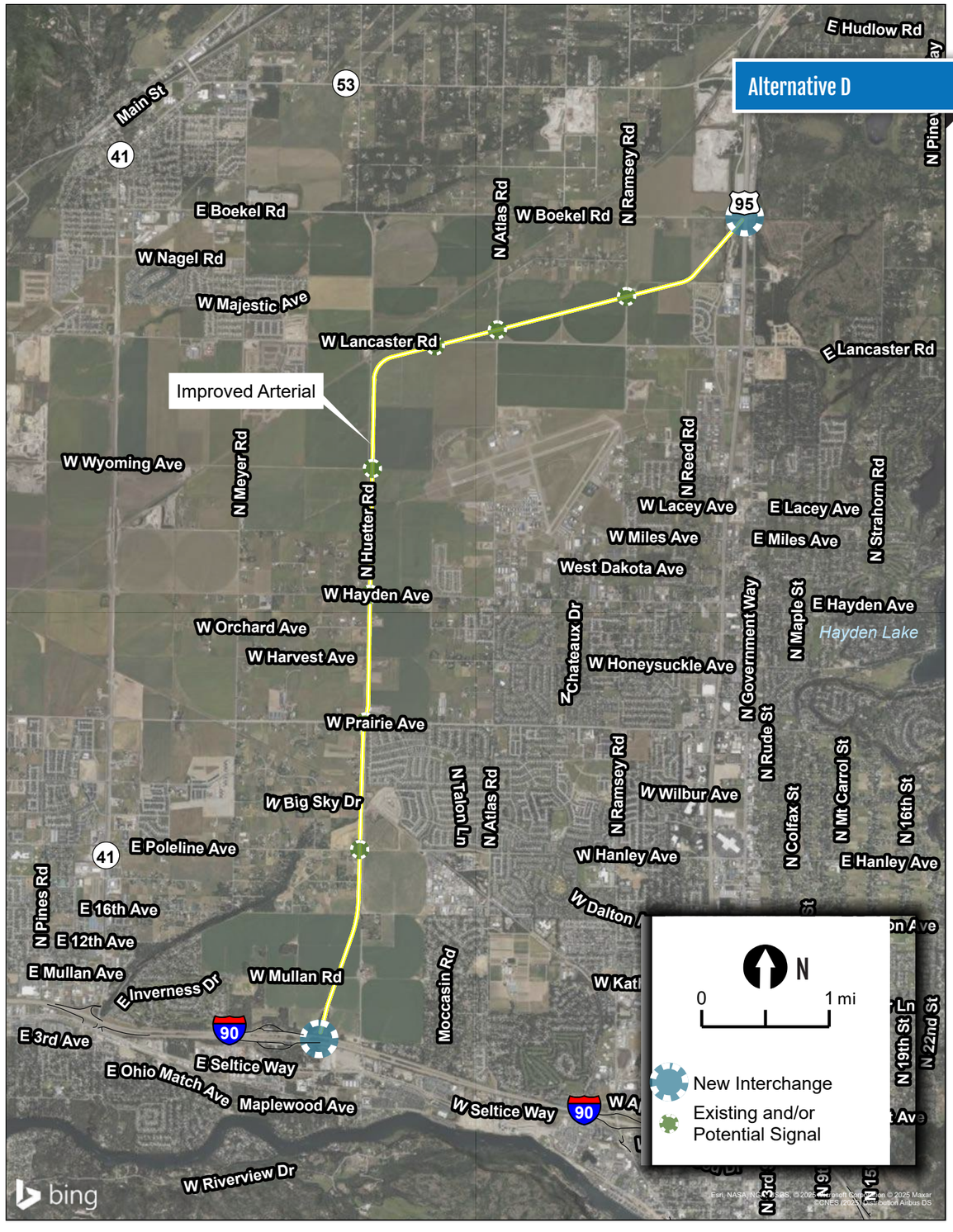
Challenges:

- May be more appropriately implemented as a local facility rather than ITD facility.
- Increases potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on Huetter Road.

Typical Section

Improved Arterial





Alternative H
Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road

Level 2 Alternative ID: H (North-South) Recommended to Carry Forward

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative H would add an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) along Huetter Road from I-90 to Lancaster Road, then along a new alignment going northeast south of the Union Pacific Railroad line to connect with US-95 near Boekel Road.

The new Huetter access-controlled highway would have two lanes in each direction, with a center median and a speed limit of 55 to 65 mph.

The existing Huetter Road would serve as a local access road and would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a speed limit of 35 to 45 mph.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

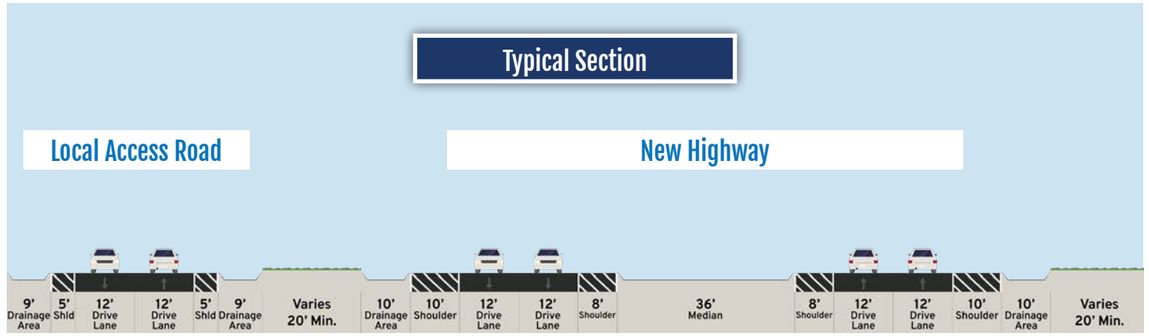
Benefits:

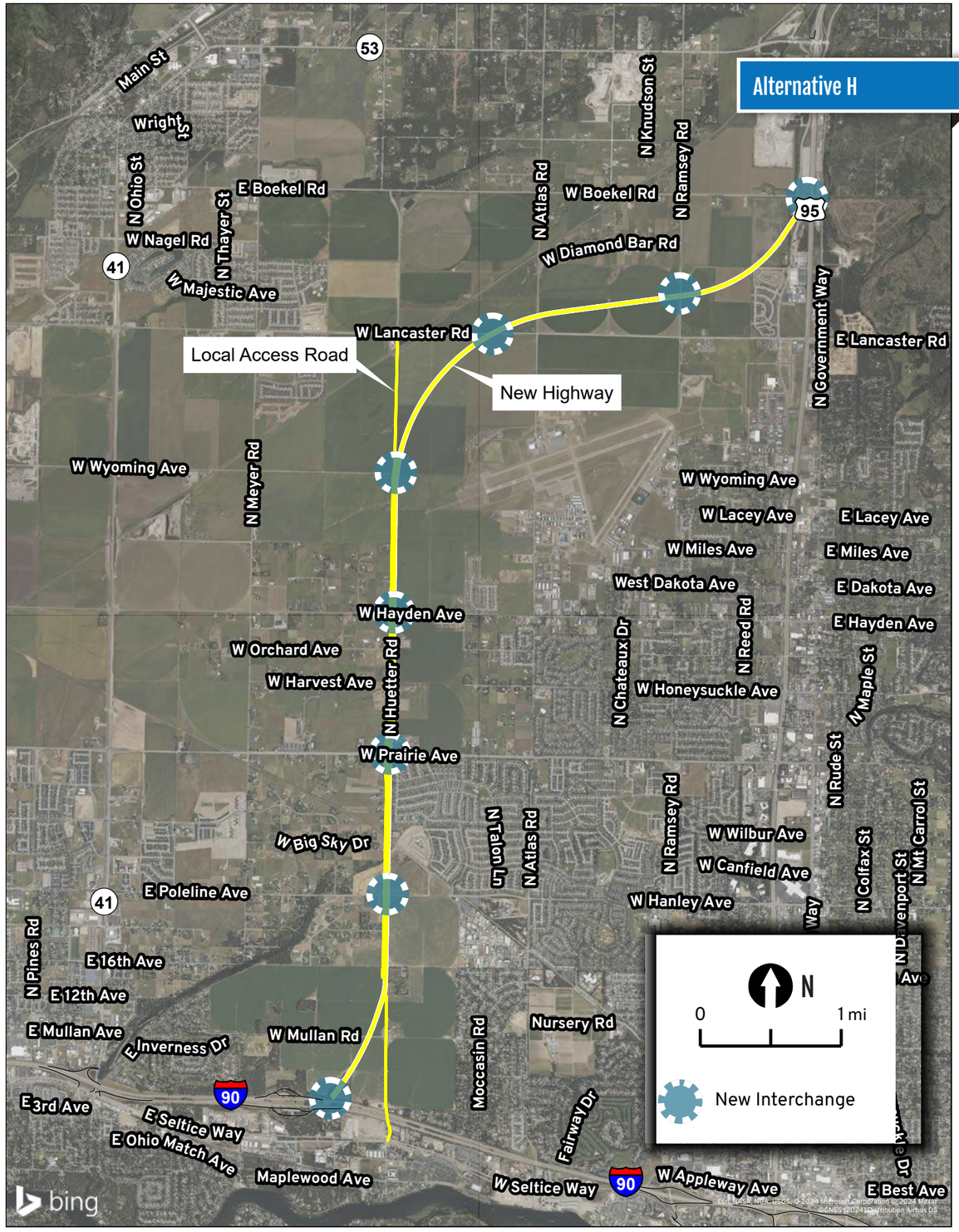
- Reduces congestion and travel time well along US-95, SH-41, and parallel roads compared to other north-south alternatives.
- Addresses study area congestion and network redundancy well compared to other north-south alternatives.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to Alternative D.
- Maintains existing arterial access points along Huetter Road.
- Adds new I-90 interchange access.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Included in local and regional planning documents.

Challenges:

- Greater right of way impacts than Alternative D (111 properties, 304 acres).
- Greater impacts to residential zoned properties than most other north-south alternatives (82 acres).

Typical Section





Alternative M

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Level 2 Alternative ID: M (East-West) Recommended to Carry Forward

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative M would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to SH-53.

The alternative would add an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from Pleasant View Road parallel to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe line to run parallel with Hayden Avenue until Idaho Road; then, run up to parallel with Wyoming Avenue from Greensferry Road to Meyer Road; then, parallel to the UPRR line to Lancaster Road, then parallel to Lancaster Road from Huetter Road to Ramsey Road; and then, run along a new alignment going northeast, south of the UPRR line, to connect with US-95 near Boekel Road.

SH-41 and SH-53 north of Rathdrum would be realigned with direct connection to a Meyer Road bypass over the BNSF line to an interchange with the new highway.

Travel lanes and improved intersections would be added to SH-53 from the Pleasant View interchange to Rathdrum. This would include an interchange at McGuire Road to connect into the new highway. A local access road would be added on the north side paralleling SH-53.

The reconstructed Pleasant View Highway and the new highway would both include two lanes in each direction with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction, turn lanes at intersections, and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

SH-53 would include two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane and a 50 to 55 mph speed limit.

The Meyer Road bypass would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

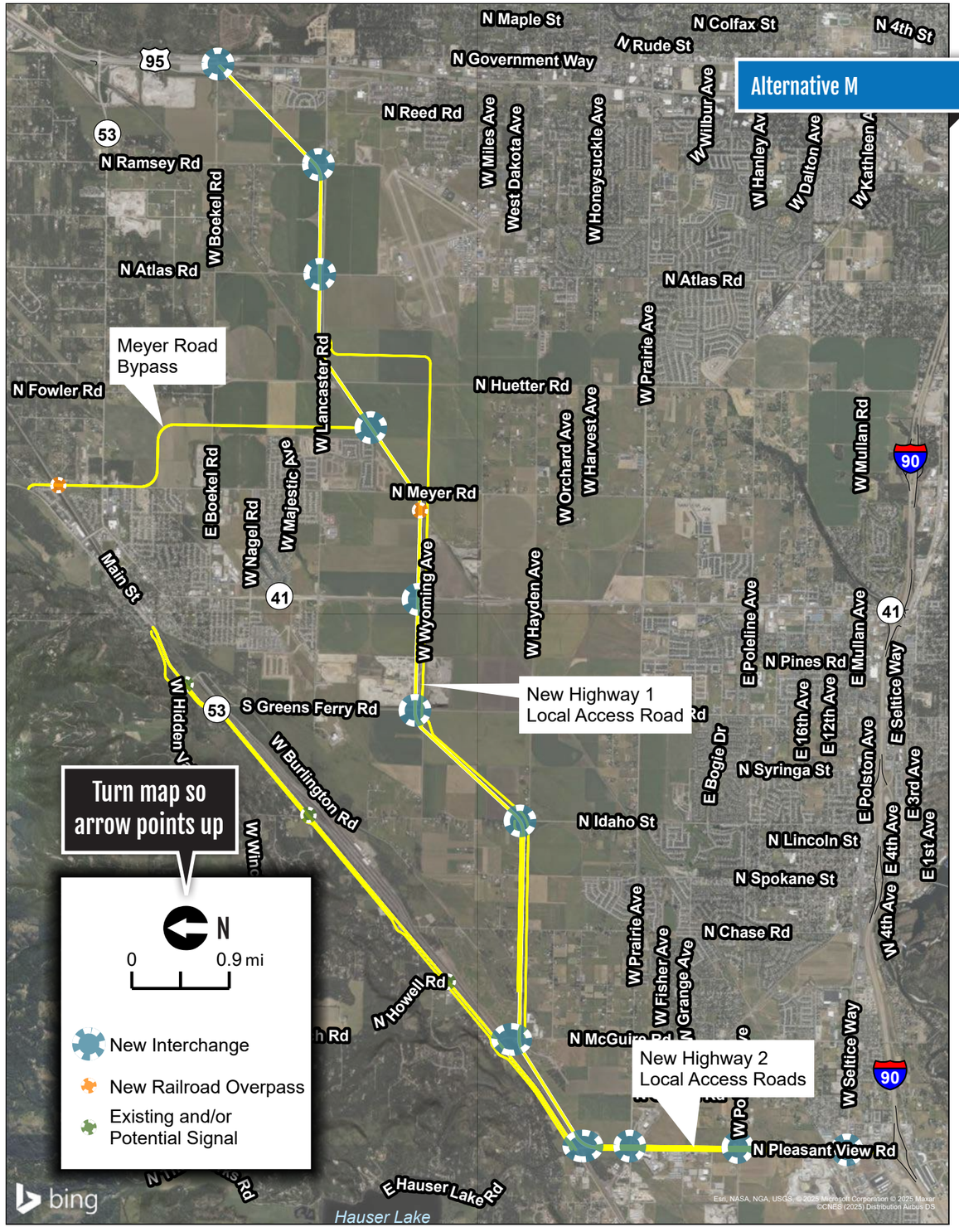
Benefits:

- Addresses congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and N.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- High level of right of way impacts (276 properties, 603 acres), and high impacts to residential zoned properties (121 acres).
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.6 acres) and historic sites (16 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).

Typical Sections **See page 34.**



Alternative N

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Level 2 Alternative ID: N (East-West) Recommended to Carry Forward

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative N would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to SH-53.

The alternative would add an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from Pleasant View Road parallel to the BNSF line, then parallel to Hayden Avenue Road south of Hayden Avenue to the UPRR line, then parallel to UPRR line to parallel to Lancaster Road from Huetter Road to Ramsey Road, then along a new alignment going northeast south of the UPRR line to connect with US-95 near Boekel Road. SH-41 and SH-53 north of Rathdrum would be realigned with a direct connection to a Meyer Road bypass over the BNSF line to an interchange with the new highway.

Travel lanes and improved intersections would be added on SH-53 from the Pleasant View interchange to Rathdrum. This would include an interchange at McGuire Road to connect into the new highway. A local access road would be added on the north side, paralleling SH-53.

The reconstructed Pleasant View Highway and the new highway would both include two lanes in each direction with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction, turn lanes at intersections, and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

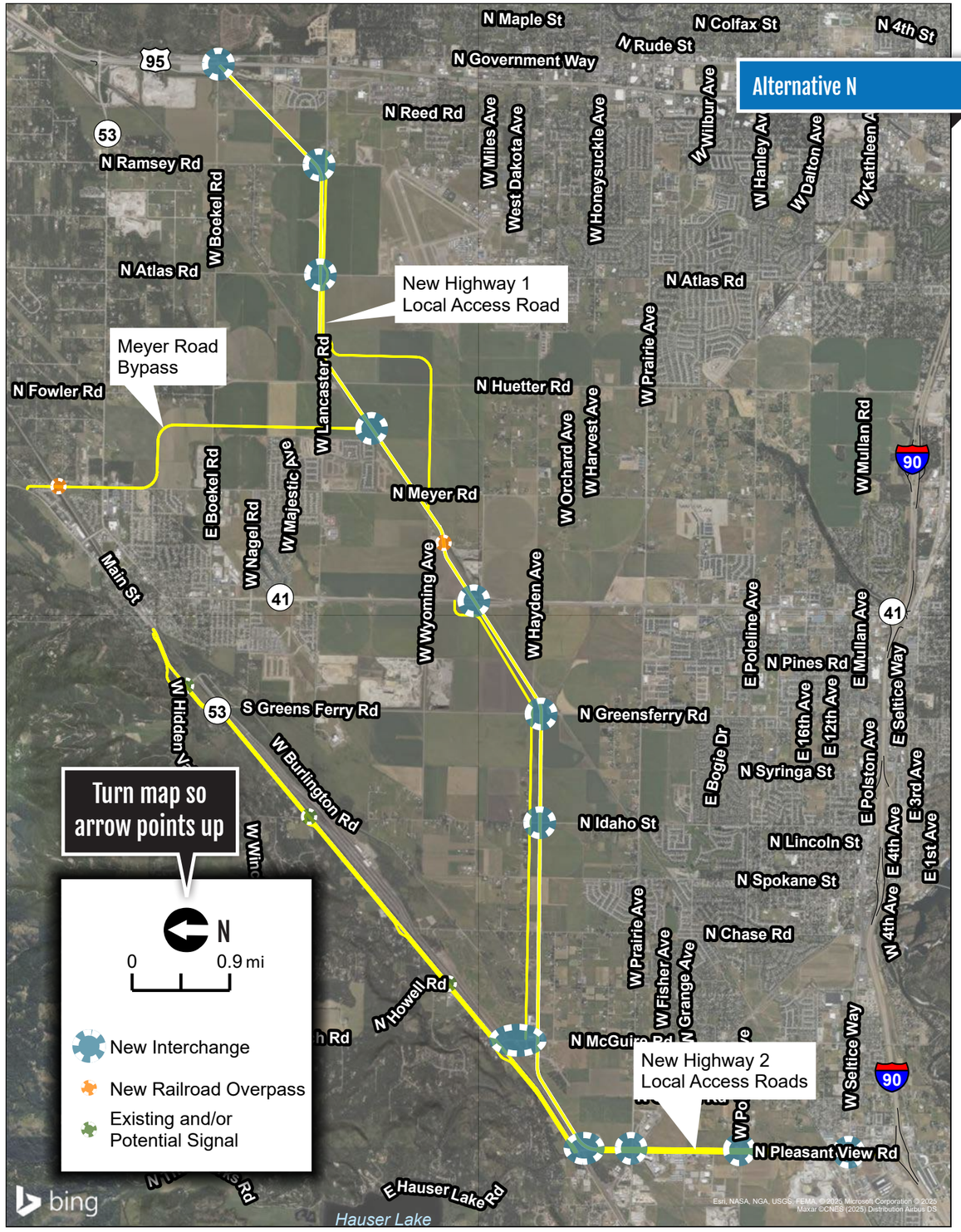
Benefits:

- Addresses congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to most other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and M.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.
- Lower impacts to residential zoned properties (66 acres) and commercial zoned property impacts (17 acres) than Alternatives L and M.

Challenges:

- High level of right of way impacts (326 properties), including greatest total number of acres impacted (731 acres).
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.8 acres) and historic sites (19 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).

Typical Sections **See page 34.**



Alternative A
SH-53 Expanded Highway

Level 2 Alternative ID: A
(East-West)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative A would add travel lanes and improve intersections on State Highway 53 from the Pleasant View interchange to Rathdrum.

The alternative would add a highway realigning SH-53, north of the City of Rathdrum, from the Greensferry Road intersection, to connect with State Highway 41 with an intersection; then, continue over the BNSF railroad tracks and connect with existing SH-53 to connect with U.S. Highway 95.

SH-53 would include two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane and 50 to 55 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

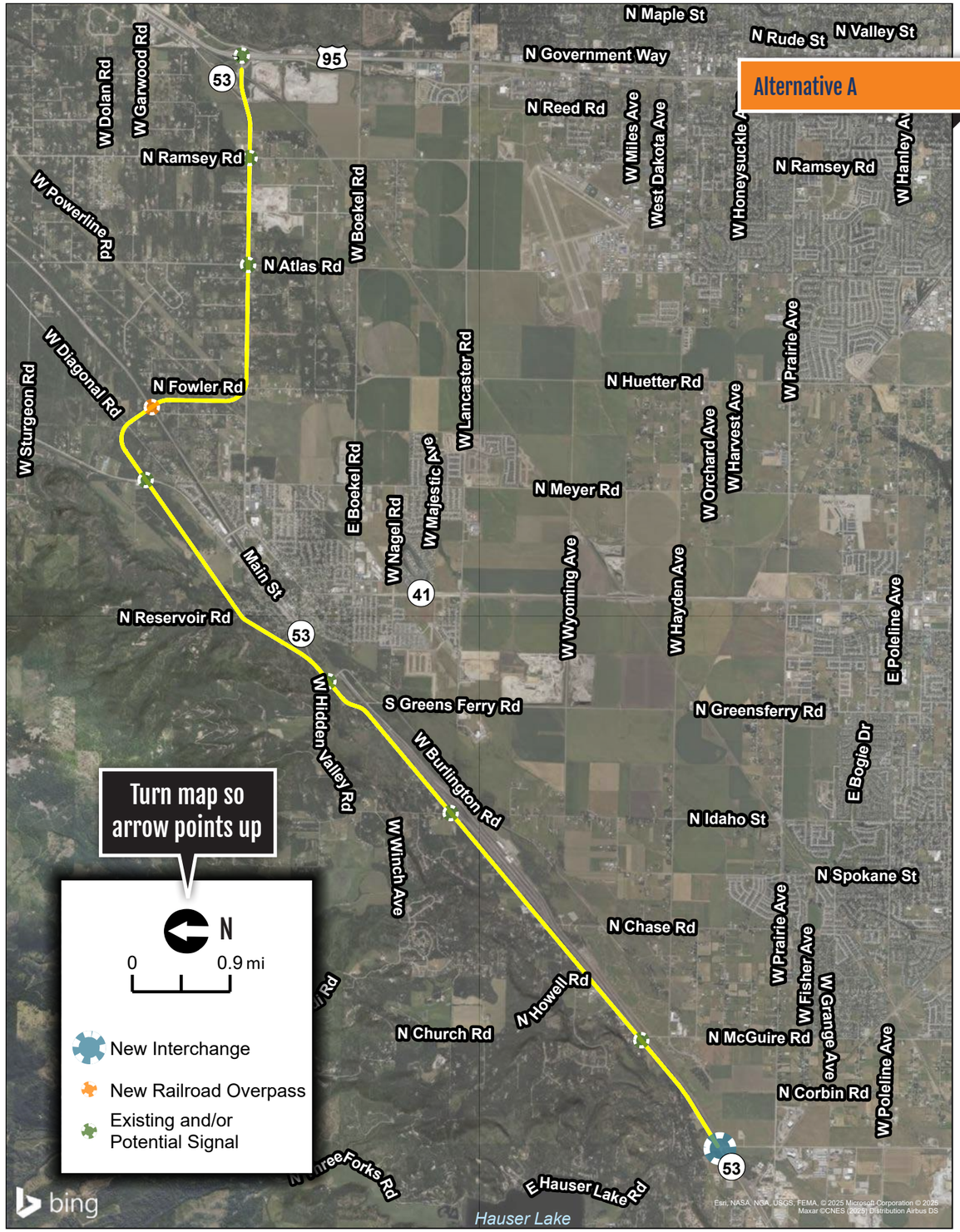
- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Would not address study area performance issues as well as other east-west alternatives.
- Would not reduce congestion and travel time on SH-53 as much as other alternatives.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- Does not significantly reduce potential crash conflicts at driveways on SH-53.
- High level of impacts to wetlands (3.7 acres) and historic sites (11 sites).

Typical Section

SH-53 Expanded Highway



Alternative C
US-95 Express Lanes

Level 2 Alternative ID: C (North-South)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative C would add separate express lanes parallel to US-95 that connect to US-95 north of Interstate 90 and south of SH-53. The express lanes would cross over or under the cross streets that intersect US-95, with no access to cross streets.

US-95 keeps the existing lane configuration and would match existing speed limits.

Express lanes would add one lane in each direction with a 60 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

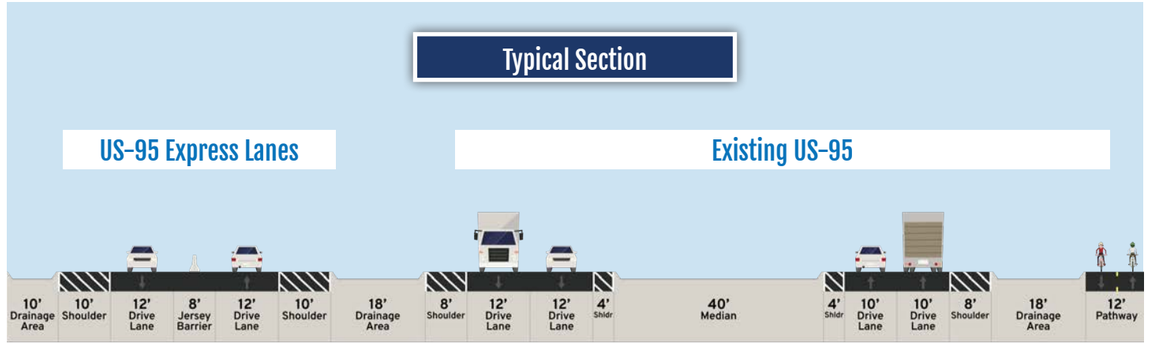
Benefits:

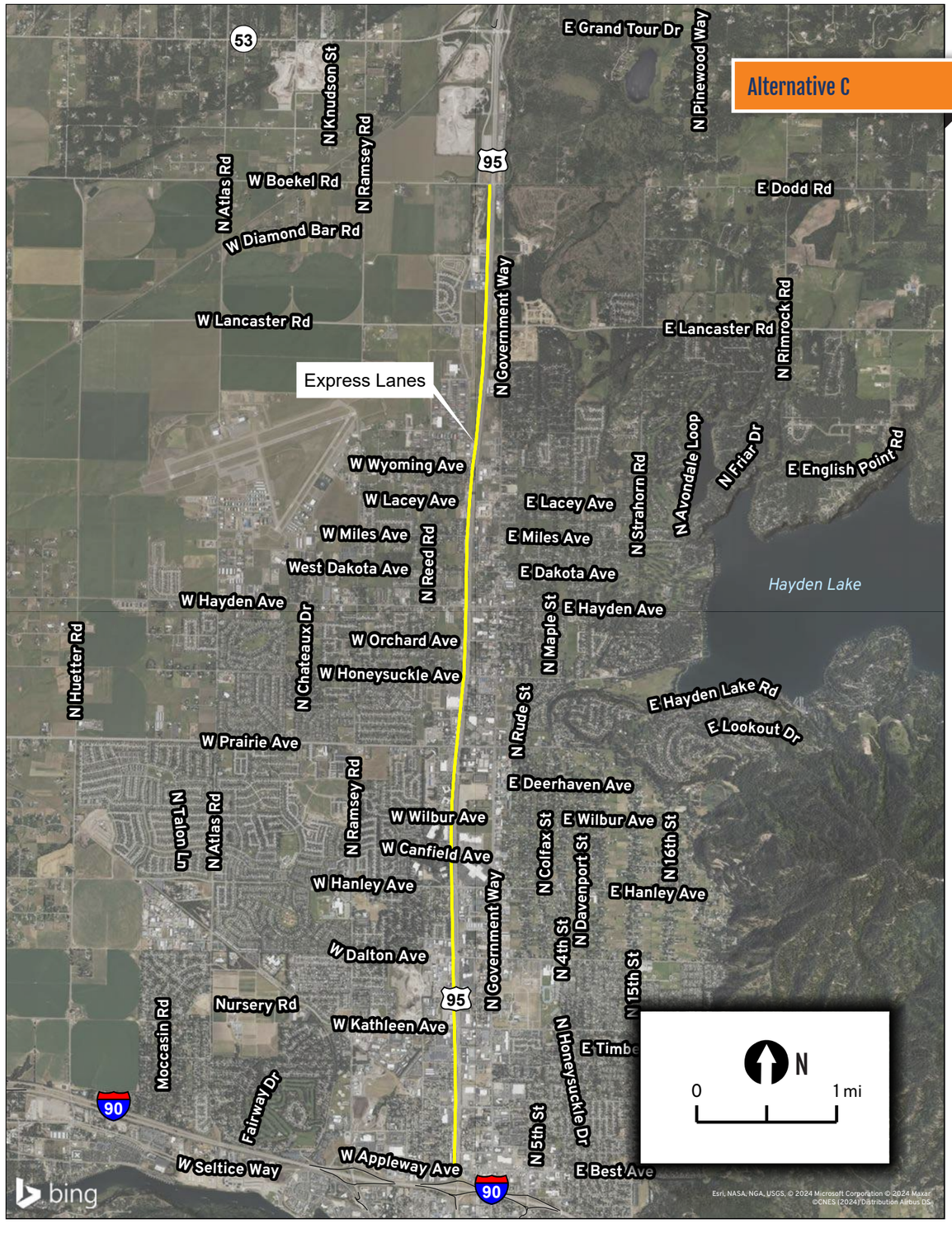
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby parallel roads.
- Fewer right of way (33 properties, 2 acres) and environmental impacts than most other north-south alternatives.

Challenges:

- Does not address study area performance issues as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not reduce potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95.
- Limited access from bypass lanes with potential for blockage with crashes.
- Further divides the community with new grade-separated overpasses.

Typical Section





Alternative E

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53

Level 2 Alternative ID: E
(East-West)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative E would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to SH-53.

The alternative would reconstruct SH-53 as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from the state line to Rathdrum, realigning SH-53 north of the City of Rathdrum from the Greensferry Road intersection to connect with SH-41 with an interchange; then, continue over the BNSF railroad tracks and connect with existing SH-53 to connect with US-95.

Pleasant View Road and SH-53 would each have two lanes in each direction with a center median with a speed limit of 55-65 mph.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections, and a speed limit of 35-45 mph.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

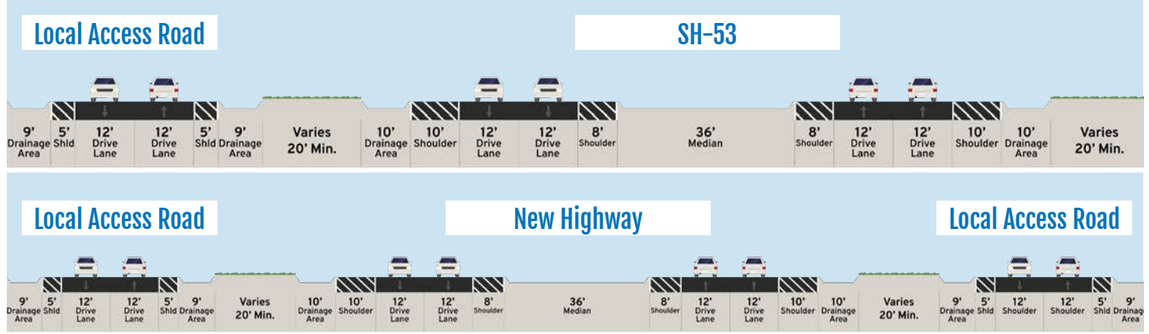
Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53, Pleasant View Road, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Generally addresses study area travel time and travel efficiency.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Highest level of impacts to residential zoned properties (345 acres).
- High level of floodplain (14 acres), wetland (8.1 acres), and historic site impacts (16 sites).
- Would not provide as much access to SH-53 as other alternatives.
- High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).

Typical Sections



Alternative F

Access Controlled Highway, SH-41, Greensferry, and SH-53

Level 2 Alternative ID: F (North-South)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative F would reconstruct SH-41 as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to SH-53. This alternative would realign SH-41 to the west, north of Wyoming Avenue, to align with Greensferry Road with a new interchange over the BNSF line connecting to SH-53.

The alternative would reconstruct SH-53 as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from the Greensferry Road/ SH-41 interchange to the realigned SH-53, north of the City of Rathdrum, to connect with SH-41 north of Rathdrum with an interchange; then, continue over the BNSF railroad tracks and connect with existing SH-53 to connect with US-95.

SH-41 and SH-53 would both have two lanes in each direction with a center median and speed limits of 55 to 65 mph.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a speed limit of 35 to 45 mph.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

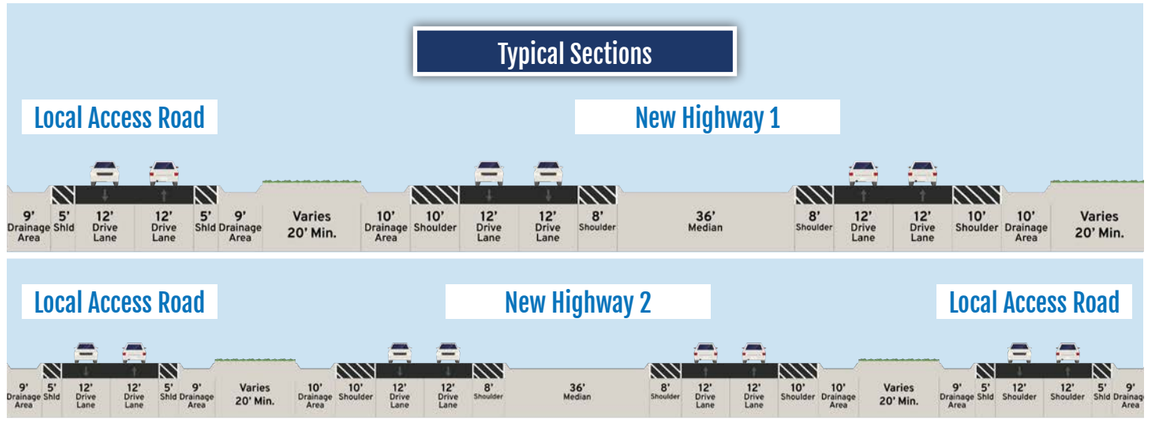
Benefits:

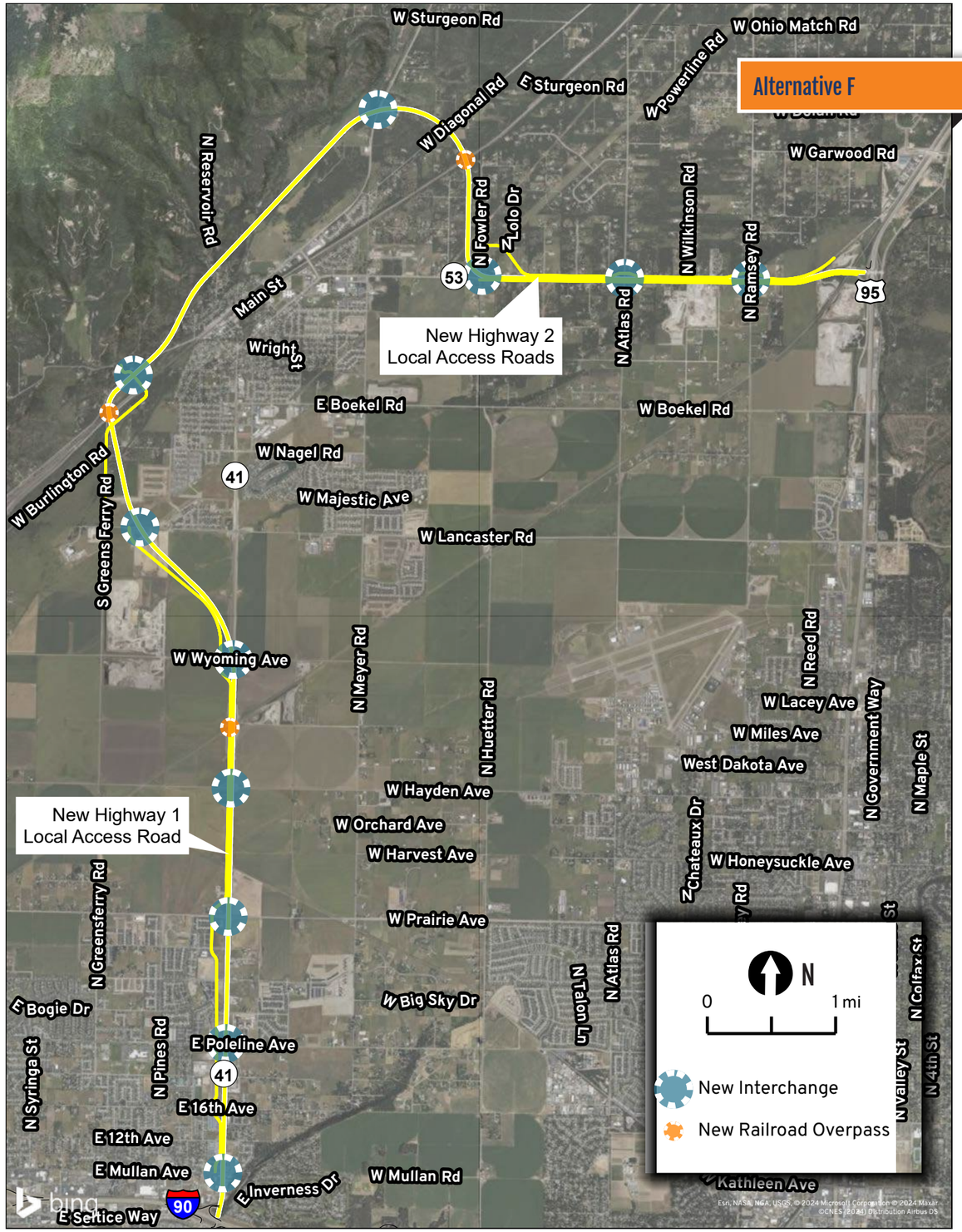
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.

Challenges:

- Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time, travel efficiency, or network redundancy as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not benefit SH-41 congestion and travel time as much as Alternatives D and H.
- High level of right of way impacts compared to other north-south alternatives (325 properties, 422 acres), including 278 acres of residential zoned property.
- High level of impacts to historic sites (26 sites) and floodplains (12 acres).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- Highest cost of north-south alternatives.

Typical Sections





Alternative I
Access Controlled Highway, US-95

Level 2 Alternative ID: I (North-South)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative I would reconstruct US-95 as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) through the study area.

US-95 would include two lanes in each direction with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access road would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

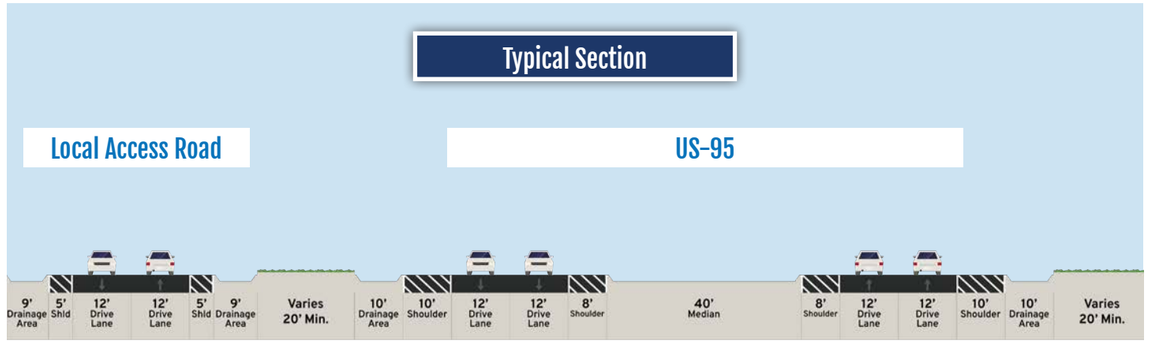
Benefits:

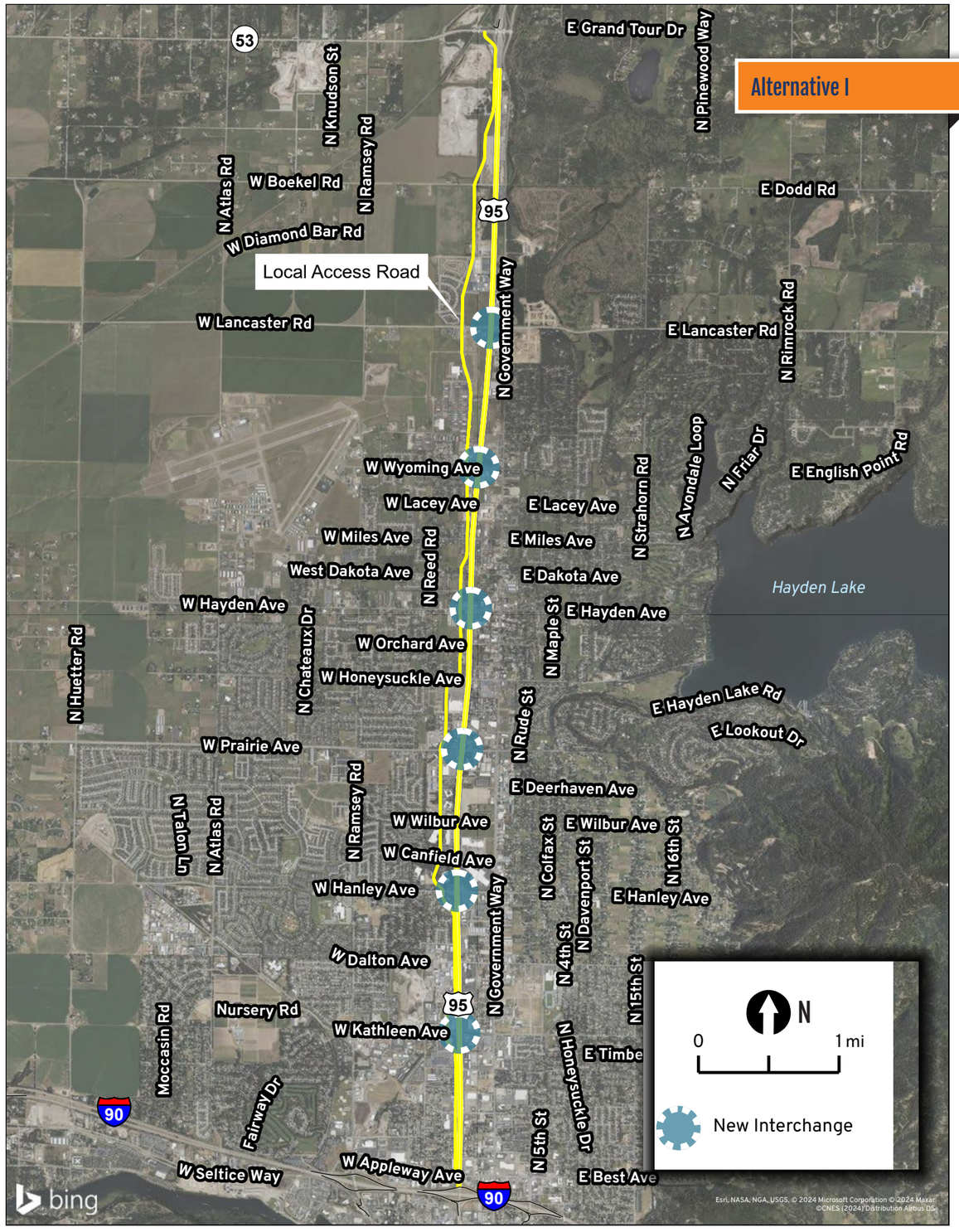
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby parallel roads.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95, compared to some other north-south alternatives.

Challenges:

- Does not address study area congestion or travel efficiency as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- High number of properties impacted compared to other north-south alternatives (359 properties), including 75 acres of commercial property.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- Further divides the community with new grade-separated overpasses.

Typical Section





Alternative J

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95

Level 2 Alternative ID: J
(East-West)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative J would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to a new highway.

The alternative would add an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) parallel to the UPRR line from Pleasant View Road to Lancaster Road, then along a new alignment going northeast, south of the UPRR line, to connect with US-95 near Boekel Road.

The reconstructed Pleasant View highway and the new highway would both have two lanes in each direction, with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

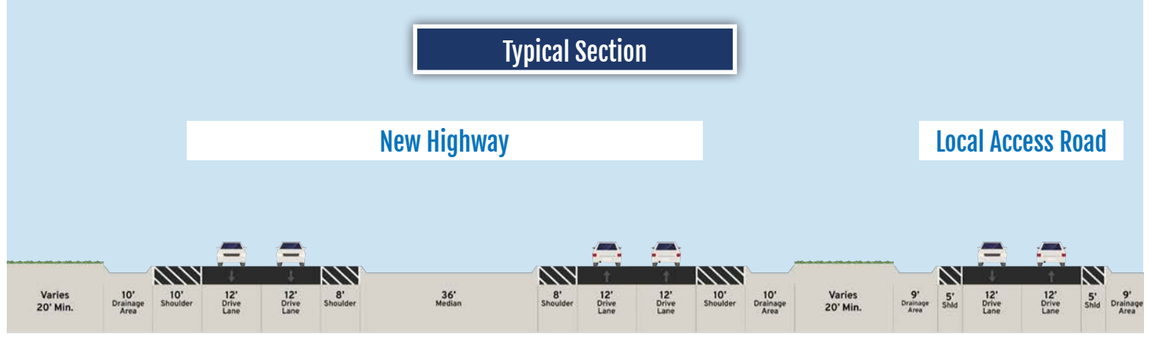
Benefits:

- Reduces congestion along I-90 and nearby parallel roads.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on alignment, compared to some other east-west alternatives.
- Addresses study area congestion similarly to other east-west alternatives.

Challenges:

- High level of right of way impacts (433 properties, 629 acres).
- High impact to residential zoned properties (214 acres).
- Further divides the community with new highway corridor next to freight rail line.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (compared with other east-west alternatives).

Typical Section



Alternative K

Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to US-95

Level 2 Alternative ID: K
(North-South)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative K would reconstruct SH-41 as an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to Hayden Avenue, and connecting to a new alignment going northeast, south of the UPRR line, to connect with US-95 near Boekel Road.

The reconstructed and new SH-41 would both include two lanes in each direction with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

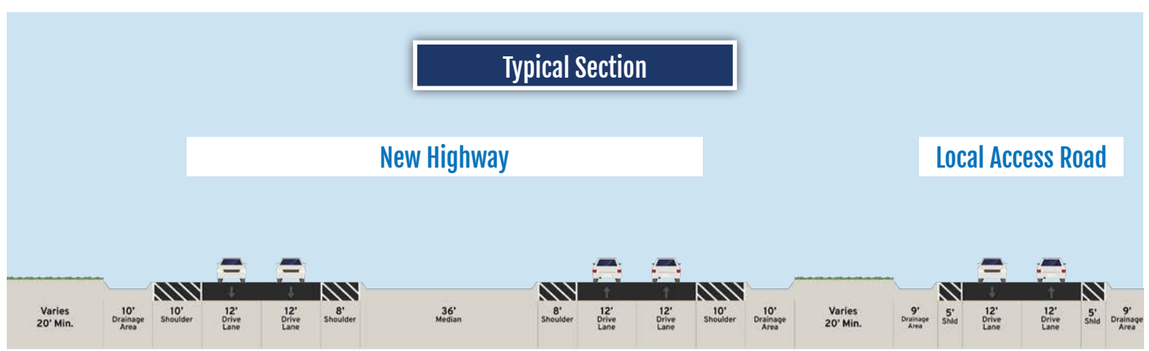
Benefits:

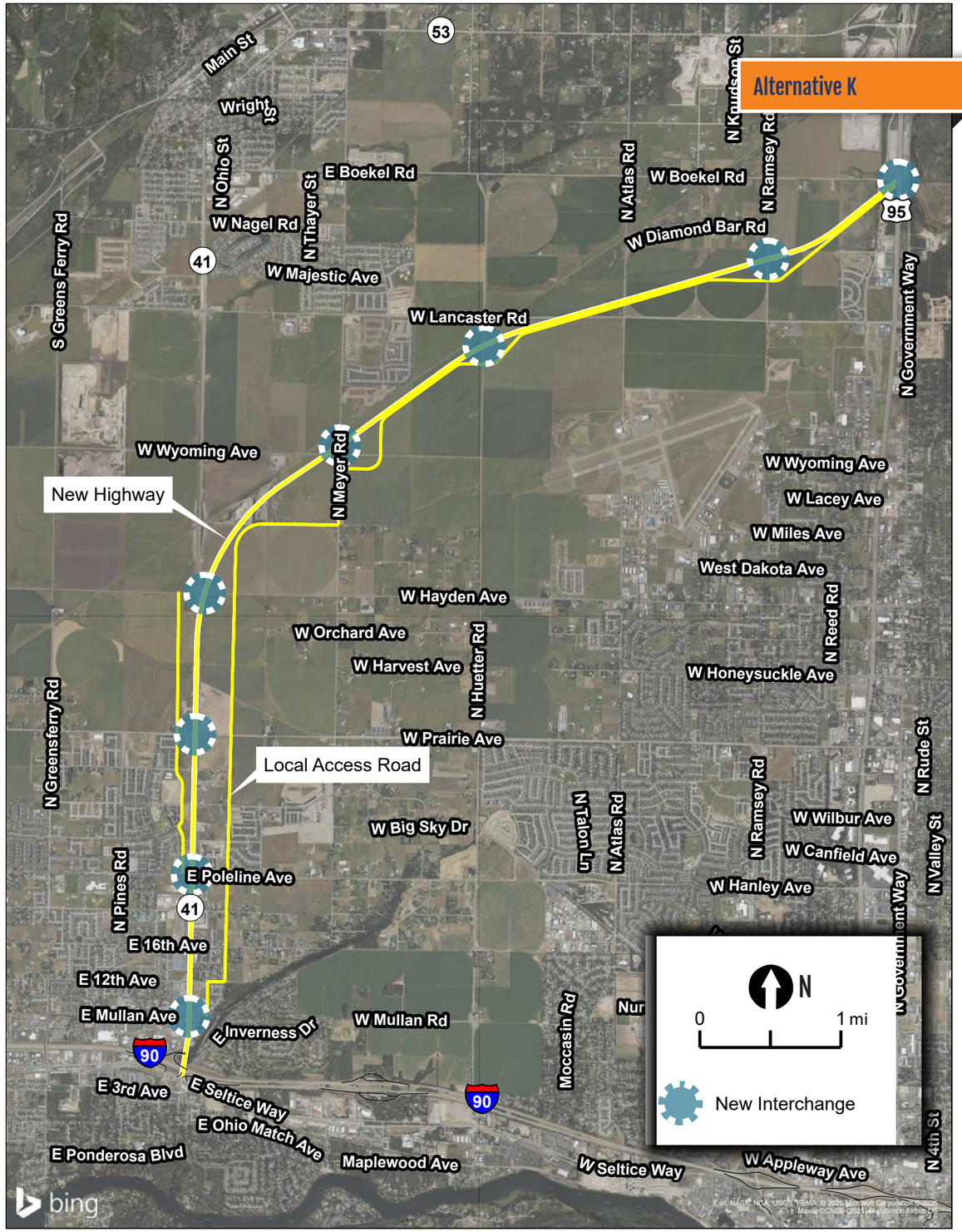
- Provides opportunity for new corridor with bike facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.

Challenges:

- Does not address congestion, travel time or travel efficiency as well as some other north south alternatives.
- High level of right-of-way impacts (428 acres).
- Does not benefit SH-41 as much as Alternatives D and H.
- Divides community by widening existing barrier of SH-41.
- High level of impact to historic sites (16 sites) compared to most other north-south alternatives.

Typical Section





Alternative L

Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Level 2 Alternative ID: L
(East-West)
Not Recommended

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative L would reconstruct Pleasant View Road as access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from I-90 to SH-53.

The alternative would add an access-controlled highway (with parallel local access roads and interchanges at key crossroads) from Pleasant View Road parallel to the BNSF line to run parallel with Lancaster Road to connect with US-95.

SH-41 and SH-53 north of Rathdrum would be realigned with direct connection to a Meyer Road bypass over the BNSF line to an interchange with the new highway.

Travel lanes and improved intersections would be added on SH-53 from the Pleasant View interchange to Rathdrum and would include an interchange at McGuire Road to connect into the new highway. A local access road would be added on the north side paralleling SH-53.

The reconstructed Pleasant View Highway and new highway would both include two lanes in each direction with a center median and a 55 to 65 mph speed limit.

The local access roads would include one lane in each direction, turn lanes at intersections, and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

SH-53 would include two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane and a 50 to 55 mph speed limit.

The Meyer Road bypass would include one lane in each direction with turn lanes at intersections and a 35 to 45 mph speed limit.

Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

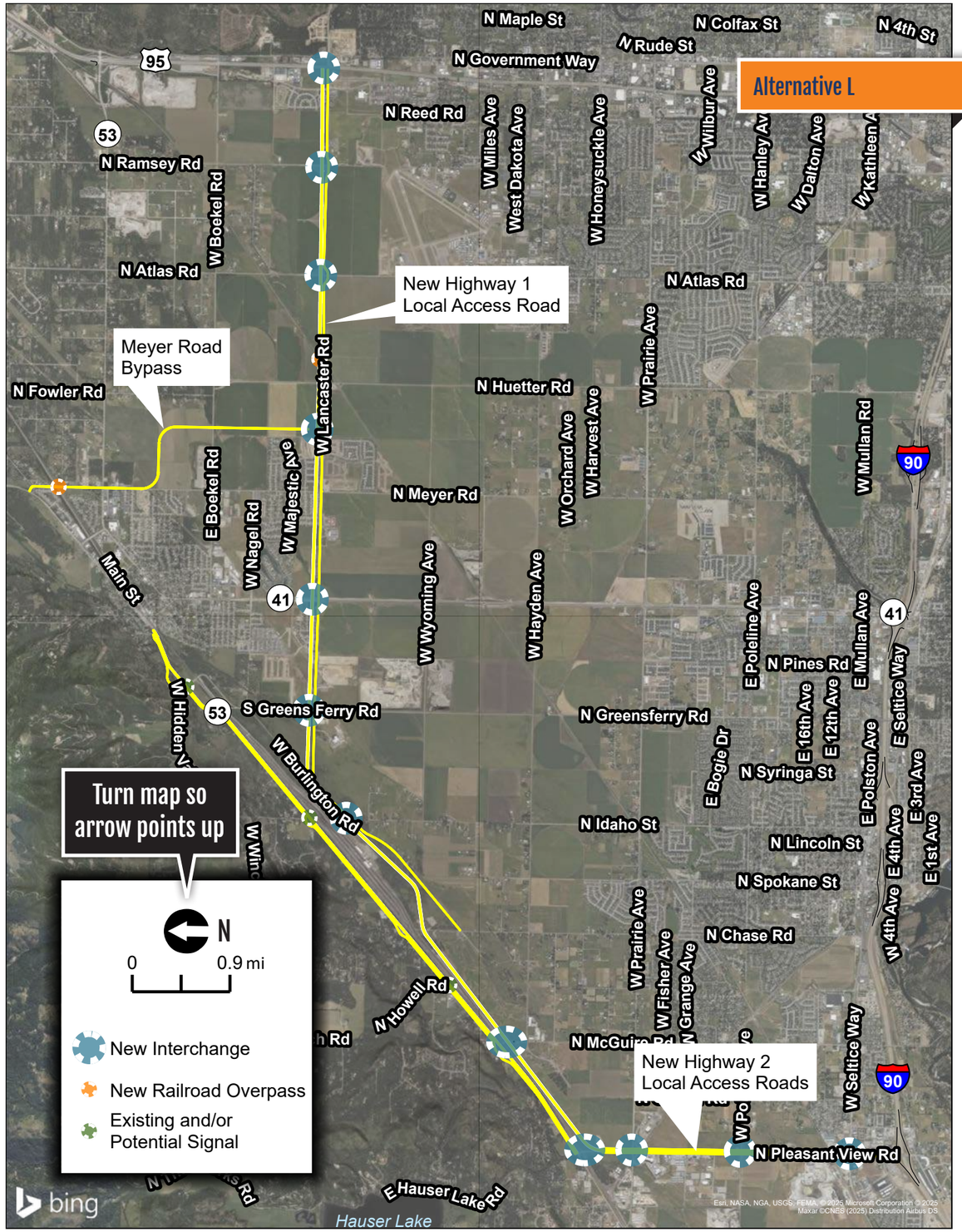
Benefits:

- Addresses congestion and travel time at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives M and N.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

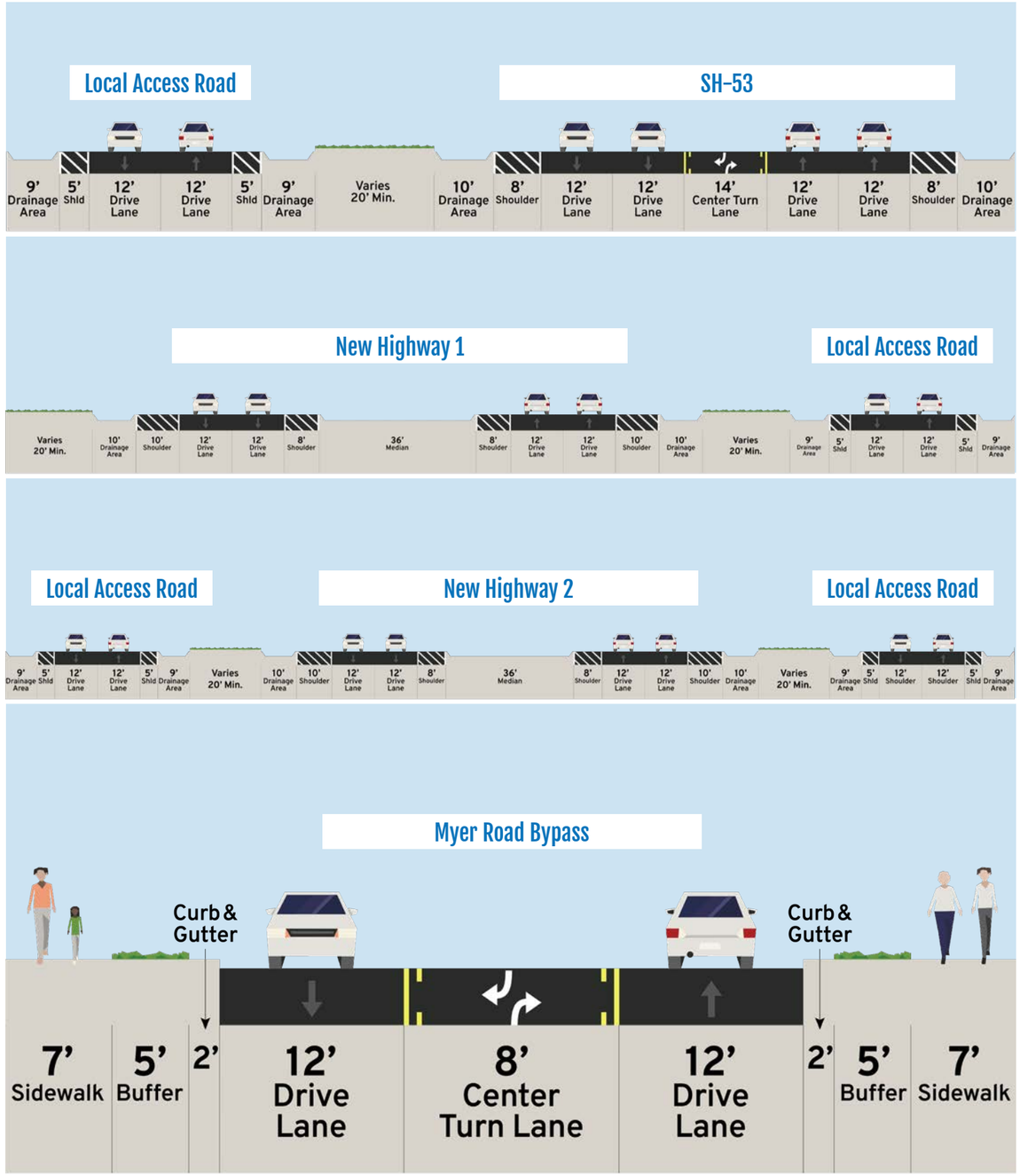
- Greatest number of total properties impacted for east-west alternatives (478 properties).
- High residential zoned property impacts (107 acres).
- Higher commercial zoned property impacts (30 acres) than Alternatives M and N.
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres) and wetlands (4.3 acres).
- Greatest number of historic properties impacted for east-west alternatives (21 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).

Typical Sections **See page 34.**



Typical Sections

Typical sections for Alternatives L, M, N



What's Next?

Level 3 Evaluation

ITD will further develop, combine, and evaluate the alternatives carried forward into Level 3 using the following steps:

- **Explore combinations of alternatives carried forward from Level 2 and consider design adjustments to alignments and cross sections.**
- **Assess in greater detail the benefits, impacts, estimated costs and potential right of way needs of each alternative.**
- **Hold one more public meeting to share Level 3 alternatives and gather feedback to identify the alternatives recommended to be developed.**
- **Finish the study in 2026 and begin moving the recommended alternatives into the NEPA review process.**

Notes:

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

If you have questions, please contact the study team:
info@rathdrumprairiepel.com

Share your input.

Visit the online meeting by scanning the QR code and submitting a comment form or mailing one to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Comments are due by **Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025**.

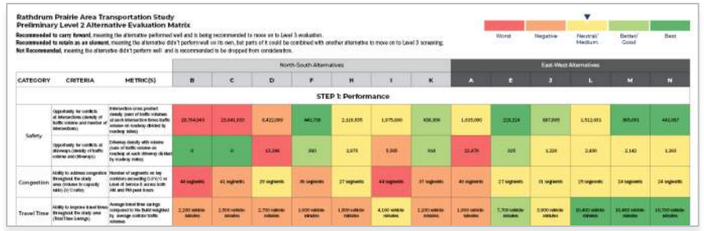
Your feedback helps guide our work, but individual or collective input isn't the same as a 'vote' — the design team also considers safety, engineering, budget, and other factors when making final decisions.

Understanding the Screening Matrix and Traffic Analysis

As part of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study, our team reviewed 13 different ideas to improve congestion and mobility across Kootenai County during Level 2 of the alternatives evaluation.

To compare the options and their overall benefits to the region, we used two main tools: a screening matrix and traffic maps with tables.

Screening Matrix: Think of this as a side-by-side representation of the tradeoffs for each alternative. It compares each alternative using data on safety, travel times, impacts to properties and the environment, and more. This helps us understand how each option would perform if built.


Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

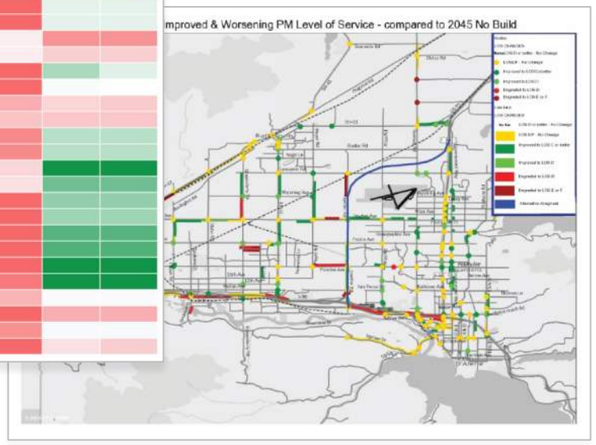
Worst | Negative | Neutral/ Medium | Better/ Good | Best

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	METRIC(S)	North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
			B	C	D	F	H	I	K	A	E	J	L	M	N
STEP 1: Performance															
Safety	Opportunity for conflicts at intersections (density of traffic volume and number of intersections)	Intersections cross product (weekly [sum of traffic volumes at each intersection times traffic volume on roadway divided by roadway miles])	28,754,643	23,643,333	8,422,000	442,738	2,319,335	1,975,000	438,306	1,435,000	228,224	687,899	1,752,693	365,093	442,057
	Opportunity for conflicts at driveways (density of traffic volume and [driveways])	[driveway density with volume (sum of traffic volume on roadway at each driveway divided by roadway miles)]	4	4	13,266	260	2,678	5,000	954	22,678	329	1,220	2,430	2,142	1,260
Congestion	Ability to address congestion throughout the study area (reduce to capacity ratio [V/C ratio])	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	37 segments	44 segments	37 segments	41 segments	27 segments	31 segments	29 segments	34 segments	34 segments
Travel Time	Ability to improve travel times throughout the study area (Total Time Savings)	Average travel time savings compared to the Build weighted by average volume-to-capacity ratio	2,200 vehicle-minutes	2,900 vehicle-minutes	2,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	1,800 vehicle-minutes	4,100 vehicle-minutes	1,200 vehicle-minutes	1,000 vehicle-minutes	7,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	15,400 vehicle-minutes	15,400 vehicle-minutes	10,700 vehicle-minutes

Traffic Analysis Maps and Tables: Our maps use computer modeling from the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization to show how each alternative could affect future traffic across the entire region, not just along each alternative. Green areas and dots show where congestion would improve, red where it would worsen, and yellow shows existing congested areas that would see no change. A blue line marks the route of the proposed alternative.

The tables show how much travel time would change compared to doing nothing ("no build"). Green means drivers would experience less congestion and save time, while red means congestion would get worse. The darker the color, the greater the change.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative D	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times	Travel Times	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			



These tools allow our team of transportation engineers and planning experts to review the data in detail and make objective recommendations. By looking at both the matrix and the maps/tables, we can see which options benefit the region overall, not just one small area.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Recommendations from the study and the public and agency input received may be adopted or incorporated into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies per 23 United States Code (USC) 168 or Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.212 and 450.318.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 1: Performance															
Safety	Opportunity for conflicts at intersections (density of traffic volume and number of intersections)	Intersection cross product density (sum of traffic volumes at each intersection times traffic volume on roadway divided by roadway miles)	29,704,943	23,041,633	8,422,099	440,738	2,119,535	1,975,800	638,306	1,615,090	223,224	897,805	1,512,631	365,091	441,087
	Opportunity for conflicts at driveways (density of traffic volume and driveways)	Driveway density with volume (sum of traffic volume on roadway at each driveway divided by roadway miles)	0	0	13,346	380	2,875	5,585	914	22,479	325	1,220	2,430	2,142	1,263
Congestion	Ability to address congestion throughout the study area (Volume to capacity ratio) (V/C ratio)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
Travel Time	Ability to improve travel times throughout the study area (Total Time Savings)	Average travel time savings compared to No-Build weighted by average corridor traffic volumes	2,200 vehicle-minutes	2,500 vehicle-minutes	2,700 vehicle-minutes	1,600 vehicle-minutes	1,900 vehicle-minutes	4,100 vehicle-minutes	1,100 vehicle-minutes	1,900 vehicle-minutes	7,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	10,400 vehicle-minutes	10,400 vehicle-minutes	10,700 vehicle-minutes
Travel Efficiency	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-miles traveled for the network) (VMT)	Change in VMT from the No-Build across both AM and PM peak hours	2,004 change from no build (1,171,402 VMT)	6,786 change from no build (1,176,184 VMT)	589 change from no build (1,169,987 VMT)	5,132 change from no build (1,174,530 VMT)	7,008 change from no build (1,176,406 VMT)	10,887 change from no build (1,180,285 VMT)	8,476 change from no build (1,177,874 VMT)	1,390 change from no build (1,170,788 VMT)	-5,640 change from no build (1,163,758 VMT)	3,195 change from no build (1,172,593 VMT)	3,001 change from no build (1,172,399 VMT)	-442 change from no build (1,168,956 VMT)	-78 change from no build (1,169,320 VMT)
	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-hours traveled for the network) (VHT)	Change in VHT from the No-Build across both AM and PM peak hours	-1,281 change from no build (49,472 VHT)	-1,970 change from no build (48,783 VHT)	-2,043 change from no build (48,710 VHT)	-1,032 change from no build (49,721 VHT)	-2,203 change from no build (48,550 VHT)	-1,705 change from no build (49,048 VHT)	-915 change from no build (49,838 VHT)	-1,498 change from no build (49,255 VHT)	-3,870 change from no build (46,883 VHT)	-3,524 change from no build (47,229 VHT)	-6,031 change from no build (44,722 VHT)	-5,925 change from no build (44,828 VHT)	-6,070 change from no build (44,683 VHT)
Network Redundancy	Ability to address congestion during a major incident (V/C ratio during detour event)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E	196 segments	190 segments	147 segments	185 segments	121 segments	191 segments	181 segments	202 segments	148 segments	166 segments	139 segments	141 segments	134 segments
Multimodal Considerations	Ability to increase safety, mobility, and connections for bicycle and pedestrian users (Consideration of integrating existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities)	Assess how improvements can benefit or impact existing or future use of bicycle and pedestrian facilities	Additional at-grade conflicts (more lanes and additional traffic)	Maintains connections, grade separated crossings, but wider corridor to cross	New corridor and multiuse paths, local bicycle and pedestrian connections maintained.	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Some crossings require navigating interchange where none exists today	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Shoulder with more lanes/traffic	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities, but disrupts local system.	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities
	Ability to increase safety mobility and connections for transit users based on transit service in mixed traffic (V/C ratio)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
Step 1 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Retain as Element**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
Step 1 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Retain as Element**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**
	Rationale		Doesn't address study area congestion metric as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed for to address intersection conflicts and multimodal performance .	Doesn't address study area congestion and redundancy as well as other north-south alternatives (D,H), as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD Facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed to address emergency vehicle access and incident response, as well as intersection conflicts.	Addresses study area congestion, efficiency and redundancy better than other alternatives (B, C, F, I, K). Provides new multimodal corridor. Design considerations needed to address intersection conflicts.	Doesn't address study area congestion and redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (D, H). Doesn't benefit ITD facility (SH-41) to the same extent as Alternatives D and H (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Addresses study area congestion and redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (B, C, F, I, K). Design considerations needed to address intersection conflicts.	Doesn't address study area congestion or travel efficiency as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed for multimodal considerations.	Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time, travel efficiency, or network redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (D, H). Doesn't benefit ITD facility (SH-41) to the same extent as Alternatives D and H (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time and network redundancy better than other east-west alternatives (E, J, L, M, N). Doesn't benefit SH-53 to the same extent as Alternatives E, L, M, and N (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 2: Impacts and Benefits															
Community Impacts and Planning	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of properties impacted)	Alternative footprint overlayed with parcel data	0 properties impacted	33 properties impacted	56 properties impacted	325 properties impacted	111 properties impacted	359 properties impacted	152 properties impacted	230 properties impacted	358 properties impacted	433 properties impacted	478 properties impacted	276 properties impacted	326 properties impacted
	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of acres impacted)	Alternative footprint overlayed with parcel data	0 acres impacted	2 acres impacted	107 acres impacted	422 acres impacted	304 acres impacted	111 acres impacted	428 acres impacted	84 acres impacted	479 acres impacted	629 acres impacted	553 acres impacted	603 acres impacted	731 acres impacted
	Estimated residential right-of-way requirements (Acres of residential zoned areas, including Ag-Suburban and Rural)	Based on acres of potentially impacted residential areas	0 acres impacted	0 acres impacted	35 acres impacted	278 acres impacted	82 acres impacted	12 acres impacted	29 acres impacted	71 acres impacted	345 acres impacted	214 acres impacted	107acres impacted	121 acres impacted	66 acres impacted
	Estimated commercial right-of-way requirements (Acres of commercial zoned areas)	Based on acres of potentially impacted commercial areas	0 acres impacted	1 acres impacted	5 acres impacted	52 acres impacted	17 acres impacted	75 acres impacted	50 acres impacted	4 acres impacted	36 acres impacted	14 acres impacted	30 acres impacted	19 acres impacted	17 acres impacted
	Use of existing highway or roadway corridors (Amount and existing corridors utilized)	Assessment based on how much of existing corridors and other corridors are utilized using the evaluation scale	Primarily uses existing corridor	Primarily uses existing corridor	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Primarily uses existing corridor but requires expansion	Requires new alignment from SH-41 to US-95	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires new corridor	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them
	How does the alternative effect local access (Based on adding more or less local access overall)	Assessment based on an increase, no change, or decrease in access using existing conditions as a baseline	Maintains access	Maintains access from US-95 to local destination. However, bypass lanes have limited access, especially for emergency response.	New access to I-90 and local areas	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, interchanges generally at existing local roadways	Access control means less access with closer spaced existing access	Less access in Post Falls, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	Maintains access	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, although existing access to I-90 exists	New access to I-90, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden
	Does the alternative divide or further divide existing communities (based on location of alternatives within existing communities)	Assessment based on existing community barriers with consideration of proposed alternatives using the evaluation scale	Additional lanes adds to crossing distance	Addition of grade-separated lanes for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to perceived barrier in developed area.	Minimal change, intermittent development	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in intermittent development and developed areas.	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to barrier.	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area in Post Falls	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Adds new corridor to developed area	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum
	Compatibility with local and regional planning efforts (based on compatibility assessment provided to local governments)	Assessment based on coordination with local jurisdictions intersecting with alternatives, and them agreeing with a Low, Medium, or High rating for each alternative	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (High)	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Coeur d'Alene (High), Post Falls (High), Hayden (Medium), Rathdrum (High)	Rathdrum (Low), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Hayden (High), Coeur d'Alene (Medium/ Concerns), Post Falls (High), Rathdrum (High)	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (Medium)	Hauser (Low), Rathdrum (Low/ Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Post Falls (Low), Rathdrum (Low/ Concerns)	Rathdrum (Low), Hayden (Low), Hauser (High)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Medium), Hayden (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Low), Hayden (Low)

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 2: Impacts and Benefits															
Environmental Resources	New acres of impervious surfaces	Estimated approximate area of new impervious surface	24 acres of impervious surface	37 acres of impervious surface	73 acres of impervious surface	115 acres of impervious surface	86 acres of impervious surface	30 acres of impervious surface	101 acres of impervious surface	75 acres of impervious surface	175 acres of impervious surface	180 acres of impervious surface	179 acres of impervious surface	187 acres of impervious surface	198 acres of impervious surface
	Floodplain Impacts	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays with resource spatial data	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	12 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	1 acre of FEMA floodplains	14 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains
	Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. Impacts	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays with resource spatial data	0.0 acres	0.0 acres	1.5 acres	2.9 acres	2.7 acres	0.0 acres	0.6 acres	3.7 acres	8.1 acres	0.2 acres	4.3 acres	3.6 acres	3.8 acres
Social and Built Environment	Potential Impacts to Community Resources and Parks and Recreation	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays or approximately 50-foot proximity from proposed alignment with desktop resource spatial data	13 properties	13 properties	2 properties	1 property	2 properties	14 properties	1 property	3 properties	3 properties	1 Property	8 properties	7 properties	7 properties
	Impacts to Hazardous Materials sites	Number of hazardous materials sites intersected by footprint	15 sites	0 sites	1 sites	9 sites	1 sites	19 sites	8 sites	6 sites	10 sites	5 sites	10 sites	7 sites	9 sites
	Impacts to Historic Sites	Number of historic sites intersected by footprint	2 sites	1 sites	3 sites	26 sites	4 sites	7 sites	16 sites	11 sites	16 sites	9 sites	21 sites	16 sites	19 sites
	Properties with potential residential noise receptors	Residential land use properties within 500 ft of alternative	1,474 properties	839 properties	417 properties	1,289 properties	591 properties	2,675 properties	1,272 properties	639 properties	874 properties	1,710 properties	1,903 properties	1,400 properties	1,442 properties
Step 2 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**
Rationale			Smaller footprint with fewer right-of-way requirements and environmental impacts. Design considerations needed to minimize impacts to community resources.	Similar right-of-way impacts as Alternative B; however, further divides corridor with new grade-separated lanes. Limited access on bypass lanes is safety concern.	Neutral/medium and better/good level of right-of-way impacts. New access to I-90. Environmental and social impacts relatively low.		Neutral/medium and Poor/negative level of overall right-of-way impacts. New access to I-90. Environmental and social impacts relatively low.	Highest number of total properties impacted for north-south alternatives. Less access to/ from US-95. Further divides corridor for most of length of corridor with widened typical section and potentially limited crossing opportunities.			Highest amount of residential right-of-way impacts. Less direct access to SH-53 due to access control. Highest level of floodplain and wetland impacts.	High number of parcels and acres of total right-of-way impacted and high level of residential impacts. Further divides Post Falls by widening barrier (currently freight rail corridor). High level of potential sensitive noise receptors.	Highest number of total properties impacted and high residential impacts. Higher commercial impacts than other east-west alternatives (M, N). Highest number of potential historic resources impacts.	Lower total right-of-way parcels impacted compared to Alternatives E, J, L and N. Higher residential property impacts than Alternatives L and M. Lower commercial property impacts than Alternative L. Similar environmental impacts for Alternatives L, M, and N.	Highest level of total right-of-way acres required, but lower level of impact to residential and commercial properties than other east-west alternatives (E, L, M). Similar environmental impacts for Alternatives L, M, and N.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

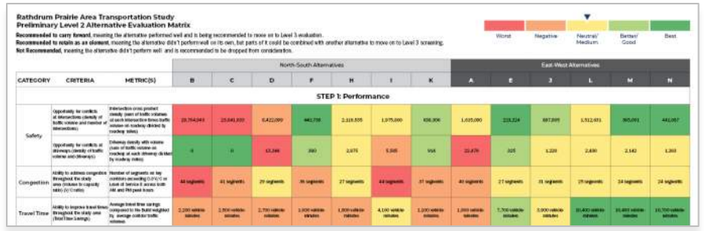
			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 3: Implementation															
Implementation	Conceptual construction costs (Magnitude in cost in comparison to other alternatives, including assumptions for structures and ROW)	Based on conceptual construction costs	$	$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$	$$$	$$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, reducing number of typical ITD construction packages per alternative	Based on number of construction packages	3 packages	4 packages	3 packages	10 packages	6 packages	5 packages	6 packages	3 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, minimizing traffic impacts	Qualitative: Impacts to the traveling public during construction	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated crossings would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, you can then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Mostly offline construction and can be constructed around Huetter Road's lower volume of traffic with phased intersections and interchanges.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Reduced number of travel lanes during construction	Phasing the 3 grade separated interchanges on SH-41 would be impactful to the traveling public. Half of project to the north is offline with fewer traffic impacts. Likely reduced number of temporary travel lanes for the south end.	Typical highway widening. Two major maintenance of traffic phases. Can maintain existing 1-lane of traffic in each direction, may have to temporarily close turn lane.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Almost all offline construction, easier to phase. High ROW impacts, but low impact to traffic flow and maintenance of traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.
Step 3 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Carry Forward**	**Carry Forward**
Rationale			Lowest cost of all alternatives. Medium implementation with maintenance of traffic and access requirements.		Comparatively low cost. Medium implementation with maintenance of traffic and access requirements.		Medium cost compared to all alternatives. Highest cost for remaining north-south alternatives.							High cost for all alternatives, but similar to other east-west alternatives (E, L, N).	High cost for all alternatives, but similar to other east-west alternatives (E, L, M).

Understanding the Screening Matrix and Traffic Analysis

As part of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study, our team reviewed 13 different ideas to improve congestion and mobility across Kootenai County during Level 2 of the alternatives evaluation.

To compare the options and their overall benefits to the region, we used two main tools: a screening matrix and traffic maps with tables.

Screening Matrix: Think of this as a side-by-side representation of the tradeoffs for each alternative. It compares each alternative using data on safety, travel times, impacts to properties and the environment, and more. This helps us understand how each option would perform if built.


Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

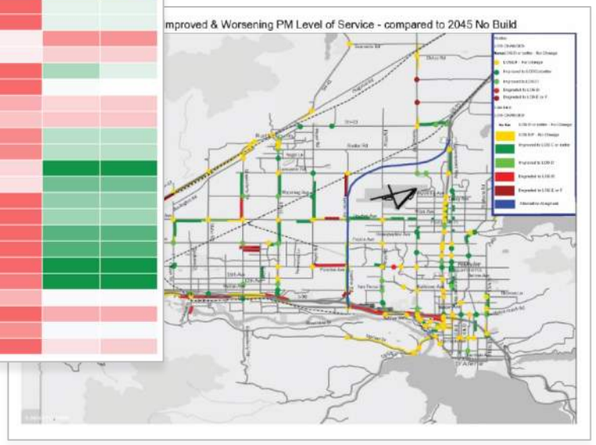
Worst | Negative | Neutral/ Medium | Better/ Good | Best

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	METRIC(S)	North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
			B	C	D	F	H	I	K	A	E	J	L	M	N
STEP 1: Performance															
Safety	Opportunity for conflicts at intersections (density of traffic volume and number of intersections)	Intersections cross product (weekly [sum of traffic volumes at each intersection times traffic volume on roadway divided by roadway miles])	28,754,643	23,643,333	8,422,000	442,738	2,319,335	1,975,000	438,306	1,435,000	228,224	687,899	1,752,693	365,093	442,057
	Opportunity for conflicts at driveways (density of traffic volume and [driveways])	[driveway density with volume (sum of traffic volume on roadway at each driveway divided by roadway miles)]	4	4	13,266	260	2,678	5,000	954	22,678	329	1,220	2,430	2,142	1,260
Congestion	Ability to address congestion throughout the study area (reduce to capacity ratio [V/C ratio])	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	37 segments	44 segments	37 segments	41 segments	27 segments	31 segments	29 segments	34 segments	34 segments
Travel Time	Ability to improve travel times throughout the study area (Total Time Savings)	Average travel time savings compared to the Build weighted by average volume-to-capacity ratio	2,200 vehicle-minutes	2,900 vehicle-minutes	2,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	1,800 vehicle-minutes	4,100 vehicle-minutes	1,200 vehicle-minutes	1,000 vehicle-minutes	7,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	15,400 vehicle-minutes	15,400 vehicle-minutes	10,700 vehicle-minutes

Traffic Analysis Maps and Tables: Our maps use computer modeling from the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization to show how each alternative could affect future traffic across the entire region, not just along each alternative. Green areas and dots show where congestion would improve, red where it would worsen, and yellow shows existing congested areas that would see no change. A blue line marks the route of the proposed alternative.

The tables show how much travel time would change compared to doing nothing ("no build"). Green means drivers would experience less congestion and save time, while red means congestion would get worse. The darker the color, the greater the change.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative D	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times	Travel Times	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			



These tools allow our team of transportation engineers and planning experts to review the data in detail and make objective recommendations. By looking at both the matrix and the maps/tables, we can see which options benefit the region overall, not just one small area.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Recommendations from the study and the public and agency input received may be adopted or incorporated into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies per 23 United States Code (USC) 168 or Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.212 and 450.318.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 1: Performance															
Safety	Opportunity for conflicts at intersections (density of traffic volume and number of intersections)	Intersection cross product density (sum of traffic volumes at each intersection times traffic volume on roadway divided by roadway miles)	29,704,943	23,041,633	8,422,099	440,738	2,119,535	1,975,800	638,306	1,615,090	223,224	897,805	1,512,631	365,091	441,087
	Opportunity for conflicts at driveways (density of traffic volume and driveways)	Driveway density with volume (sum of traffic volume on roadway at each driveway divided by roadway miles)	0	0	13,346	380	2,875	5,585	914	22,479	325	1,220	2,430	2,142	1,263
Congestion	Ability to address congestion throughout the study area (Volume to capacity ratio) (V/C ratio)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
Travel Time	Ability to improve travel times throughout the study area (Total Time Savings)	Average travel time savings compared to No-Build weighted by average corridor traffic volumes	2,200 vehicle-minutes	2,500 vehicle-minutes	2,700 vehicle-minutes	1,600 vehicle-minutes	1,900 vehicle-minutes	4,100 vehicle-minutes	1,100 vehicle-minutes	1,900 vehicle-minutes	7,700 vehicle-minutes	3,900 vehicle-minutes	10,400 vehicle-minutes	10,400 vehicle-minutes	10,700 vehicle-minutes
Travel Efficiency	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-miles traveled for the network) (VMT)	Change in VMT from the No-Build across both AM and PM peak hours	2,004 change from no build (1,171,402 VMT)	6,786 change from no build (1,176,184 VMT)	589 change from no build (1,169,987 VMT)	5,132 change from no build (1,174,530 VMT)	7,008 change from no build (1,176,406 VMT)	10,887 change from no build (1,180,285 VMT)	8,476 change from no build (1,177,874 VMT)	1,390 change from no build (1,170,788 VMT)	-5,640 change from no build (1,163,758 VMT)	3,195 change from no build (1,172,593 VMT)	3,001 change from no build (1,172,399 VMT)	-442 change from no build (1,168,956 VMT)	-78 change from no build (1,169,320 VMT)
	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-hours traveled for the network) (VHT)	Change in VHT from the No-Build across both AM and PM peak hours	-1,281 change from no build (49,472 VHT)	-1,970 change from no build (48,783 VHT)	-2,043 change from no build (48,710 VHT)	-1,032 change from no build (49,721 VHT)	-2,203 change from no build (48,550 VHT)	-1,705 change from no build (49,048 VHT)	-915 change from no build (49,838 VHT)	-1,498 change from no build (49,255 VHT)	-3,870 change from no build (46,883 VHT)	-3,524 change from no build (47,229 VHT)	-6,031 change from no build (44,722 VHT)	-5,925 change from no build (44,828 VHT)	-6,070 change from no build (44,683 VHT)
Network Redundancy	Ability to address congestion during a major incident (V/C ratio during detour event)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E	196 segments	190 segments	147 segments	185 segments	121 segments	191 segments	181 segments	202 segments	148 segments	166 segments	139 segments	141 segments	134 segments
Multimodal Considerations	Ability to increase safety, mobility, and connections for bicycle and pedestrian users (Consideration of integrating existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities)	Assess how improvements can benefit or impact existing or future use of bicycle and pedestrian facilities	Additional at-grade conflicts (more lanes and additional traffic)	Maintains connections, grade separated crossings, but wider corridor to cross	New corridor and multiuse paths, local bicycle and pedestrian connections maintained.	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Some crossings require navigating interchange where none exists today	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Shoulder with more lanes/traffic	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities, but disrupts local system.	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities
	Ability to increase safety mobility and connections for transit users based on transit service in mixed traffic (V/C ratio)	Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C or Level of Service E across both AM and PM peak hours	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
Step 1 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Retain as Element**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
Step 1 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Retain as Element**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**
	Rationale		Doesn't address study area congestion metric as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed for to address intersection conflicts and multimodal performance .	Doesn't address study area congestion and redundancy as well as other north-south alternatives (D,H), as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD Facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed to address emergency vehicle access and incident response, as well as intersection conflicts.	Addresses study area congestion, efficiency and redundancy better than other alternatives (B, C, F, I, K). Provides new multimodal corridor. Design considerations needed to address intersection conflicts.	Doesn't address study area congestion and redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (D, H). Doesn't benefit ITD facility (SH-41) to the same extent as Alternatives D and H (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Addresses study area congestion and redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (B, C, F, I, K). Design considerations needed to address intersection conflicts.	Doesn't address study area congestion or travel efficiency as a standalone alternative. However, benefits travel time for ITD facility (US-95) (See travel time and V/C ratio figures). Design considerations needed for multimodal considerations.	Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time, travel efficiency, or network redundancy better than other north-south alternatives (D, H). Doesn't benefit ITD facility (SH-41) to the same extent as Alternatives D and H (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time and network redundancy better than other east-west alternatives (E, J, L, M, N). Doesn't benefit SH-53 to the same extent as Alternatives E, L, M, and N (See travel time and V/C ratio figures).	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.	Generally addresses study area performance criteria relative to other east-west alternatives.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 2: Impacts and Benefits															
Community Impacts and Planning	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of properties impacted)	Alternative footprint overlayed with parcel data	0 properties impacted	33 properties impacted	56 properties impacted	325 properties impacted	111 properties impacted	359 properties impacted	152 properties impacted	230 properties impacted	358 properties impacted	433 properties impacted	478 properties impacted	276 properties impacted	326 properties impacted
	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of acres impacted)	Alternative footprint overlayed with parcel data	0 acres impacted	2 acres impacted	107 acres impacted	422 acres impacted	304 acres impacted	111 acres impacted	428 acres impacted	84 acres impacted	479 acres impacted	629 acres impacted	553 acres impacted	603 acres impacted	731 acres impacted
	Estimated residential right-of-way requirements (Acres of residential zoned areas, including Ag-Suburban and Rural)	Based on acres of potentially impacted residential areas	0 acres impacted	0 acres impacted	35 acres impacted	278 acres impacted	82 acres impacted	12 acres impacted	29 acres impacted	71 acres impacted	345 acres impacted	214 acres impacted	107acres impacted	121 acres impacted	66 acres impacted
	Estimated commercial right-of-way requirements (Acres of commercial zoned areas)	Based on acres of potentially impacted commercial areas	0 acres impacted	1 acres impacted	5 acres impacted	52 acres impacted	17 acres impacted	75 acres impacted	50 acres impacted	4 acres impacted	36 acres impacted	14 acres impacted	30 acres impacted	19 acres impacted	17 acres impacted
	Use of existing highway or roadway corridors (Amount and existing corridors utilized)	Assessment based on how much of existing corridors and other corridors are utilized using the evaluation scale	Primarily uses existing corridor	Primarily uses existing corridor	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Primarily uses existing corridor but requires expansion	Requires new alignment from SH-41 to US-95	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires new corridor	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them
	How does the alternative effect local access (Based on adding more or less local access overall)	Assessment based on an increase, no change, or decrease in access using existing conditions as a baseline	Maintains access	Maintains access from US-95 to local destination. However, bypass lanes have limited access, especially for emergency response.	New access to I-90 and local areas	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, interchanges generally at existing local roadways	Access control means less access with closer spaced existing access	Less access in Post Falls, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	Maintains access	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, although existing access to I-90 exists	New access to I-90, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden
	Does the alternative divide or further divide existing communities (based on location of alternatives within existing communities)	Assessment based on existing community barriers with consideration of proposed alternatives using the evaluation scale	Additional lanes adds to crossing distance	Addition of grade-separated lanes for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to perceived barrier in developed area.	Minimal change, intermittent development	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in intermittent development and developed areas.	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to barrier.	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area in Post Falls	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Adds new corridor to developed area	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum
	Compatibility with local and regional planning efforts (based on compatibility assessment provided to local governments)	Assessment based on coordination with local jurisdictions intersecting with alternatives, and them agreeing with a Low, Medium, or High rating for each alternative	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (High)	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Coeur d'Alene (High), Post Falls (High), Hayden (Medium), Rathdrum (High)	Rathdrum (Low), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Hayden (High), Coeur d'Alene (Medium/ Concerns), Post Falls (High), Rathdrum (High)	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (Medium)	Hauser (Low), Rathdrum (Low/ Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Post Falls (Low), Rathdrum (Low/ Concerns)	Rathdrum (Low), Hayden (Low), Hauser (High)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Medium), Hayden (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/ Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Low), Hayden (Low)

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 2: Impacts and Benefits															
Environmental Resources	New acres of impervious surfaces	Estimated approximate area of new impervious surface	24 acres of impervious surface	37 acres of impervious surface	73 acres of impervious surface	115 acres of impervious surface	86 acres of impervious surface	30 acres of impervious surface	101 acres of impervious surface	75 acres of impervious surface	175 acres of impervious surface	180 acres of impervious surface	179 acres of impervious surface	187 acres of impervious surface	198 acres of impervious surface
	Floodplain Impacts	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays with resource spatial data	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	12 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	1 acre of FEMA floodplains	14 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains
	Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. Impacts	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays with resource spatial data	0.0 acres	0.0 acres	1.5 acres	2.9 acres	2.7 acres	0.0 acres	0.6 acres	3.7 acres	8.1 acres	0.2 acres	4.3 acres	3.6 acres	3.8 acres
Social and Built Environment	Potential Impacts to Community Resources and Parks and Recreation	Impacts from alternative footprint overlays or approximately 50-foot proximity from proposed alignment with desktop resource spatial data	13 properties	13 properties	2 properties	1 property	2 properties	14 properties	1 property	3 properties	3 properties	1 Property	8 properties	7 properties	7 properties
	Impacts to Hazardous Materials sites	Number of hazardous materials sites intersected by footprint	15 sites	0 sites	1 sites	9 sites	1 sites	19 sites	8 sites	6 sites	10 sites	5 sites	10 sites	7 sites	9 sites
	Impacts to Historic Sites	Number of historic sites intersected by footprint	2 sites	1 sites	3 sites	26 sites	4 sites	7 sites	16 sites	11 sites	16 sites	9 sites	21 sites	16 sites	19 sites
	Properties with potential residential noise receptors	Residential land use properties within 500 ft of alternative	1,474 properties	839 properties	417 properties	1,289 properties	591 properties	2,675 properties	1,272 properties	639 properties	874 properties	1,710 properties	1,903 properties	1,400 properties	1,442 properties
Step 2 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Carry forward**	**Carry forward**
Rationale			Smaller footprint with fewer right-of-way requirements and environmental impacts. Design considerations needed to minimize impacts to community resources.	Similar right-of-way impacts as Alternative B; however, further divides corridor with new grade-separated lanes. Limited access on bypass lanes is safety concern.	Neutral/medium and better/good level of right-of-way impacts. New access to I-90. Environmental and social impacts relatively low.		Neutral/medium and Poor/negative level of overall right-of-way impacts. New access to I-90. Environmental and social impacts relatively low.	Highest number of total properties impacted for north-south alternatives. Less access to/ from US-95. Further divides corridor for most of length of corridor with widened typical section and potentially limited crossing opportunities.			Highest amount of residential right-of-way impacts. Less direct access to SH-53 due to access control. Highest level of floodplain and wetland impacts.	High number of parcels and acres of total right-of-way impacted and high level of residential impacts. Further divides Post Falls by widening barrier (currently freight rail corridor). High level of potential sensitive noise receptors.	Highest number of total properties impacted and high residential impacts. Higher commercial impacts than other east-west alternatives (M, N). Highest number of potential historic site impacts.	Lower total right-of-way parcels impacted compared to Alternatives E, J, L and N. Higher residential property impacts than Alternatives L and M. Lower commercial property impacts than Alternative L. Similar environmental impacts for Alternatives L, M, and N.	Highest level of total right-of-way acres required, but lower level of impact to residential and commercial properties than other east-west alternatives (E, L, M). Similar environmental impacts for Alternatives L, M, and N.

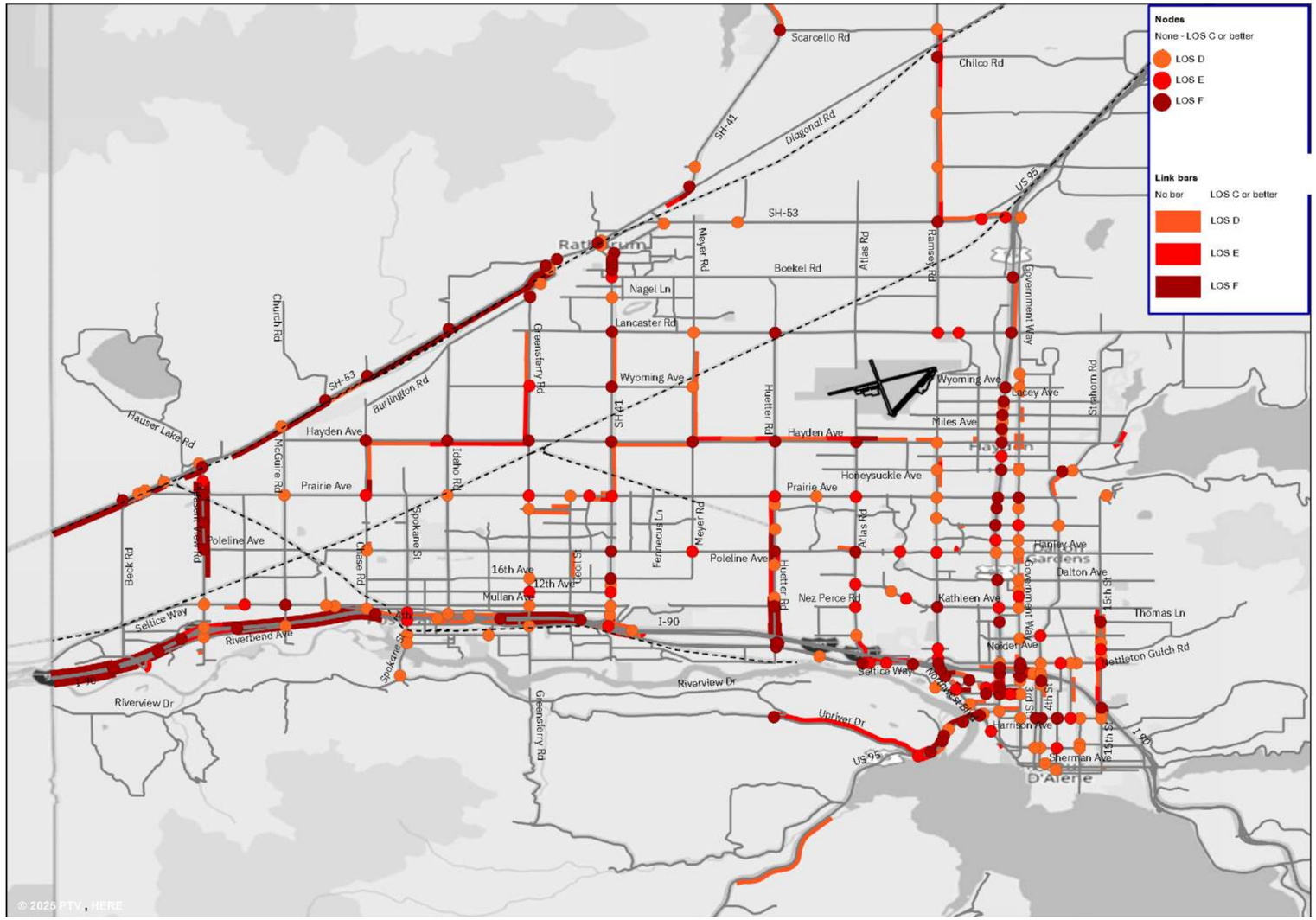
Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study
Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Recommended to carry forward, meaning the alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.
Recommended to retain as an element, meaning the alternative didn't perform well on its own, but could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.
Not Recommended, meaning the alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

			North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
CATEGORY	**CRITERIA**	**METRIC(S)**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**	**H**	**I**	**K**	**A**	**E**	**J**	**L**	**M**	**N**
STEP 3: Implementation															
Implementation	Conceptual construction costs (Magnitude in cost in comparison to other alternatives, including assumptions for structures and ROW)	Based on conceptual construction costs	$	$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$	$$$	$$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, reducing number of typical ITD construction packages per alternative	Based on number of construction packages	3 packages	4 packages	3 packages	10 packages	6 packages	5 packages	6 packages	3 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, minimizing traffic impacts	Qualitative: Impacts to the traveling public during construction	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated crossings would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, you can then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Mostly offline construction and can be constructed around Huetter Road's lower volume of traffic with phased intersections and interchanges.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Reduced number of travel lanes during construction	Phasing the 3 grade separated interchanges on SH-41 would be impactful to the traveling public. Half of project to the north is offline with fewer traffic impacts. Likely reduced number of temporary travel lanes for the south end.	Typical highway widening. Two major maintenance of traffic phases. Can maintain existing 1-lane of traffic in each direction, may have to temporarily close turn lane.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Almost all offline construction, easier to phase. High ROW impacts, but low impact to traffic flow and maintenance of traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.
Step 3 Results			**Retain as Element**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Carry Forward**	**Carry Forward**
Rationale			Lowest cost of all alternatives. Medium implementation with maintenance of traffic and access requirements.		Comparatively low cost. Medium implementation with maintenance of traffic and access requirements.		Medium cost compared to all alternatives. Highest cost for remaining north-south alternatives.							High cost for all alternatives, but similar to other east-west alternatives (E, L, N).	High cost for all alternatives, but similar to other east-west alternatives (E, L, M).

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**
US-95	NB	
US-95	SB	
I-90	EB	
I-90	WB	
SH-41	NB	
SH-41	SB	
SH-53	EB	
SH-53	WB	
Govt Way	NB	
Govt Way	SB	
Prairie Ave	EB	
Prairie Ave	WB	
Ramsey Rd	NB	
Ramsey Rd	SB	
Huetter Rd	NB	
Huetter Rd	SB	
Poleline/Hanley	EB	
Poleline/Hanley	WB	
Pleasant View Rd	NB	
Pleasant View Rd	SB	
Greensferry Rd	NB	
Greensferry Rd	SB	

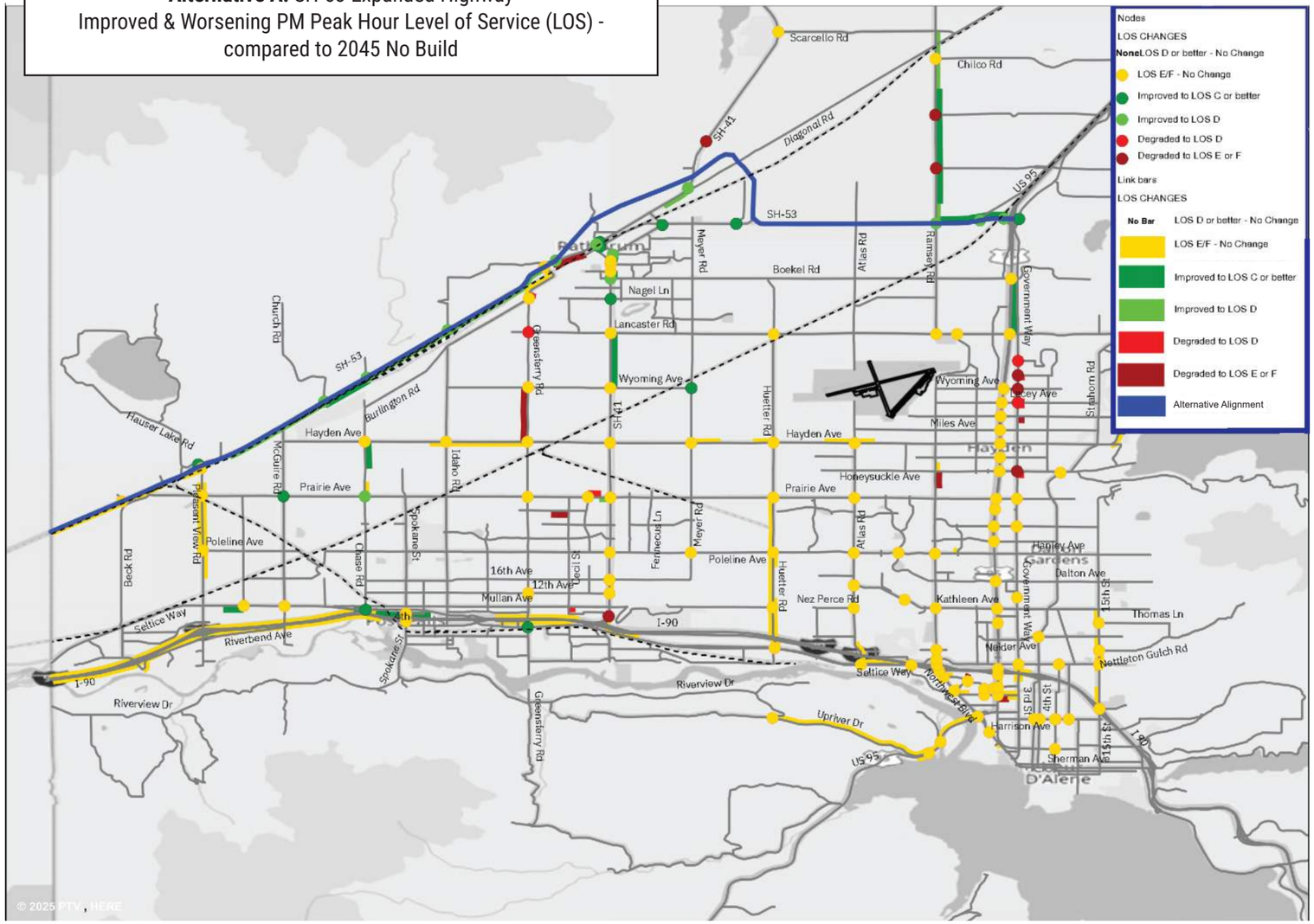
NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE: PM Peak Hour Level of Service



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative A	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

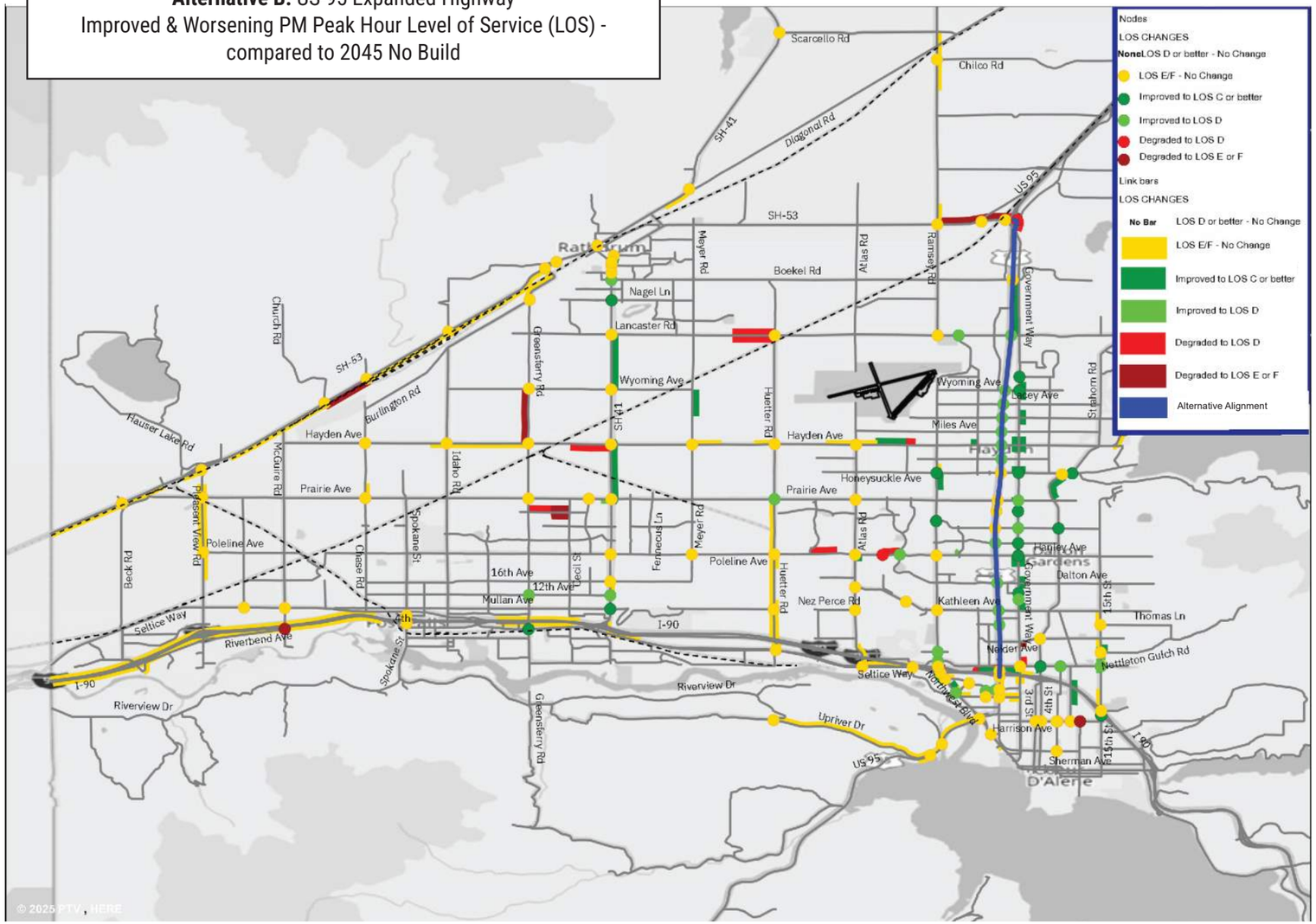
Alternative A: SH-53 Expanded Highway
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative B	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

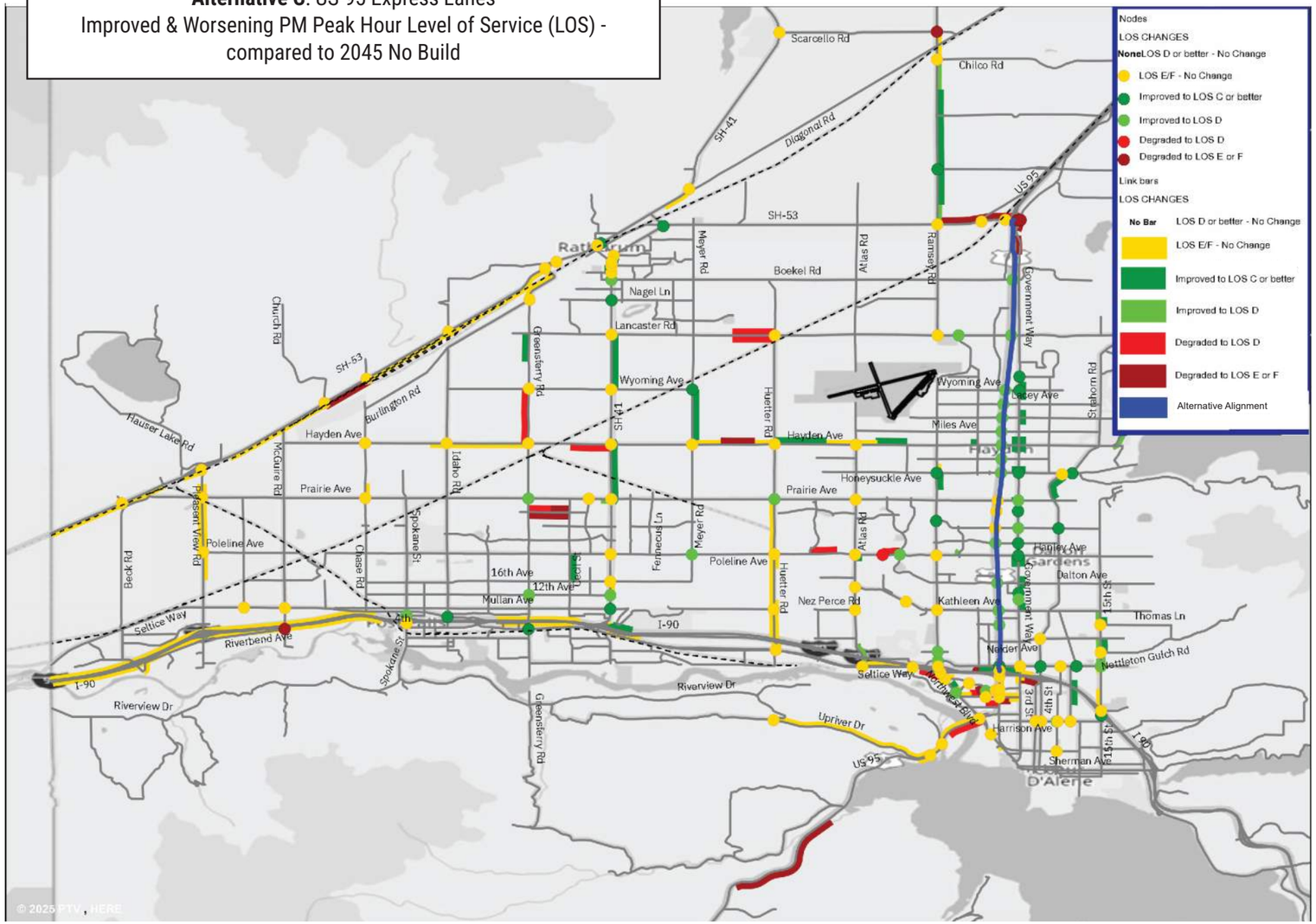
Alternative B: US-95 Expanded Highway
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative C	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

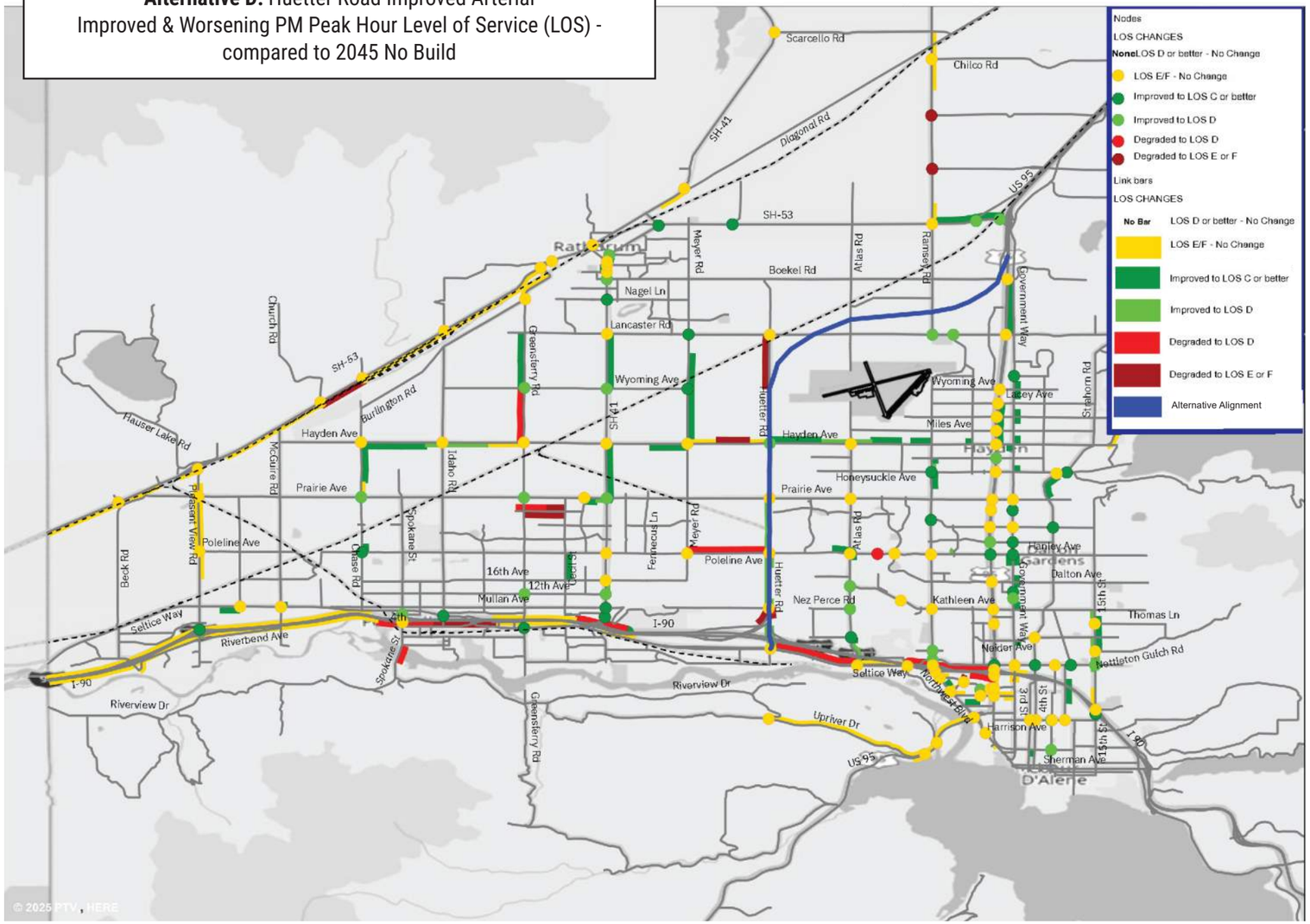
Alternative C: US-95 Express Lanes
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative D	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

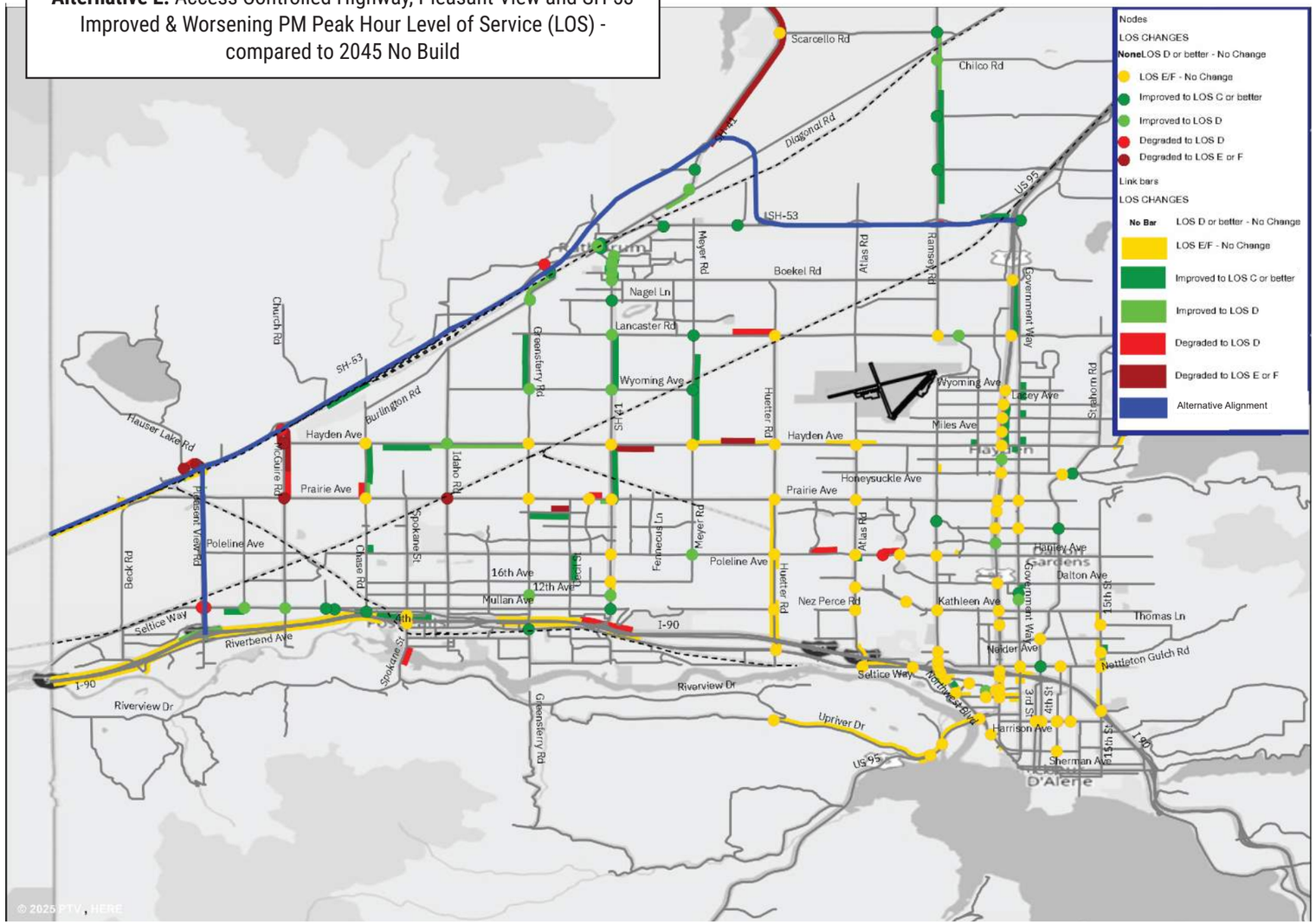
Alternative D: Huetter Road Improved Arterial
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative E	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

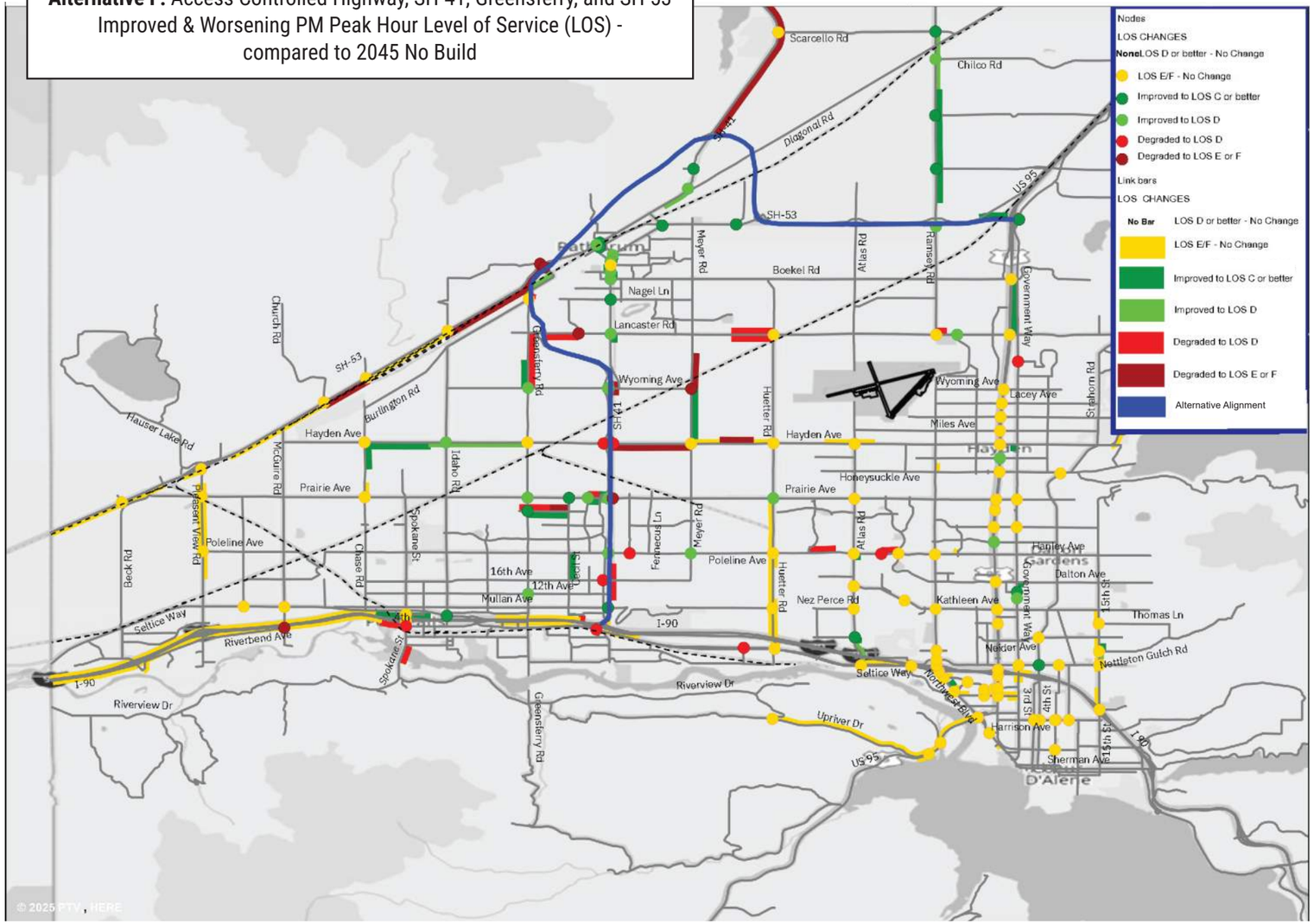
Alternative E: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53 Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative F	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

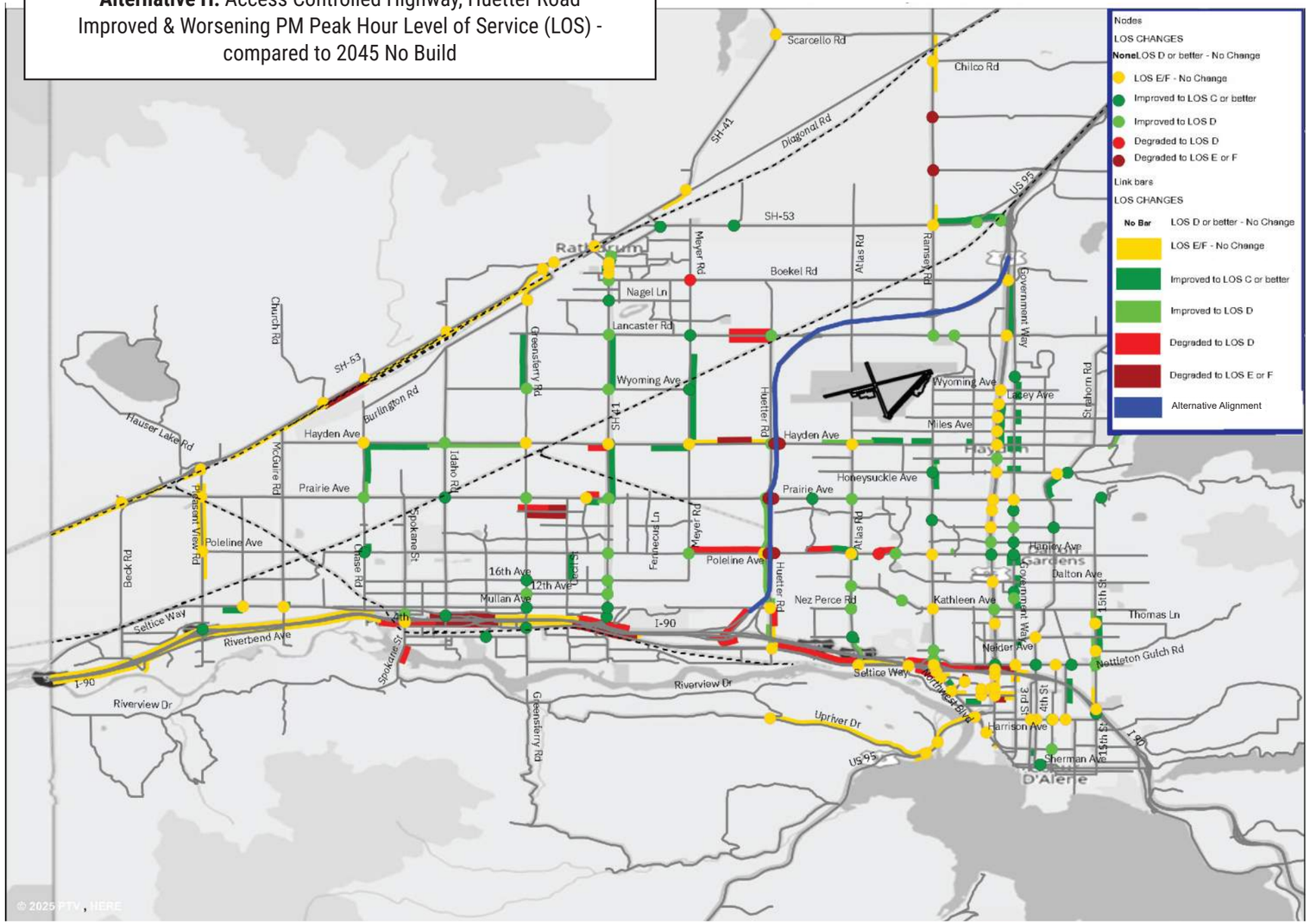
Alternative F: Access Controlled Highway, SH-41, Greensferry, and SH-53 Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative H	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

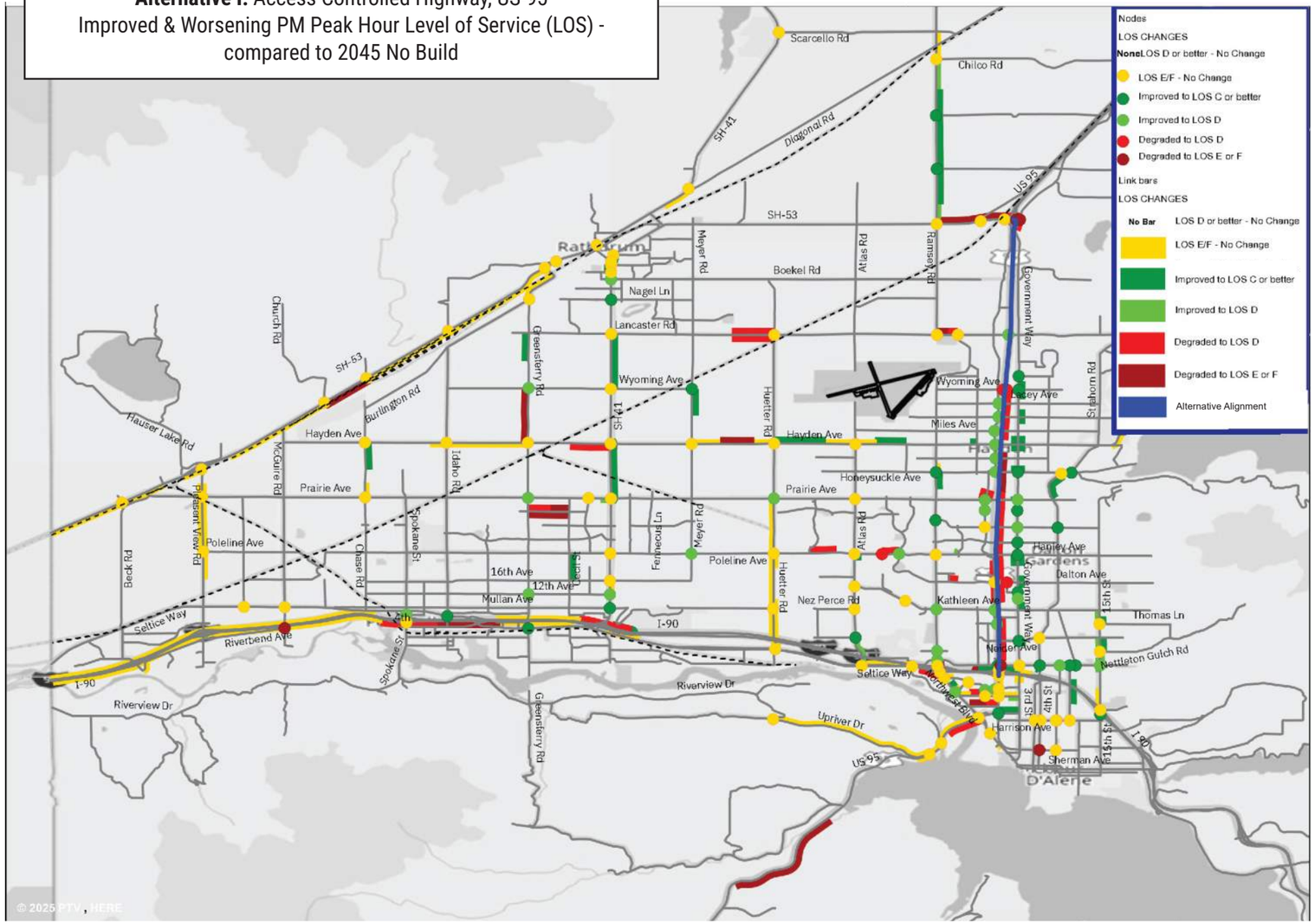
Alternative H: Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative I	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

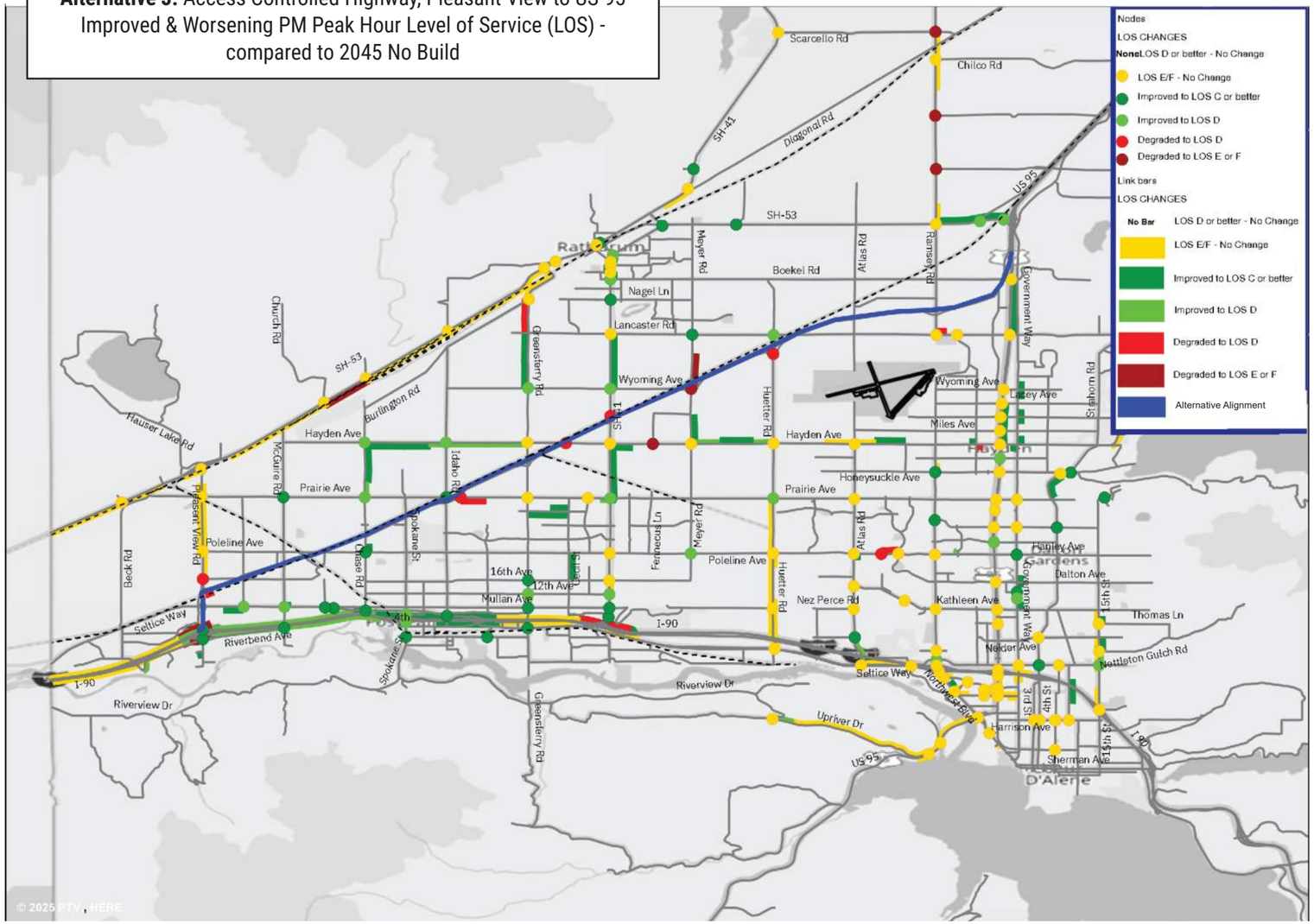
Alternative I: Access Controlled Highway, US-95
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative J	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

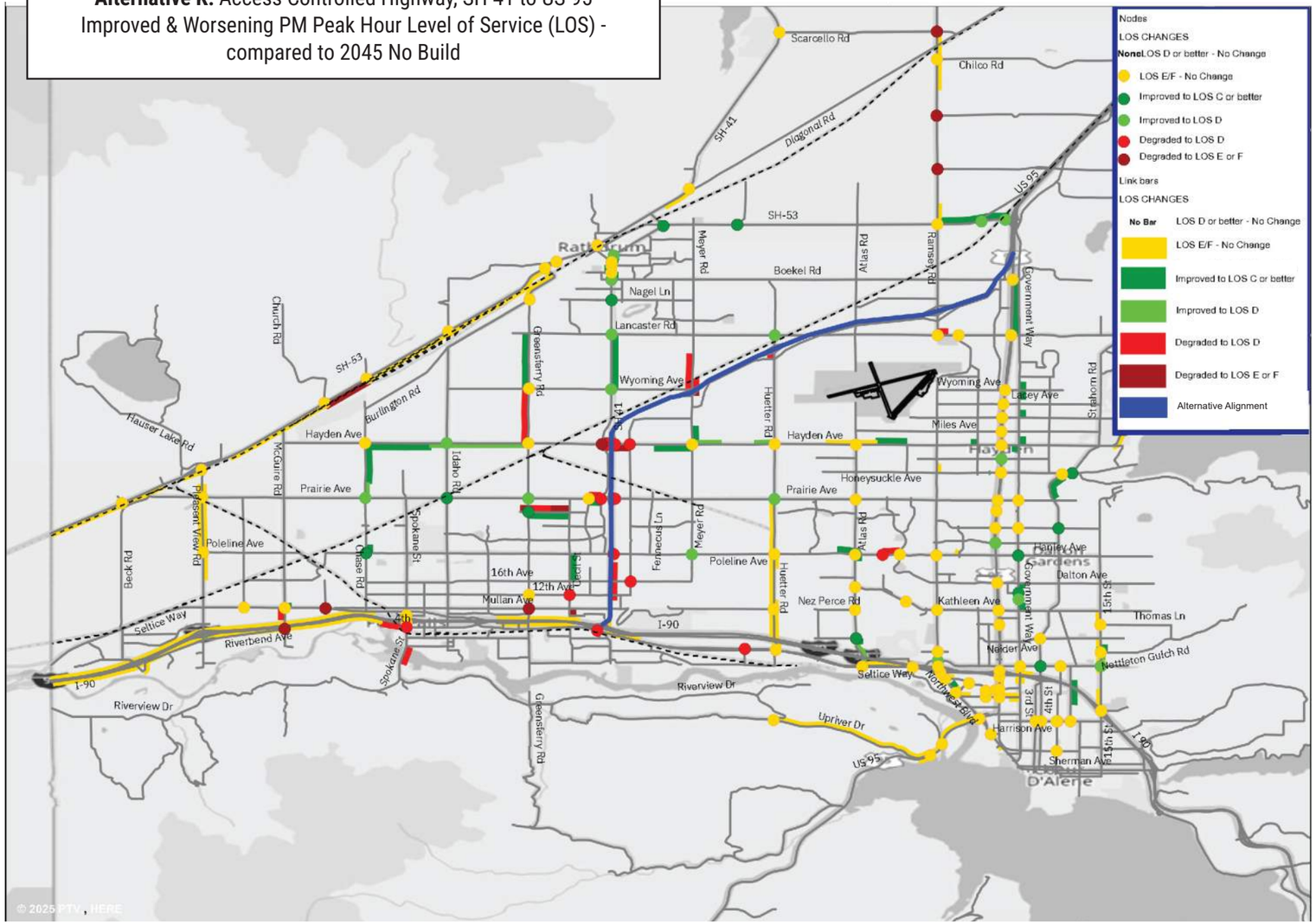
Alternative J: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95 Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative K	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

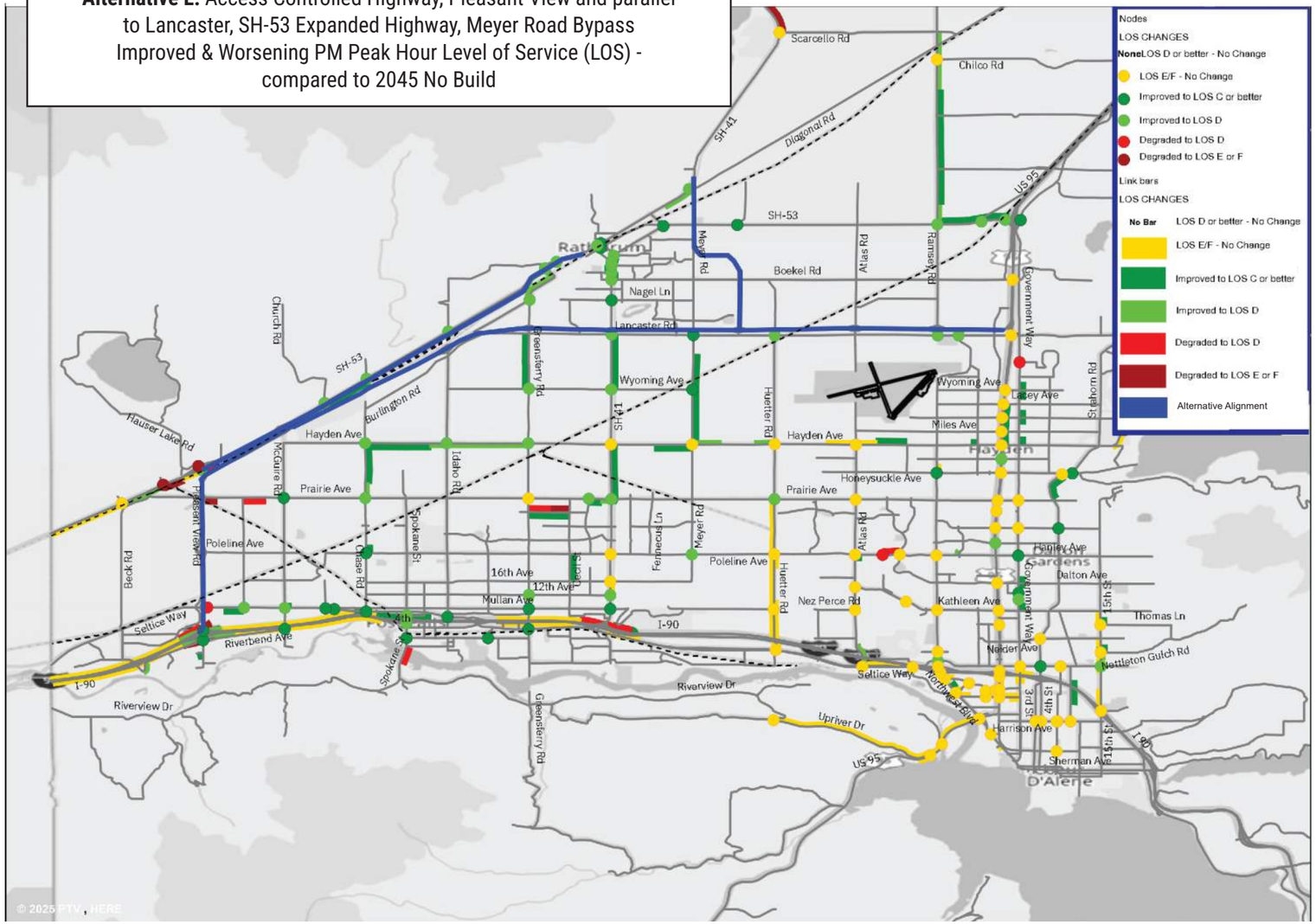
Alternative K: Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to US-95
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative L	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

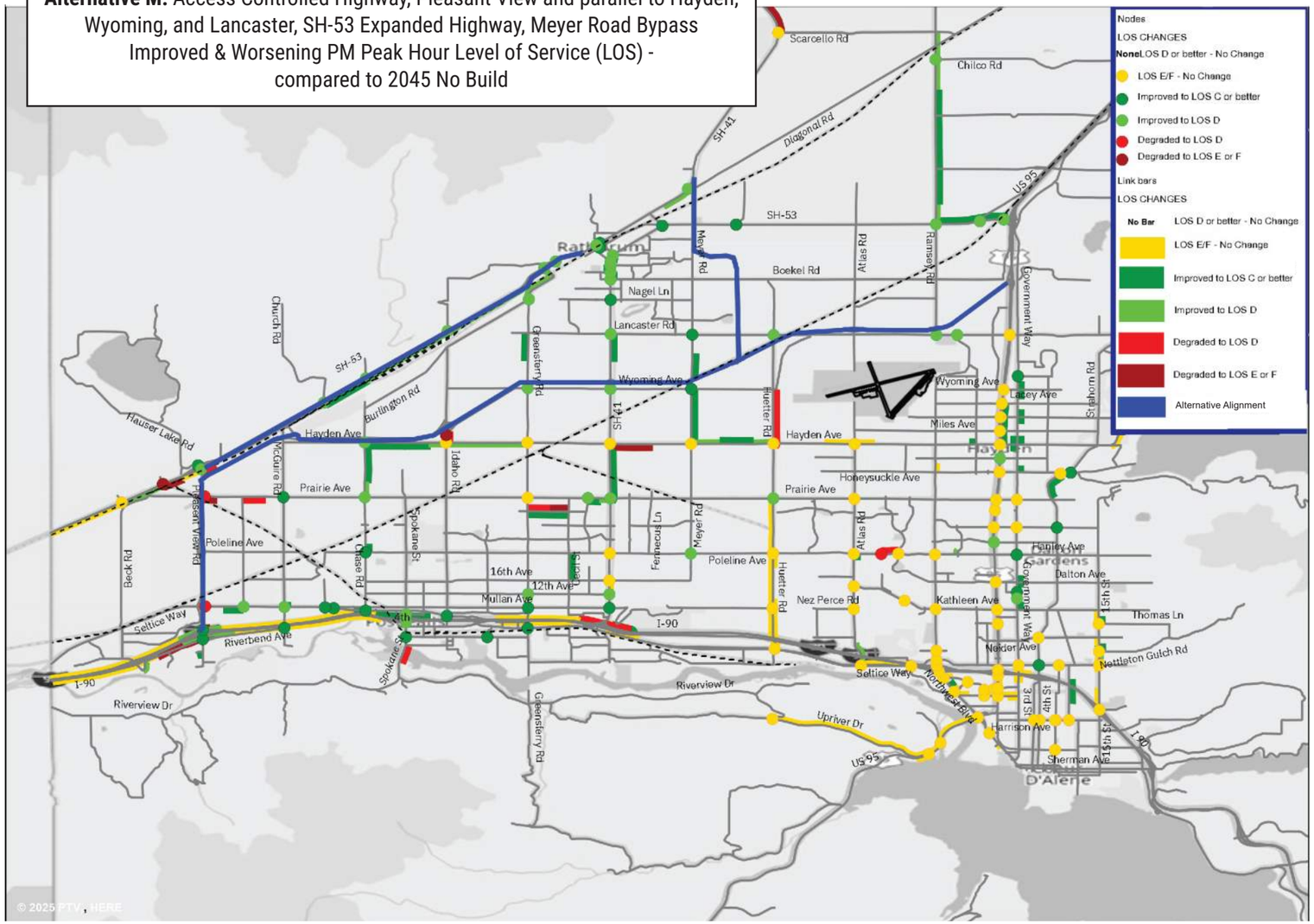
Alternative L: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative M	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

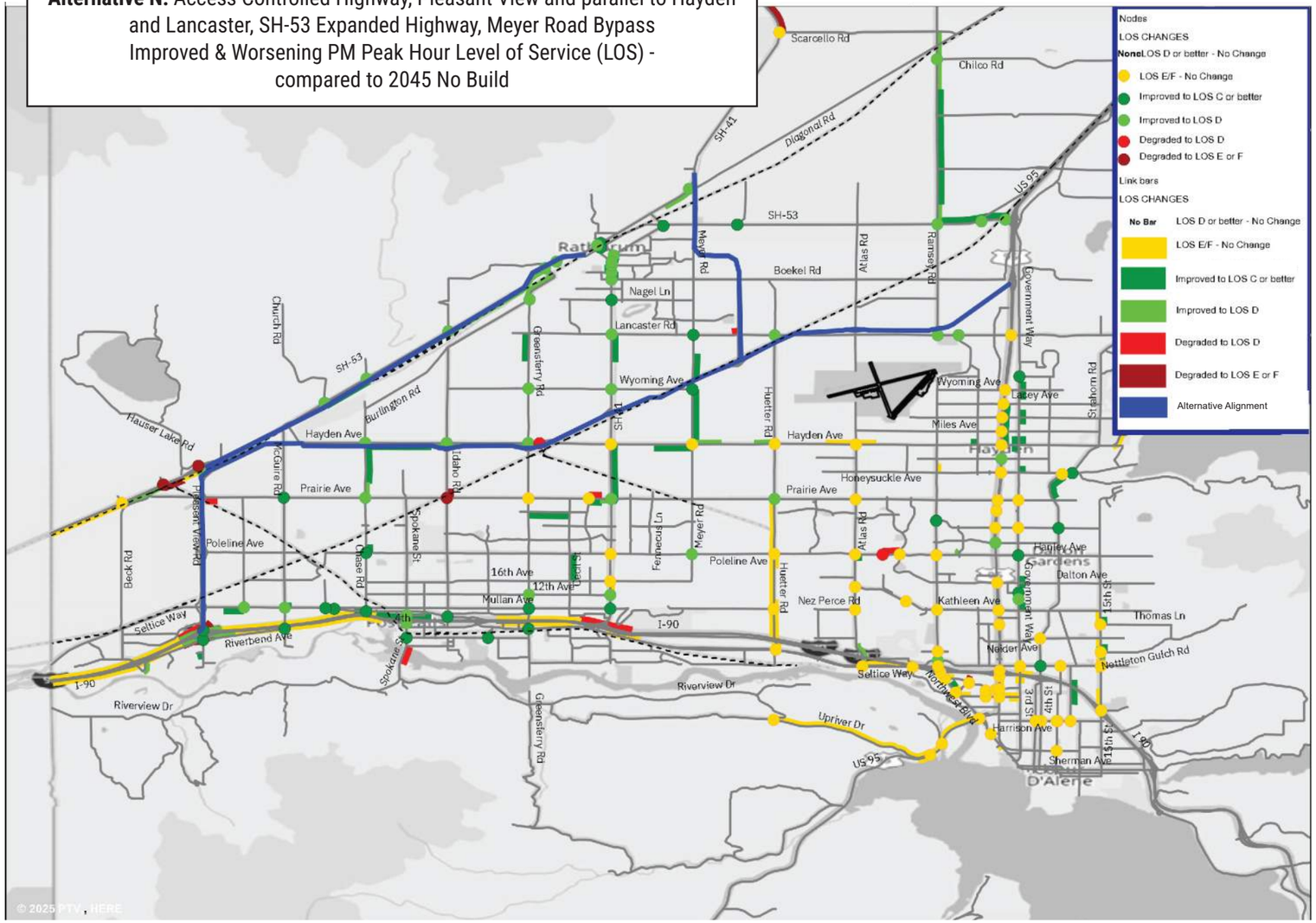
Alternative M: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) -
compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative N	
Corridor	**Direction**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)**	**Travel Time Changes**
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative N: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Follow the study or join the online meeting.

Scan the QR code or visit:

itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

We're planning for a transportation system that works for everyone—today and tomorrow.

This study aims to:

- Improve safety in areas with high crash rates.
- Add capacity to address current and future traffic challenges as our region grows.
- Considering new connections to make it easier for people to get where they need to go.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: _____

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City:_____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): **SH-53 Expanded Highway**

Alt. C (pages 20-21): **US-95 Express Lanes**

Alt. E (pages 22-23): **Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95**

Alt. F (pages 24-25): **Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95**

Alt. I (pages 26-27): **Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden**

Alt. J (pages 28-29): **Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95**

Alt. K (pages 30-31): **Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95**

Alt. L (pages 32-33): **Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass**

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	○	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	○	○	○	○	○
L	○	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials – including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

◯ I have no understanding of the study
◯ I have a limited understanding of the study
◯ I have a good understanding of the study
◯ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ◯ Yes – Email Address: _____
- ◯ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ◯ Postcard
- ◯ Coverage by local news media
- ◯ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ◯ Email
- ◯ Social media
- ◯ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ◯ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ◯ Postcard
- ◯ Newspaper ad
- ◯ Email
- ◯ Social media
- ◯ Meetings
- ◯ Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

Are you disabled?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ◯ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ◯ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ◯ Black
- ◯ Asian
- ◯ Hispanic
- ◯ White
- ◯ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: _____

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City:_____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ◯ Strongly support
- ◯ Somewhat support
- ◯ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): **SH-53 Expanded Highway**

Alt. C (pages 20-21): **US-95 Express Lanes**

Alt. E (pages 22-23): **Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95**

Alt. F (pages 24-25): **Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95**

Alt. I (pages 26-27): **Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden**

Alt. J (pages 28-29): **Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95**

Alt. K (pages 30-31): **Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95**

Alt. L (pages 32-33): **Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass**

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	○	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	○	○	○	○	○
L	○	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials – including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

◯ I have no understanding of the study
◯ I have a limited understanding of the study
◯ I have a good understanding of the study
◯ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ◯ Yes – Email Address: _____
- ◯ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ◯ Postcard
- ◯ Coverage by local news media
- ◯ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ◯ Email
- ◯ Social media
- ◯ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ◯ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ◯ Postcard
- ◯ Newspaper ad
- ◯ Email
- ◯ Social media
- ◯ Meetings
- ◯ Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

Are you disabled?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ◯ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ◯ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ◯ Black
- ◯ Asian
- ◯ Hispanic
- ◯ White
- ◯ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Appendix: C
Meeting displays

Display boards
Table maps

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

WELCOME!

Public Meeting #4

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study.

The purpose of the meeting is to share which alternatives are recommended to be carried forward in the study process after being screened for performance, impacts/benefits and implementation.

We welcome your input!

Working Together for a Safer, More Connected Future

This study is being developed by the Idaho Transportation Department and the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization and will help identify ways to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity and improve mobility throughout the Rathdrum Prairie.

We're planning for a transportation system that works for everyone — today and tomorrow.

This study aims to:

»

»

»

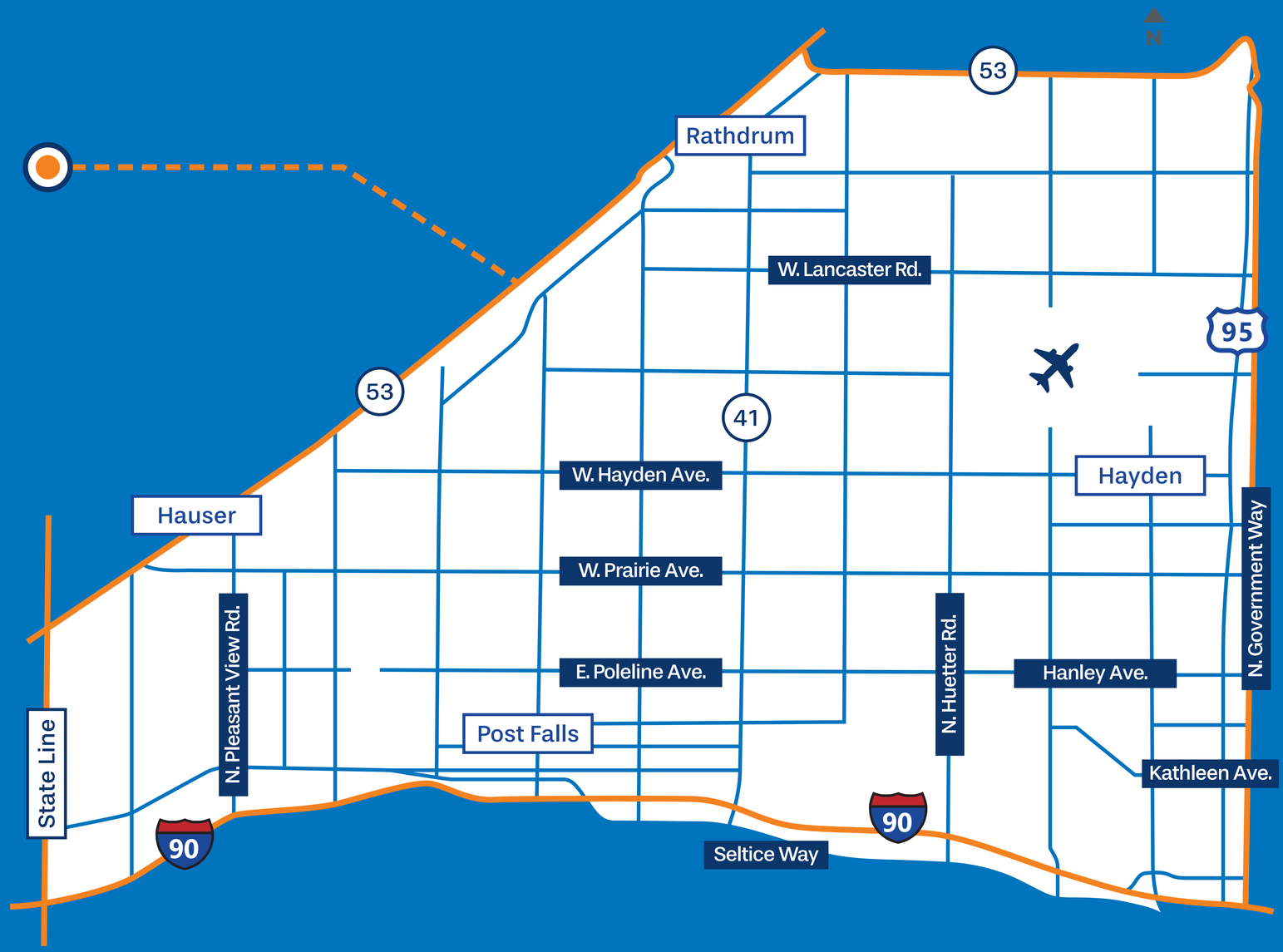
Your input helps shape solutions that reflect the needs of the whole community. We invite you to take a look at the transportation improvement options that came out of our Level 2 screening review process.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER
2025

Purpose of the Study

The Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study is looking at ways to improve safety, keep traffic moving efficiently and make the system more reliable as Kootenai County continues to grow.



RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER
2025

What is a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study?

The PEL process considers environmental, community and economic goals early on while planning future projects.

This process is outlined by the Federal Highway Administration and weighs:

»

»

»

Recommendations from this PEL study, shaped by public and agency input received, could move forward to the next step: the federal review process called the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, which is required before major transportation projects are built.

Scan the QR code to watch a short video about the PEL process

COLLECT

Collect information about the transportation system, local communities and environment.

UTILIZE

Use information to develop a range of potential transportation solutions called alternatives.

REFINE

Screen alternatives against certain factors such as safety, environmental impacts, and future development and planning.

CATEGORIZE

Categorize alternatives into potential short-, mid-, and long-term transportation improvement projects in the study area.

DEVELOP

Develop a plan for funding and delivering projects.

POST-PEL PROJECT STEPS

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Preliminary Design

Final Design

Construction

NEPA requires agencies to assess environmental effects of proposed actions prior to making decisions.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2025

What is the Evaluation Process Used in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study?

At our last public meeting, we introduced the Level 2 screening process to show how alternatives would be evaluated. Today, we're back to share the results of that evaluation and ITD's preliminary recommendations for which alternatives could move forward. Your feedback will help shape the final recommendations and decisions for the study.

LEVEL 1 EVALUATION

Develop a wide range of concepts and remove those that don't clearly meet the project goals or have insurmountable cost, safety or environmental impacts.

LEVEL 2 EVALUATION

Refine concepts from Level 1 into alternatives and compare them against one another to see which perform best in terms of safety, cost and environmental impacts.

WE ARE HERE

AND WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

LEVEL 3 EVALUATION

Combine full alternatives, or some of their best parts, into logical scenarios and compare them to find the most effective overall solutions.

Recommend alternatives for future NEPA study.

Future NEPA Study to Clear Project(s) for Federal Funding and/or Permits

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2025

Level 2 Alternatives

ITD used public and stakeholder input, planning best practices, and collaboration with agencies and jurisdictions to reduce the more than 50 Level 1 Concepts to 13 Level 2 Alternatives.

What is a Level 2 Alternative?

Level 2 Alternatives are potential transportation solutions that can be compared to each other to understand their relative benefits and impacts, in order to decide which will be carried forward to the Level 3 screening process. Public input will also determine which alternatives move to Level 3.

Level 2 Alternatives displayed in your handout and on the maps on the tables include alignment (fat lines on a map), number of lanes, and preliminary roadway layouts displayed on aerial photo maps.

LEVEL 1

Unconnected concepts/ideas

LEVEL 2

Further developed and combined concepts/ideas into alternatives

LEVEL 3

Recommended alternatives

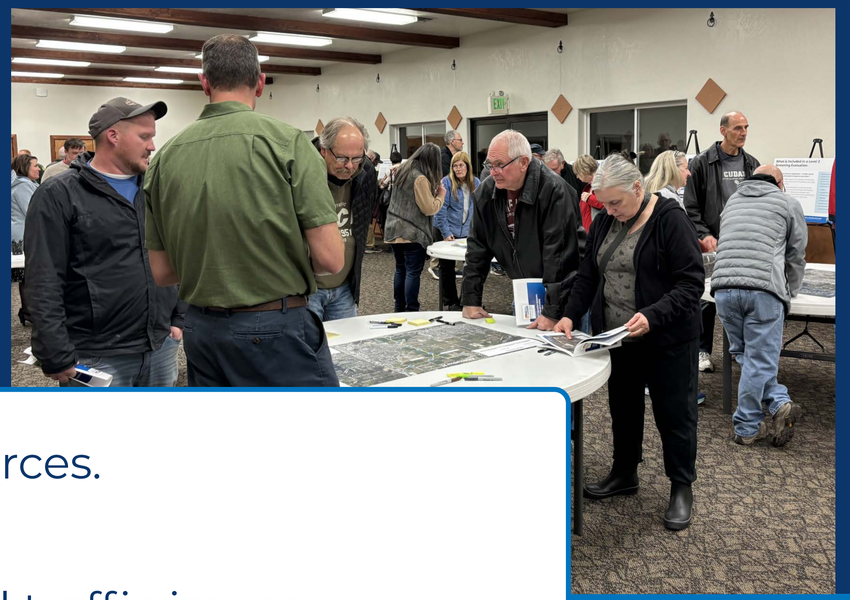
RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER
2025

We Heard You

Since 2022, ITD has gathered input from community members, stakeholders, and agencies through interviews, workshops, and public meetings. The feedback received has helped to shape the screening criteria, alternatives and recommendations you see today. Some alternatives were originally suggested and drawn out by the public at previous meetings.

This is our fourth round of public meetings for this study and each one has helped the team understand how public needs and priorities are focused as alternatives are developed and screened.



From the November 2024 meetings we heard:

» The community values protecting existing neighborhoods and resources.

» Avoiding cultural and historic sites is a priority.

» A combination of the alternatives may be needed to address regional traffic issues.

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER
2025

What is Included in a Level 2 Screening Evaluation?

Level 2 screening was comparative – in other words, we examined how each alternative compared to one another.

The Level 2 screening process compared each alternative in a deliberate sequence, looking first at performance, then impacts and benefits, and finally, implementation.

STEP 1 **Performance**

We considered:

East-west and north-south travel patterns were evaluated. Some that perform poorly on their own but improve overall results when combined with other alternatives could still move forward to Level 3 evaluation.

STEP 2 **Impacts and Benefits**

We looked at how each alternative supports the goals of the study in terms of:

This step helped identify trade-offs between performance and potential impacts.

STEP 3 **Implementation**

We looked at how difficult each alternative would be to build, considering:

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2025

Level 2 Screening Evaluation

KEY: North-South Alternative | East-West Alternative | Not Recommended | – Recommend to Retain as Element | Recommend to Carry Forward | Not evaluated further

Alternatives that were not recommended at a step did not proceed to the next step.

LEVEL 2 ALTERNATIVES	STEP 1 Performance	STEP 2 Impacts & Benefits	STEP 3 Implementation
A	⊗		
B	–	–	–
C	–	⊗	
D	✓	✓	✓
E	✓	⊗	
F	⊗		
H	✓	✓	✓
I	–	⊗	
J	✓	⊗	
K	⊗		
L	✓	⊗	
M	✓	✓	✓
N	✓	✓	✓

Recommended to carry forward: The alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.

Recommended to retain as an element: The alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.

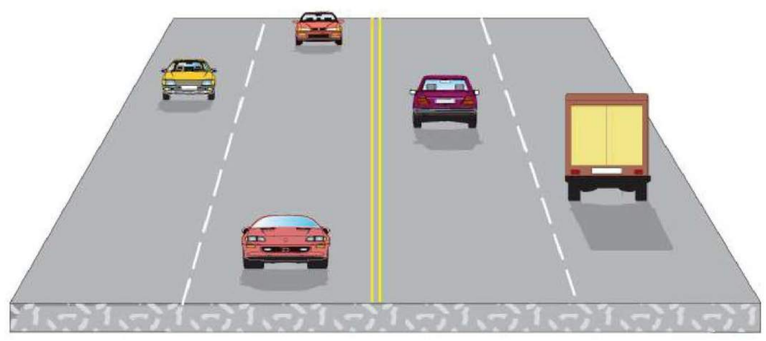
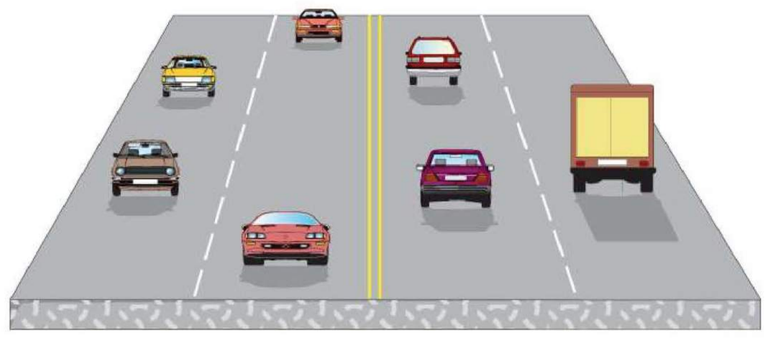
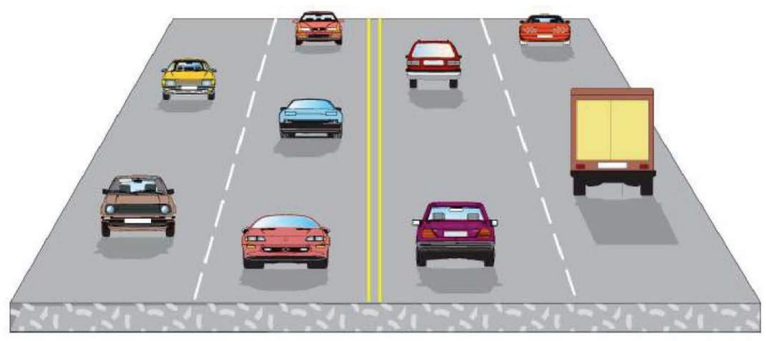
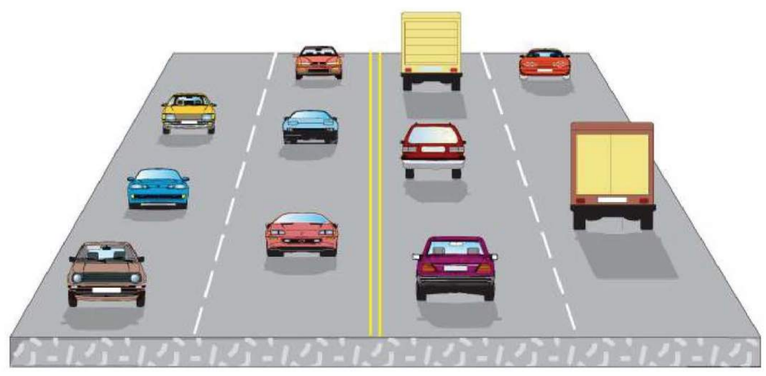
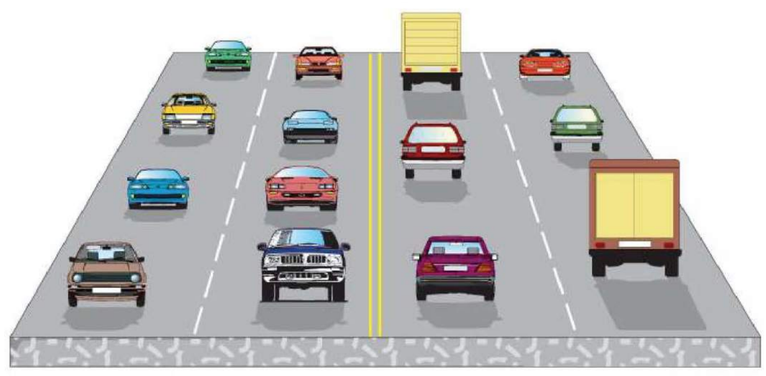
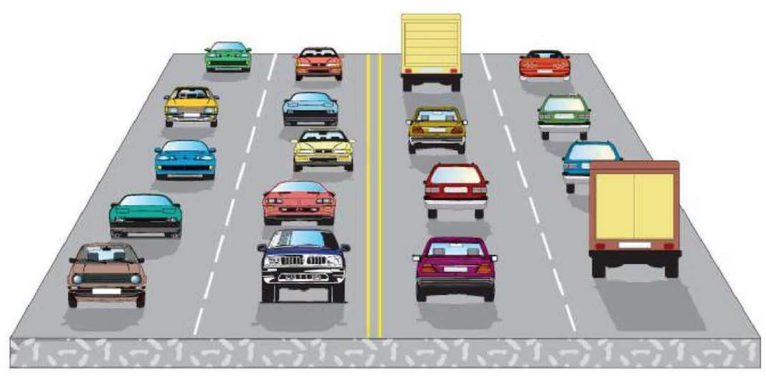
Not Recommended: The alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

→ See individual alternatives for screening rationale

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2025

Traffic Level of Service

Level of Service	What This Looks Like	Descriptions
A		Highest level of service. Traffic flows freely with little or no restrictions on maneuverability. **No Delays**
B		Traffic flows freely, but drivers have slightly less freedom to maneuver. **No Delays**
C		Density becomes noticeable with ability to maneuver limited by other vehicles. **Minimal Delays**
D		Speed and ability to maneuver is severely restricted by increasing density of vehicles. **Minimal Delays**
E		Unstable traffic flow. Speeds vary greatly and are unpredictable. **Moderate Delays**
F		Traffic flow is unstable, with brief periods of movement followed by forced stops. **Significant Delays**

Source: 2000 HCM, Exhibit 21-3, Speed-Flow Curves with LOS Criteria for Multi-Lane Highways.

→ Generally, ITD seeks to achieve LOS C or D

Performance: Traffic Benefits

As part of screening alternatives for performance, we estimated impacts to travel time and congestion.

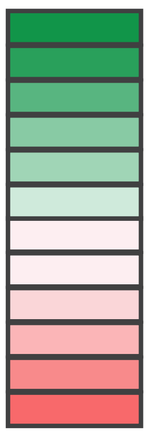
Graphics are presented at this station for each alternative that show the following:

Tables

Travel times and travel time changes on study routes compared to what they are estimated to be in the year 2045 if no additional improvements were made (No Build Alternative).

- Green indicates better travel times on the roadways relative to the other alternatives. Darker green means greater travel time benefit.
- Red indicates worse travel times on the roadways relative to the other alternatives. Darker red means less travel time benefit.

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative N	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times	Travel Times	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

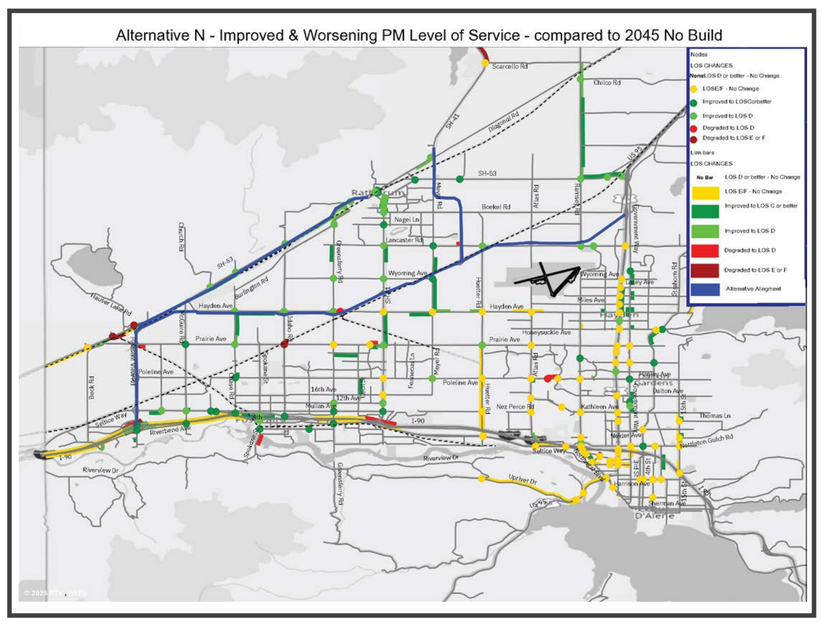


← Greatest positive difference in congestion and travel time.

← Greatest negative difference in congestion and travel time.

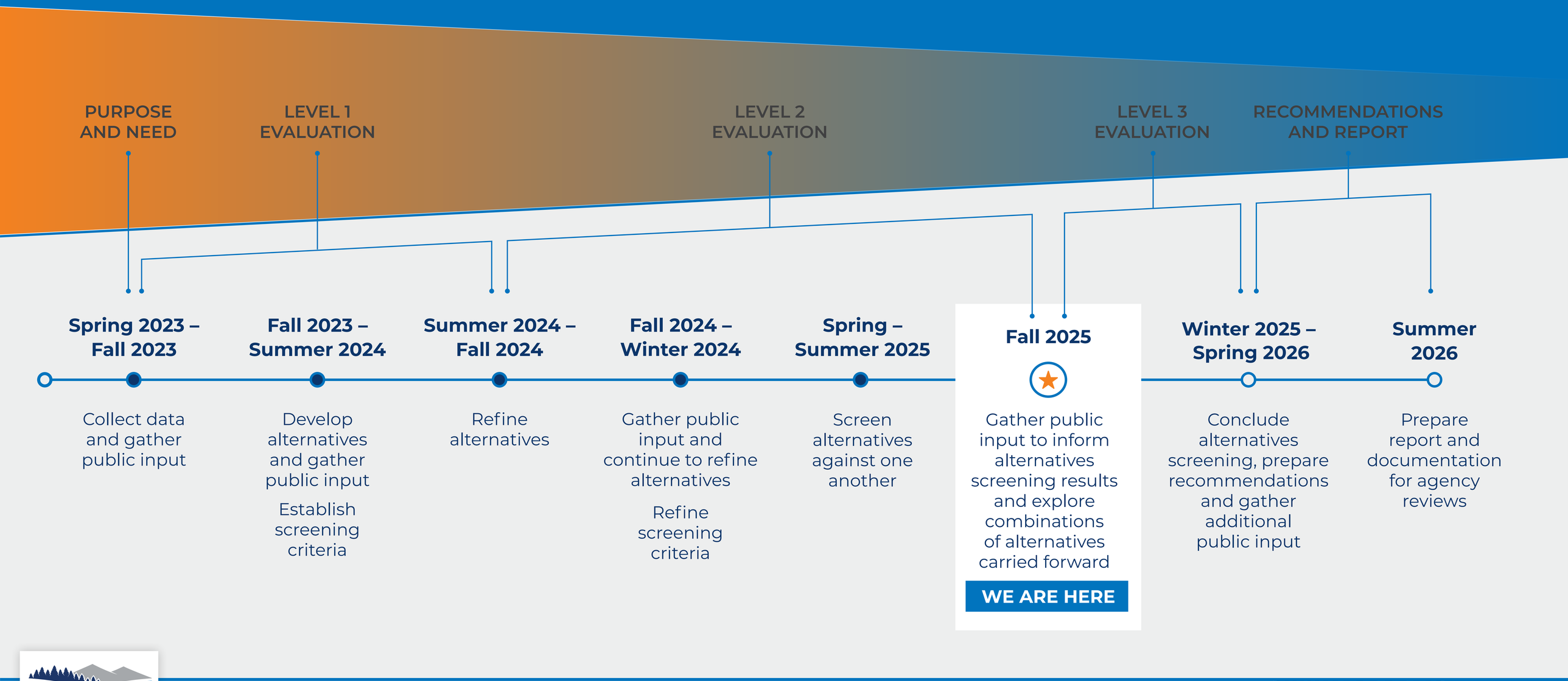
Maps

Change in Level of Service (LOS) from the No Build alternative = How each alternative will affect congestion in the year 2045.


Alternative N - Improved & Worsening PM Level of Service - compared to 2045 No Build
Nodes
LOS CHANGES
Name/LOS D or better - No Change
LOS E/F - No Change
Improved to LOS C or better
Improved to LOS D
Degraded to LOS D
Degraded to LOS E or F
Link bars
LOS CHANGES
No Bar
LOS D or better - No Change
LOS E/F - No Change
Improved to LOS C or better
Improved to LOS D
Degraded to LOS D
Degraded to LOS E or F
Alternative Alignment
Scarcello Rd
Chilco Rd
SH-41
Howard Rd
SH-53
Ramsey Rd
Atlas Rd
Government Way
Rathdrum
Nagel Ln
Lancaster Rd
Boekel Rd
Church St
Wyoming Ave
Huetter Rd
Meyer Rd
Hayden Ave
Prairie Ave
Honeysuckle Ave
Poleline Ave
Seltice Way
Nez Perce Rd
Kathleen Ave
Dalton Ave
Thomas Ln
Fernan Hill Rd
16th Ave
Marion Ave
I-90
Riverbend Ave
Riverview Dr
Ohio Match Rd
Ironwood Dr
Ramsey Rd
Atlas Rd
Government Way
Huetter Rd
Meyer Rd
Ramsey Rd
Atlas Rd
Government Way
Ohio Match Rd
Ironwood Dr
Seltice Way
Riverview Dr
Kathleen Ave
Dalton Ave
Thomas Ln
Fernan Hill Rd
Honeysuckle Ave
Poleline Ave
Prairie Ave
Hayden Ave
Wyoming Ave
Nagel Ln
Lancaster Rd
Boekel Rd
Church St
Meyer Rd
Atlas Rd
Government Way
Ramsey Rd
Huetter Rd

Where Are We in the Process?

ITD initiated the study in 2022 to evaluate the state, and federal highway and local roadway system within the Rathdrum Prairie. No specific project is funded at this time for design or construction. Recommended alternatives could be moved into these steps if funding becomes available.



RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2025

What's Next

Level 3 Evaluation

ITD will further develop, combine, and evaluate the alternatives carried forward into Level 3 using the following steps:

- Explore combinations of alternatives carried forward from Level 2 and consider design adjustments to alignments and cross sections.
- Assess in greater detail the benefits, impacts, estimated costs and potential right of way needs of each alternative.
- Hold one more public meeting to share Level 3 alternatives and gather feedback to identify the alternatives recommended to be developed.
- Finish the study spring of 2026 and begin moving the recommended alternatives into the NEPA review process.

Comments Are Encouraged!

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision-making as we complete the study and continue analysis under NEPA and design. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental and engineering information, and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

Please fill out a comment form and place it in the comment box.

While your comments are always welcome, they can be best utilized if received by ***Oct. 1, 2025****.*

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

SEPTEMBER
2025

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Thank You for Joining Us Today!

ITD is actively working with the public as we continue refining the study. We value your input and encourage you to stay connected. To stay involved, please sign up for email updates on the website.

Contact Us

For questions, comments or to reach the study team:

Call: 208-772-1230

Email: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com

Website: itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel
The website is the best resource to track progress of the study.

« *Scan the QR code to visit the website*

Mail: ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Alternative A

Typical Sections

SH-53 Expanded Highway

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Would not address study area performance issues as well as other east-west alternatives.
- Would not reduce congestion and travel time on SH-53 as much as other alternatives.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- Does not significantly reduce potential crash conflicts at driveways on SH-53.
- High level of impacts to wetlands (3.7 acres) and historic sites (11 sites).

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1 mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS, bing

Alternative B

Typical Sections

US-95 Expanded Highway

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby key corridors.
- Fewer right-of-way (0 acres) and environmental impacts than other north-south alternatives.
- Maintains existing access points.

Challenges:

- Does not address study area performance issues as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not reduce potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.

Preliminary Result:

RECOMMENDED TO RETAIN AS ELEMENT

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1 mi

Existing and/or Potential Signals

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS

bing

Alternative C

Typical Sections

US-95 Bypass Lanes

Existing US-95

Note: Bypass lanes cross over or under cross streets.

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby parallel roads.
- Fewer right-of-way (33 properties, 2 acres) and environmental impacts than most other north-south alternatives.

Challenges:

- Does not address study area performance issues as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not reduce potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95.
- Limited access from bypass lanes with potential for blockage with crashes.
- Further divides the community with new grade-separated overpasses.

Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Bypass Lanes

Hayden Lake

0 1mi

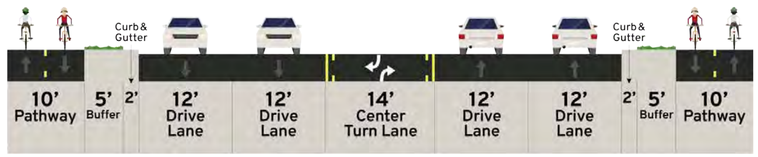
bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative D

Typical Sections

Improved Arterial



Benefits:

- Addresses study area congestion, travel efficiency, and network redundancy better than most other north-south alternatives.
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Fewer right-of-way (56 properties, 107 acres) than most other north-south alternatives.
- Maintains existing access points.
- Adds new I-90 interchange access.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Challenges:

- May be more appropriately implemented as a local facility rather than ITD facility.
- Increases potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on Huetter Road.

Preliminary Result:

RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Improved Arterial

0 1 mi

New Interchange

Existing and/or Potential Signals

bing
Earthstar Geographics, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative E

Typical Sections

Local Access Road — SH-53

Local Access Road — New Highway — Local Access Road

Local Access Road

New Highway

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53, Pleasant View Road, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Generally addresses study area travel time and travel efficiency.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Highest level of impacts to residential zoned properties (345 acres).
- High level of floodplain (14 acres), wetland (8.1 acres), and historic site impacts (16 sites).
- Would not provide as much access to SH-53 as other alternatives.
- High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA | © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution ...

Alternative F

Typical Sections

Local Access Road — **New Highway 1**

Local Access Road — **New Highway 2** — **Local Access Road**

Benefits:

- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.

Challenges:

- Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time, travel efficiency, or network redundancy as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not benefit SH-41 congestion and travel time as much as Alternatives D and H.
- High level of right-of-way impacts compared to other north-south alternatives (325 properties, 422 acres), including 278 acres of residential zoned property.
- High level of impacts to historic sites (26 sites) and floodplains (12 acres).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- Highest cost of north-south alternatives.

Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

New Highway 2 Local Access Road

New Highway 1 Local Access Road

0 1mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

bing
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA | © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative H

Typical Sections

Local Access Road

New Highway

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time well along US-95, SH-41, and parallel roads compared to other north-south alternatives.
- Addresses study area congestion and network redundancy well compared to other north-south alternatives.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to Alternative D.
- Maintains existing arterial access points along Huetter Road.
- Adds new I-90 interchange access.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Included in local and regional planning documents.

Challenges:

- Greater right-of-way impacts than Alternative D (111 properties, 304 acres).
- Greater impacts to residential zoned properties than most other north-south alternatives (82 acres).

Preliminary Result:

RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Local Access Road

New Highway

0 1mi

New Interchange

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative I

Typical Sections

Local Access Road

US-95

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby parallel roads.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95, compared to some other north-south alternatives.

Challenges:

- Does not address study area congestion or travel efficiency as well as other north-south alternatives.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- High number of properties impacted compared to other north-south alternatives (359 properties), including 75 acres of commercial property.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- Further divides the community with new grade-separated overpasses.

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Local Access Road

0 1mi

New Interchange

Hayden Lake

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative J

Typical Sections

New Highway

Local Access Road

New Highway

Local Access Road

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion along I-90 and nearby parallel roads.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on alignment, compared to some other east-west alternatives.
- Addresses study area congestion similarly to other east-west alternatives.

Challenges:

- High level of right-of-way impacts (433 properties, 629 acres).
- High impact to residential zoned properties (214 acres).
- Further divides the community with new highway corridor next to freight rail line.
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (compared with other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar, ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative K

Typical Sections

New Highway

Local Access Road

New Highway

Local Access Road

Benefits:

- Provides opportunity for new corridor with bike facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.

Challenges:

- Does not address congestion, travel time or travel efficiency as well as some other north south alternatives.
- High level of right-of-way impacts (428 acres).
- Does not benefit SH-41 as much as Alternatives D and H.
- Divides community by widening existing barrier of SH-41.
- High level of impact to historic sites (16 sites) compared to most other north-south alternatives.

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1mi

New Interchange

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2024 Microsoft Corporation © 2024 Maxar ©CNES (2024) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative L

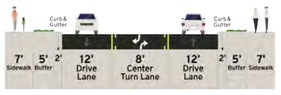
Typical Sections

Local Access Road — **SH-53**

New Highway 1 — **Local Access Road**

Local Access Road — **New Highway 2** — **Local Access Road**

Meyer Road Bypass



Meyer Road Bypass

New Highway 1
Local Access Road

New Highway 2
Local Access Roads

Benefits:

- Addresses congestion and travel time at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives M and N.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Greatest number of total properties impacted for east-west alternatives (478 properties).
- High residential zoned property impacts (107 acres).
- Higher commercial zoned property impacts (30 acres) than Alternatives M and N.
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres) and wetlands (4.3 acres).
- Greatest number of historic sites impacted for east-west alternatives (21 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1 mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative M

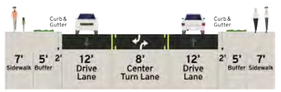
Typical Sections

Local Access Road **SH-53**

New Highway 1 **Local Access Road**

Local Access Road **New Highway 2** **Local Access Road**

Meyer Road Bypass



Meyer Road Bypass

New Highway 1
Local Access Road

New Highway 2
Local Access Roads

Benefits:

- Addresses congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and N.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- High level of right-of-way impacts (276 properties, 603 acres), and high impacts to residential zoned properties (121 acres).
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.6 acres) and historic sites (16 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

0 1 mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS

Alternative N

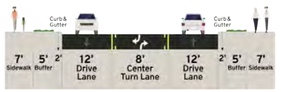
Typical Sections

Local Access Road — **SH-53**

New Highway 1 — **Local Access Road**

Local Access Road — **New Highway 2** — **Local Access Road**

Meyer Road Bypass



Benefits:

- Addresses congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to most other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and M.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.
- Lower impacts to residential zoned properties (66 acres) and commercial zoned property impacts (17 acres) than Alternatives L and M.

Challenges:

- High level of right-of-way impacts (326 properties), including greatest total number of acres impacted (731 acres).
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.8 acres) and historic sites (19 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Meyer Road Bypass

New Highway 1
Local Access Road

New Highway 2
Local Access Roads

0 1 mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals

bing

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, © 2025 Microsoft Corporation © 2025 Maxar ©CNES (2025) Distribution Airbus DS

Preliminary Level 2 Alternative Evaluation Matrix

Ranking Scale: Worst | Negative | Neutral/ Medium | Better/ Good | Best

Alternatives that were not recommended at a step did not proceed to the next step.

STEP 1 Performance

Category	Criteria	North-South Alternatives							East-West Alternatives					
		Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative F	Alternative H	Alternative I	Alternative K	Alternative A	Alternative E	Alternative J	Alternative L	Alternative M	Alternative N
Safety	Opportunity for conflicts at intersections (density of traffic volume and intersections)	High intersection traffic density	High intersection traffic density	Medium/High intersection traffic density	Low intersection traffic density	Medium intersection traffic density	Medium intersection traffic density	Medium/Low intersection traffic density	Medium intersection traffic density	Low intersection traffic density	Medium/Low intersection traffic density	Medium intersection traffic density	Low intersection traffic density	Low intersection traffic density
	Opportunity for conflicts at driveways (density of traffic volume and driveways)	No driveway traffic density	No driveway traffic density	High driveway traffic density	Medium/Low driveway traffic density	Medium driveway traffic density	Medium/High driveway traffic density	Medium/Low driveway traffic density	High driveway traffic density	Medium/Low driveway traffic density	Medium driveway traffic density	Medium driveway traffic density	Medium driveway traffic density	Medium driveway traffic density
Congestion	Ability to address congestion throughout the study area (Volume to capacity ratio) (Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C ratio)	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
Travel Time	Ability to improve travel times throughout the study area (Total Time Savings)	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/Low travel time savings	Medium/High travel time savings	Medium travel time savings	High travel time savings	High travel time savings	High travel time savings
Travel Efficiency	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-miles traveled for the network) (VMT)	Medium increase in VMT	Medium/High increase in VMT	Medium increase in VMT	Medium/High increase in VMT	Medium/High increase in VMT	High increase in VMT	High increase in VMT	Medium increase in VMT	Medium/High decrease in VMT	Medium/High increase in VMT	Medium/High increase in VMT	Medium decrease in VMT	Medium decrease in VMT
	Ability to improve travel efficiency within the study area (Vehicle-hours traveled for the network) (VHT)	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium/Low decrease in VHT	Medium decrease in VHT	Medium decrease in VHT	Medium/High decrease in VHT	Medium/High decrease in VHT	Medium/High decrease in VHT
Network Redundancy	Ability to address congestion during a major incident (Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C ratio during detour event)	196 segments	190 segments	147 segments	185 segments	121 segments	191 segments	181 segments	202 segments	148 segments	166 segments	139 segments	141 segments	134 segments
Multimodal Considerations	Ability to increase safety, mobility, and connections for bicycle and pedestrian users (Consideration of integrating existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities)	Additional at-grade conflicts (more lanes and additional traffic)	Maintains connections, grade separated crossings, but wider corridor to cross	New multiuse paths, local multimodal connections maintained	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Some crossings require navigating interchange where none exists today	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	Shoulder with more lanes/traffic	Existing Corridor: Bike off of mainline	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities, but disrupts local system.	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities	New corridor with bike or pedestrian facilities
	Ability to increase safety, mobility and connections for transit users based on transit service in mixed traffic (Number of segments on key corridors exceeding 0.9 V/C ratio)	44 segments	41 segments	29 segments	36 segments	27 segments	44 segments	37 segments	40 segments	27 segments	31 segments	25 segments	24 segments	24 segments
STEP 1 RESULTS		**Recommended to retain as an element**	**Recommended to retain as an element**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to retain as an element**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**

STEP 2 Impacts and Benefits

Category	Criteria	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative F	Alternative H	Alternative I	Alternative K	Alternative A	Alternative E	Alternative J	Alternative L	Alternative M	Alternative N
Community Impacts and Planning	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of properties impacted)	0 properties impacted	33 properties impacted	56 properties impacted	325 properties impacted	111 properties impacted	359 properties impacted	152 properties impacted	230 properties impacted	358 properties impacted	433 properties impacted	478 properties impacted	276 properties impacted	326 properties impacted
	Estimated requirements for right-of-way acquisition (Number of acres impacted)	0 acres impacted	2 acres impacted	107 acres impacted	422 acres impacted	304 acres impacted	111 acres impacted	428 acres impacted	84 acres impacted	479 acres impacted	629 acres impacted	553 acres impacted	603 acres impacted	731 acres impacted
	Estimated residential right-of-way requirements (Acres of residential zoned areas)	0 acres impacted	0 acres impacted	35 acres impacted	278 acres impacted	82 acres impacted	12 acres impacted	29 acres impacted	71 acres	345 acres	214 acres	107 acres	121 acres	66 acres
	Estimated commercial right-of-way requirements (Acres of commercial zoned areas)	0 acres impacted	1 acres impacted	5 acres impacted	52 acres impacted	17 acres impacted	75 acres impacted	50 acres impacted	4 acres	36 acres	14 acres	30 acres	19 acres	17 acres
	Use of existing highway or roadway corridors (Amount and existing corridors utilized)	Primarily uses existing corridor	Primarily uses existing corridor	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Primarily uses existing corridor but requires expansion	Requires new alignment from SH-41 to US-95	Requires some new alignment	Requires some new alignment	Requires new corridor	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them	Primarily utilized existing corridors with new alignments connecting them
	How does the alternative effect local access (Based on adding more or less local access overall)	Maintains access	Maintains access from US-95 to local destination. However, bypass lanes have limited access, especially for emergency response	New access to I-90 and local areas	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, interchanges generally at existing local roadways	Access control means less access with closer spaced existing access	Less access in Post Falls, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	Maintains access	Access control means less access	New access to I-90, although existing access to I-90 exists	New access to I-90, New access near Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden	New access to I-90, New access near Post Falls, Rathdrum and Hayden
	Does the alternative divide or further divide existing communities (based on location of alternatives within existing communities)	Additional lanes adds to crossing distance	Addition of grade-separated lanes for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to perceived barrier in developed area	Minimal change, intermittent development	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in intermittent development and developed areas	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area for length of facility adding crossing distance and adding to barrier	Addition of lanes, upgrade of facility type in developed area in Post Falls	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Adds new corridor to developed area	Bypass Rathdrum but still splitting lighter developed areas	Bypass Rathdrum	Bypass Rathdrum
	Compatibility with local and regional planning efforts (based on compatibility assessment provided to local governments)	Hayden (Low), Coeur d'Alene (High)	Hayden and Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Coeur d'Alene (High), Post Falls (High), Hayden (Medium), Rathdrum (High)	Rathdrum (Low), Post Falls (Medium/Concerns)	Hayden (High), Coeur d'Alene (Medium/Concerns), Post Falls (High), Rathdrum (High)	Hayden and Coeur d'Alene (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/Concerns)	Rathdrum (Medium/Concerns), Hauser (Medium)	Hauser (Low), Rathdrum (Low/ Concerns), Post Falls (Medium/ Concerns)	Post Falls (Low), Rathdrum (Low/Concerns)	Rathdrum (Low), Hayden (Low), Hauser (High)	Rathdrum (Medium/Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Medium), Hayden (Low)	Rathdrum (Medium/Concerns), Hauser (High), Post Falls (Low), Hayden (Low)
Environmental Resources	New acres of impervious surfaces	24 acres of impervious surface	37 acres of impervious surface	73 acres of impervious surface	115 acres of impervious surface	86 acres of impervious surface	30 acres of impervious surface	101 acres of impervious surface	75 acres of impervious surface	175 acres of impervious surface	180 acres of impervious surface	179 acres of impervious surface	187 acres of impervious surface	198 acres of impervious surface
	Floodplain Impacts	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	12 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	1 acre of FEMA floodplains	14 acres of FEMA floodplains	0 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains	6 acres of FEMA floodplains
	Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. Impacts	0.0 acres	0.0 acres	1.5 acres	2.9 acres	2.7 acres	0.0 acres	0.6 acres	3.7 acres	8.1 acres	0.2 acres	4.3 acres	3.6 acres	3.8 acres
Social and Built Environment	Potential Impacts to Community Resources and Parks and Recreation	13 properties	13 properties	2 properties	1 properties	2 properties	14 properties	1 property	3 properties	3 properties	1 property	8 properties	7 properties	7 properties
	Impacts to Hazardous Materials sites	15 sites	0 sites	1 site	9 sites	1 site	19 sites	8 sites	6 sites	10 sites	5 sites	10 sites	7 sites	9 sites
	Impacts to Historic Sites	2 sites	1 site	3 sites	26 sites	4 sites	7 sites	16 sites	11 sites	16 sites	9 sites	21 sites	16 sites	19 sites
	Properties with potential residential noise receptors	1,474 properties	839 properties	417 properties	1,289 properties	591 properties	2,675 properties	1,272 properties	639 properties	874 properties	1,710 properties	1,903 properties	1,400 properties	1,442 properties
STEP 2 RESULTS		**Recommended to retain as an element**	**Not recommended**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Not recommended**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**

STEP 3 Implementation

Category	Criteria	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative F	Alternative H	Alternative I	Alternative K	Alternative A	Alternative E	Alternative J	Alternative L	Alternative M	Alternative N
Implementation	Conceptual construction costs (Magnitude in cost in comparison to other alternatives, including assumptions for structures and ROW)	$	$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$	$$$	$$$	$$	$$$$$	$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$	$$$$$
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, reducing number of typical ITD construction packages per alternative	3 packages	4 packages	3 packages	10 packages	6 packages	5 packages	6 packages	3 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages	10 packages
	Ability to proceed with phased implementation, minimizing traffic impacts	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated crossings would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Can mostly maintain existing number of through lanes in each direction during construction. Frequent access work and adjacent traffic not efficient and more disruptive to traveling public.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, you can then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Mostly offline construction and can be constructed around Huetter Road's lower volume of traffic with phased intersections and interchanges.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. Reduced number of travel lanes during construction	Phasing the 3 grade separated interchanges on SH-41 would be impactful to the traveling public. Half of project to the north is offline with fewer traffic impacts. Likely reduced number of temporary travel lanes for the south end.	Typical highway widening. Two major maintenance of traffic phases. Can maintain existing 1-lane of traffic in each direction, may have to temporarily close turn lane.	Grade separated interchanges would be challenging to phase without temporary impacts to traffic. If building the frontage road first, then detouring SH-41 onto the detour, then phase the interchanges. However this temporarily decreases number of travel lanes.	Almost all offline construction, easier to phase. High ROW impacts, but low impact to traffic flow and maintenance of traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.	Similar maintenance of traffic to Alternative A with the addition of other roadway/ highway online work and interchanges. Could disrupt cross street traffic.
STEP 3 RESULTS		**Recommended to retain as an element**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 1**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Not recommended in Step 2**	**Recommended to carry forward**	**Recommended to carry forward**

Appendix: D
Public meeting sign-in sheets

Sign-in sheets, September 17, 2025
Sign-in sheets, September 18, 2025

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Shina Urbat		[redacted]		
LoRae + John Stolpp				
Jacqui Dodd-Duran				
Donna Boekel				
Carolyn B	CDA Press			
Helen Farbee				
Mary Ann Garringer				
Shannon Drapp	City of Hayden			
Melissa Hallas, PE	Citizen/ commuter			

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project. though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
JASON LUCAS	ST/rt L(ti-DU'v W	[redacted]		
TRACI BROOKS				
Pat Bergen	self			
Mark Puddy				
Gemma Puddy	Hovracks			
Dallas Thomson				
	Sgtte Bough			
Art Collins	SELF			
RICH BELZER	"			

Name (please print) | Title/Representing | Address | Contact Information | Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may umubscribe f'om updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
ROBERT FARR		[redacted]		
CHRIS URBAT				
Robert Palus	Ct7 of s) {;;/ls G'45.·			
Stephanie Wolf				
SANDRA & GARY SONNEN				
Connie Jordahl	N/A			
Donald C McGhee				
John Gunning				
JIM KERNS				

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #41 Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
John Wilson	NA	[redacted]		
Valerie Walker	—			
Bruce Walker	—			
Calvin Graham				
Jeremy Swingle				
Cheryl + Gary Matthews				
Rob Hoff				
Linda Cervero				

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #41 Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
[illegible]	Ay'Jellf-	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Ba, Cv'4 il/Y'-[,v(d	Se}'			
J„v,d il Y,k\ttk-	f€_(+			
e - <d [illegible] Unde„„J,; /l				
DOUG WRIGHT	SELF			
CHRIS MEYER	f;4e_LJOo0 (3VSAt;::-5 J Pi o Paz;.r;EJ			
Brian Kluss Janet Kluss				
Greg Slotten	—			

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
J ac[)qKJJ Kathy Km<tS	LW-blfp, ner	[redacted]		
t?	t b			
i»by Co ry				
Cf<o or.. S ,,rJ	K£fM 2- Ne i			
10 \ tof(	-			
5onaf'ha'lYawfe	-			
Ted FuRBeck	-			
Kyle & Danielle	-			

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 I Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center. 105 N. 1st Street. Coeur d'Alene. ID I Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information		Please check appropriate boxes			
David + Natalie Hayes		[redacted]						
Heather Reed								
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White ☐ Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
			Phone		☐ Male ☐ Female	☐ Person with a disability	☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____	
			Email					
Name (please print)	I Title/Representing	I Address	I Contact Information		I Please check appropriate boxes			

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project. though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

62 Total

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center, 105 N. 1st Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID | Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Kelly Heck		[redacted]		
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic O – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic O – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ – – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic O – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ – –
			Phone Email	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic O – –
Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 IQ'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID IThursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Jeff & Dawn Fehrs		[redacted]		
[illegible]				
/... A: /t.J..,"1 CoJJ5-, d j'A)				
[illegible]				
LAURA BURGAN				
Charlayne Streeter				
[illegible]				
LORI DAUB				
Iain Fisher				

Name (please print) | Title/Representing | Address | Contact Information | Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID | Thursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Damon	ITD	[redacted]		
Boyer	Self			
Ca\""	.Serp			
\ 0f1S 'Efuc Knutson	f			
<qlenrfFeHer	Self			
0e /11-Rr	PPHD C l„u;„'1vV\ v,			
Rob Wright	Self			
Dusty Ormayer	Ardurra			
Bob Seale	City of Post Falls			

Name (please print) | Title/Representing | Address | Contact Information | Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID | Thursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Pat Cook	Home owner	[redacted]		
Tom Freeman	Self			
Dewey Berndt	Self			
Bob Flagor				
Andrew Sales				
CHARLES Husband				
Chris & Mary Chandler	homeowners/ self			
Joseph Meek	City emp. Post Falls			
Judy Fujimoto	Home Owner			
Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable informatiOn will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID | Thursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Robert Palus	City of Post Falls	[redacted]		
Ben Davis	Keller Associates			
WES & Laura Somerton	self			
Jim MASTERS				
Larry Eastlack				
Mathew Noble	Self			
TJ Wilkes	Self			
Mary Padelt	Self			
Jacob Harder	interested citizen			

Name (please print) | Title/Representing | Address | Contact Information | Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 | Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID | Thursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Janet Cason		[redacted]		
Mark Hughes				
Cindy Conover				
Bruce Howard				
James Steffensen				
Paul Franz				
BRIAN JENNINGS	1 ,T A5U.0LTY			
Brad & Beth Patzer				
John Heaney				
Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 IQ'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID IThursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
Mike Boyer		[redacted]		
Lauren Scarcella	Jeip			
Tom Olsen Marilyn Olsen	Self			
Leon Duce	City of Rathdrum			
Jim Guy				
Justin Kerr	Property owner			
Aaron Weight	Property Reserve			
Doris Wagner	Self			
RANDY & LOIS GALES	Self			

Name (please print) | Title/Representing | Address | Contact Information | Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #4 I Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID I Thursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
PGedeon	self	[redacted]		
Darleen Langlitz	self			
Anita Dupzyk	self			
Heidi Rockstrom	Howe- If+ow И			
Chris Larson				
			Phone / Email	☐ Male ☐ Female; ☐ Person with a disability; ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ _____
			Phone / Email	☐ Male ☐ Female; ☐ Person with a disability; ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ _____
			Phone / Email	☐ Male ☐ Female; ☐ Person with a disability; ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Phone / Email	☐ Male ☐ Female; ☐ Person with a disability; D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White O Hispanic ☐ _____
Name (please print)	Title/Representing	I Address	I Contact Information	I Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collectiOn purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Idaho Transportation Department Sign-In Sheet

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Public Meeting #41 Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center, 12201 W Parkway Dr., Post Falls, ID IThursday, September 18, 2025, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Name (please print)	Title/Representing	Address	Contact Information	Please check appropriate boxes
DAVE MAXWELL	Resident	[redacted]		
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Nalive)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability ☐ American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
			Phone	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Person with a disability D American Indian (Tribal Native)/ Alaskan Native D Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ White D Hispanic ☐ _____
			Email	
Name (please print)	I Title/Representing	I Address	I Contact Information	I Please check appropriate boxes

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)). Sign-in sheets will become part of the public record for this project, though personally Identifiable Information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Appendix: E
Public Online meeting

Online meeting presentation
Website metrics

RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Welcome to this public meeting to learn more about the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study.

If you have questions after participating in the online meeting, please email info@rathdrumprairiepel.com. A member of the study team will respond within 48 hours, excluding holidays and weekends.

The public comment period for this study is open until midnight Oct. 1, 2025. Comments can be submitted online by clicking the "comments" icon in the top right corner of your screen, in person at the public meeting, by email or U.S. mail.

Enter Virtual Meeting

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Working Together for a Safer, More Connected Future

This study is being developed by the Idaho Transportation Department and the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization and will help identify ways to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity and improve mobility throughout the Rathdrum Prairie.

The purpose of the online meeting is to share which alternatives are recommended to be carried forward in the study process after being screened for performance, impacts/benefits and implementation.

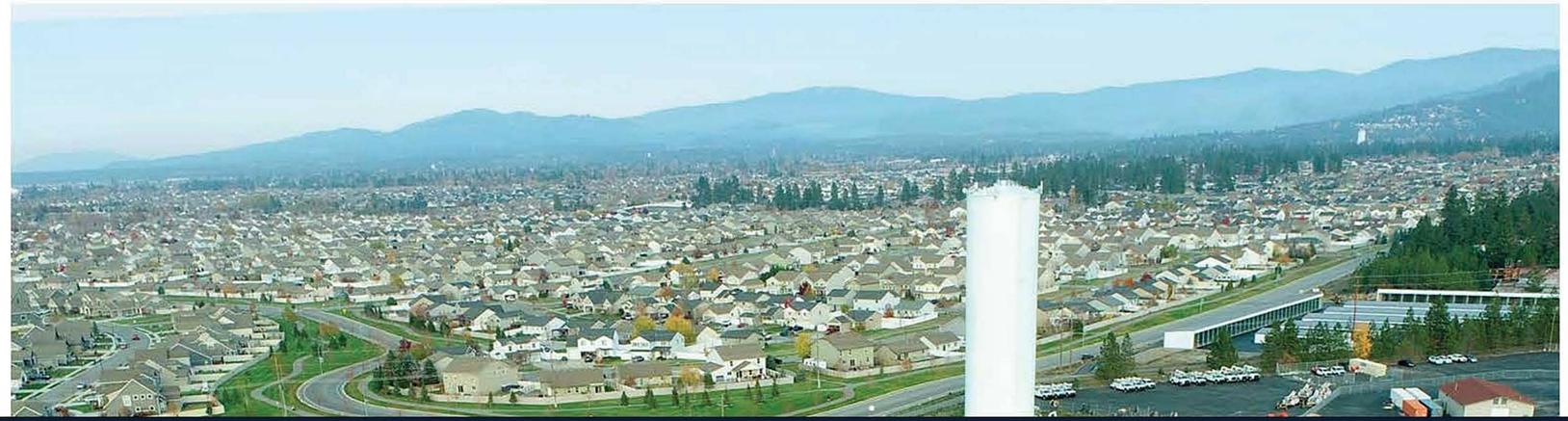
We're planning for a transportation system that works for everyone- today and tomorrow.

This study aims to:

- **Improve safety in areas with high crash rates.**
- **Add capacity to address current and future traffic challenges as our region grows.**
- **Consider new connections to make it easier for people to get where they need to go.**

Your input helps shape solutions that reflect the needs of the whole community.

We invite you to take a look at the transportation improvement options that came out of our Level 2 screening review process.



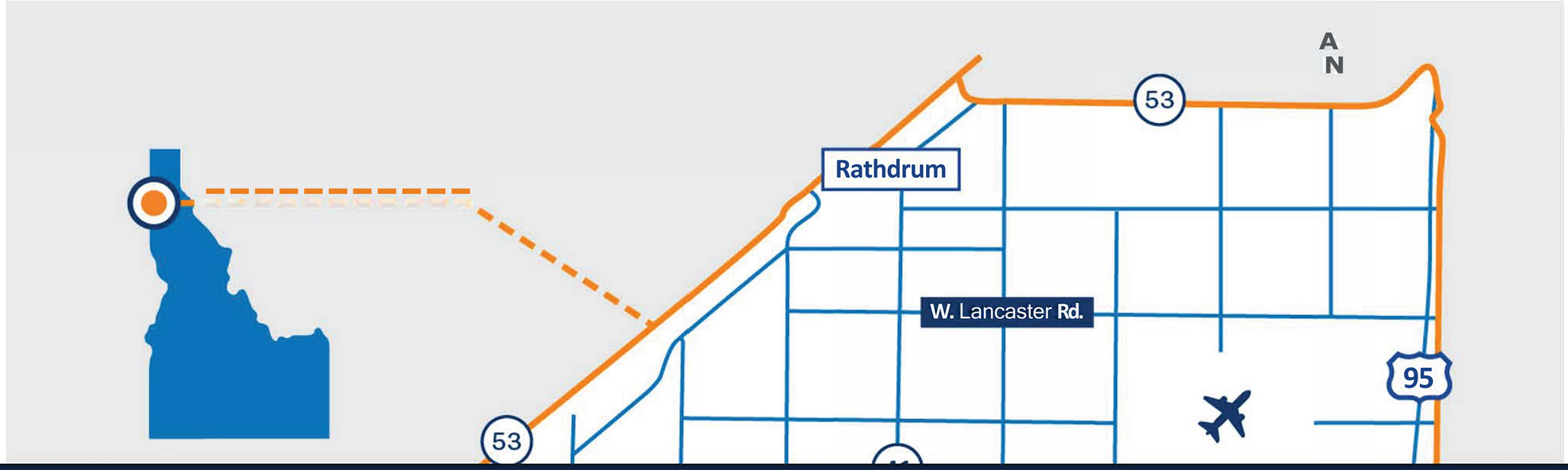
Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Purpose of the Study

The Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study is looking at ways to improve safety, keep traffic moving efficiently and make the system more reliable as Kootenai County continues to grow.

Needs to be addressed:

- Improve safety in areas with high numbers of crashes.
- Proactively plan for more traffic as the area grows.
- Create new, safer, and better connections for people walking, biking, or using transit.



RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

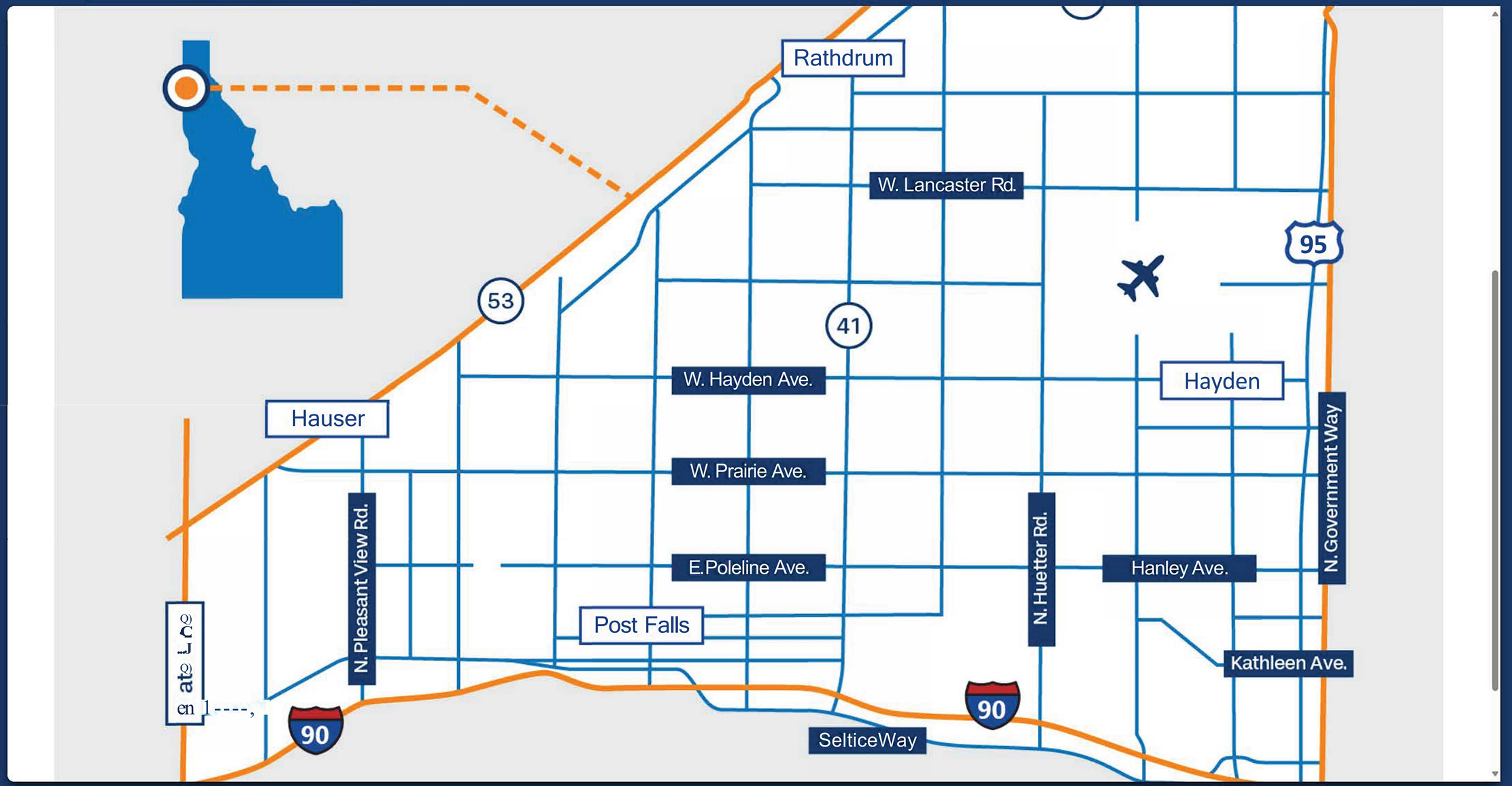
How to Use this Site

< MENU

Preliminary Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results

See the Latest Project Updates

COMMENT



m Working Together
m Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
m Evaluation Process
m Level 2 Alternatives
m We Heard You
m Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
m Traffic Benefits
m Where are we?
m What's Next?
m Stay Involved
m Comments

What is a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

The PEL process considers environmental, community and economic goals early on while planning future projects.

This process is outlined by the Federal Highway Administration and weighs:

- **Transportation issues and priorities**
- **Environmental resources and concerns**
- **Stakeholder and public concerns**

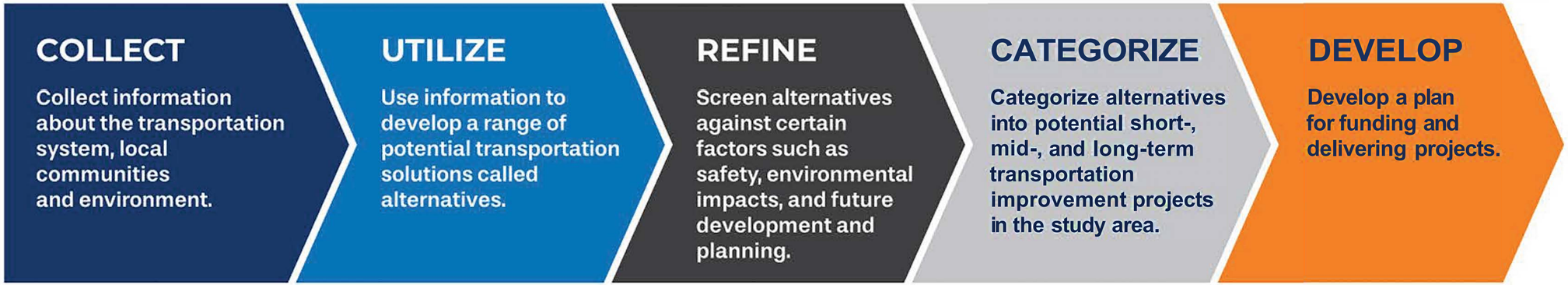
Recommendations from this PEL study, shaped by public and agency input received, could move forward to the next step: the federal review process called the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, which is required before major transportation projects are built.

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

This process is outlined by the Federal Highway Administration and weighs:

- **Transportation issues and priorities**
- **Environmental resources and concerns**
- **Stakeholder and public concerns**

Recommendations from this PEL study, shaped by public and agency input received, could move forward to the next step: the federal review process called the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, which is required before major transportation projects are built.



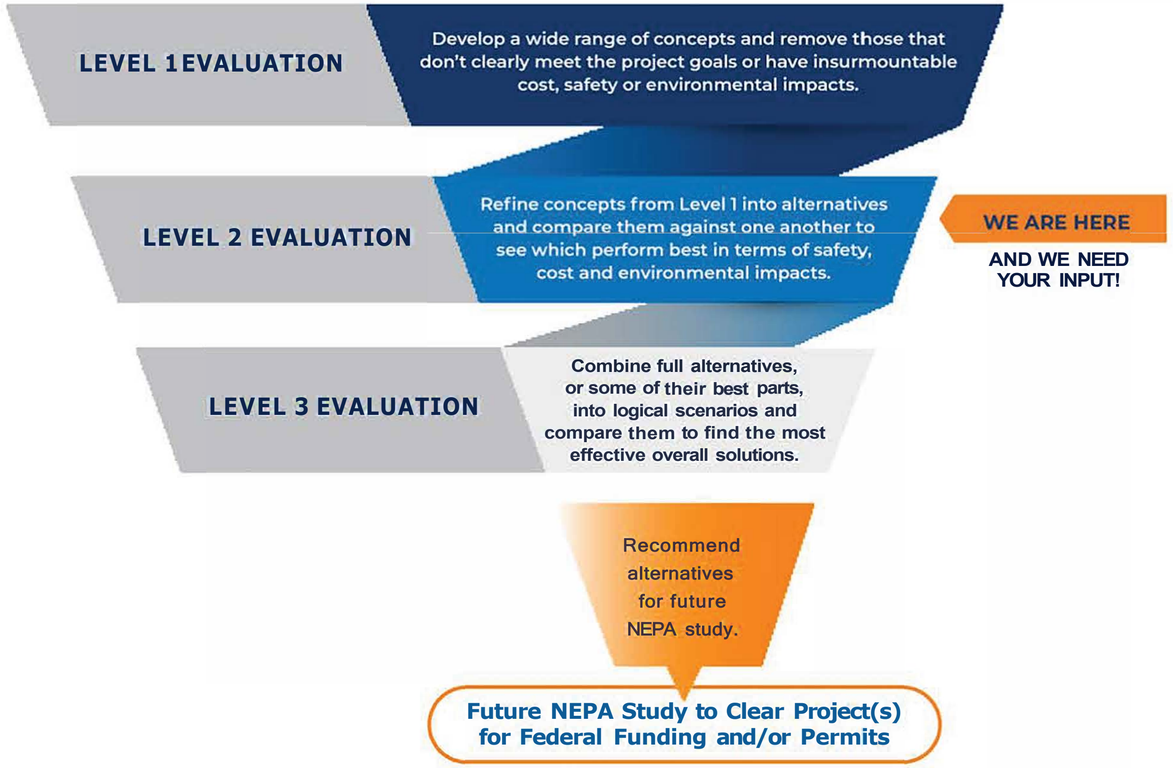
POST-PEL:.:. PROJECT STEPS

NEPA requires agencies to assess environmental effects of proposed actions prior to making decisions.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

What is the evaluation process used in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study?

At our last public meeting, we introduced the Level 2 screening process to show how alternatives would be evaluated. Today, we're back to share the results of that evaluation and ITD's preliminary recom·mendations for which alternatives could move forward. Your feedback will help shape the final recommendations and decisions for the study.



RATHDRUM PRAIRIE
AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

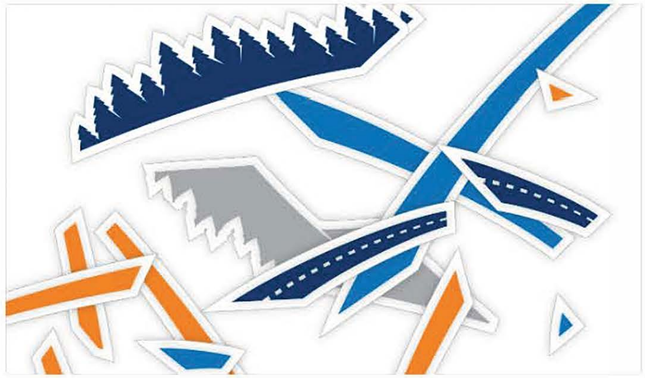
Level 2 Alternatives

ITD used public and stakeholder input, planning best practices, and collaboration with agencies and jurisdictions to reduce the more than SO Level 1 Concepts to 13 Level 2 Alternatives. For more information, view the Level 2 Alternatives boards.

What is a Level 2 Alternative?

Level 2 Alternatives are potential transportation solutions that can be compared to each other to understand their relative benefits and impacts, in order to decide which will be carried forward to the Level 3 screening process. Public input will also determine which alternatives move to Level 3.

Level 2 Alternatives displayed in the Preliminarx Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results include alignment (fat lines on a map), number of lanes, and preliminary roadway layouts displayed on aerial photo maps.



Level1

Unconnected concepts/ideas

Level2

Further developed! and combined concepts/ideas into alternatives

Level 3

Recommended alternatives

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

We Heard You

Since 2022, ITD has gathered input from community members, stakeholders and agencies through interviews, workshops, and public meetings. The feedback received has helped to shape the screening criteria, alternatives and recommendations you see today. Some alternatives were originally suggested and drawn out by the public at previous meetings.

This is our fourth round of public meetings for this study and each one has helped the team understand how public needs and priorities are focused as alternatives are developed and screened.

From the November 2024 meetings we heard:

- The community values protecting existing neighborhoods and resources.
- Avoiding cultural and historic sites is a priority.
- A combination of alternatives may be needed to address regional traffic issues.

m Working Together
m Purpose and Need
m What is a PEL
m Evaluation Process
m Level 2 Alternatives
m We Heard You
» Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
m Traffic Benefits
m Where are we?
m What's Next?
m Stay Involved
m Comments

Level 2 Screening Evaluation

Level 2 screening was comparative - in other words, we examined how each alternative compared to one another.

The Level 2 screening process compared each alternative in a deliberate sequence, looking first at performance, then impacts and benefits, and finally implementation. For more information, view the Preliminarx Level 2 Alternative Screening Results: Detailed Screening Matrix, which includes criteria and rationale.

Recommended to carry forward: The alternative performed well and is being recommended to move on to Level 3 evaluation.

Recommended to retain as an element: The alternative didn't perform well on its own, but parts of it could be combined with another alternative to move on to Level 3 screening.

Not Recommended: The alternative didn't perform well and is recommended to be dropped from consideration.

For more information, view the Prelimina[Y. Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results.

Step 1: Performance

Step 2: Impacts and benefits

Step 3: Implementation

Key

8 North-South Alternative | East-West Alternative | Not Recommended | Recommended to Retain as Element | Recommended to Carry Forward | Not Evaluated Further

Alternatives that were not recommended at a step did not proceed to the next step.

Level 2 Alternatives	Step 1 Performance	Step 2 Impacts & Benefits	Step 3 Implementation
A	⊗		

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Step 3: Implementation

Key

8 North-South Alternative ◆ East-West Alternative @ Not Recommended O Recommended to Retain as Element C'; Recommended to Carry Forward ☐ Not Evaluated Further

Alternatives that were not recommended at a step did not proceed to the next step.

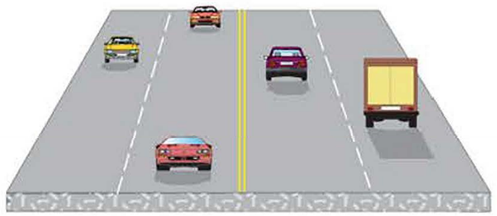
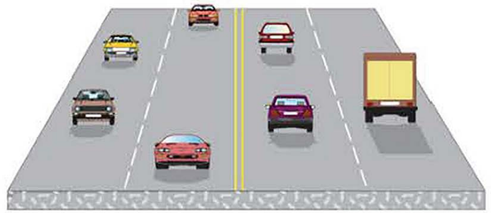
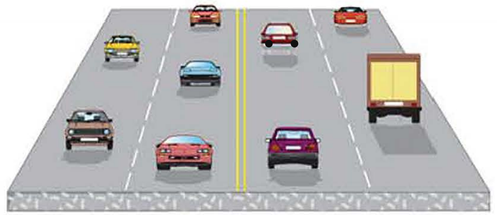
Level 2 Alternatives	Step 1 Performance	Step 2 Impacts & Benefits	Step 3 Implementation
A	®		
B8	0	0	0
CE	0	®	
D8	&	0	✓
E	0	®	
F8	®		
H8	0	0	✓
18	0	®	
J	0	®	
K8	®		
L	0	®	
M	0	0	0
N	0	0	0

See individual alternatives for screening rationale

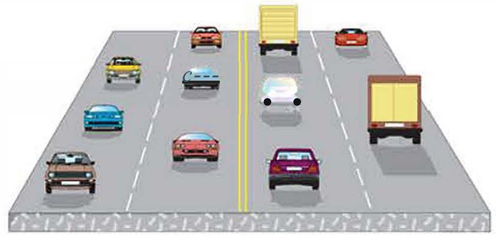
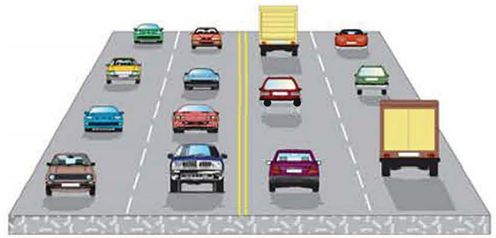
Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Traffic Benefits

Level of Service

A		Highest level of service. Traffic flows freely with little or no restrictions on maneuverability. **No Delays**
G		Traffic flows freely, but drivers have slightly less freedom to maneuver. **No Delays**
G		Density becomes noticeable with ability to maneuver limited by other vehicles. **Minitnal Delays**
		Speed and ability to maneuver is severely restricted by increasing density of vehicles. **Minimal Delays**

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

e		Speed and ability to maneuver is severely restricted by increasing density of vehicles. Minimal Delays
E		Unstable traffic flow. Speeds vary greatly and are unpredictable. Moderate Delays
F		Traffic flow is unstable, with brief periods of movement followed by forced stops. Significant Delays

Generally, ITD seeks to achieve LOS C or D

Below are graphics of each alternative that show the following:

Performance: Traffic Benefits

As part of screening alternatives for performance, we estimated impacts to travel time and congestion

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

Below are graphics of each alternative that show the following:

Performance: Traffic Benefits

As part of screening alternatives for performance, we estimated impacts to travel time and congestion.

Graphics are presented for each alternative that show the following:

Tables

Travel times and travel time changes on study routes compared to what they are estimated to be in the year 2045 if no additional improvements were made (No Build Alternative).

- Green indicates better travel times on the roadways relative to the other alternatives. Darker green means greater travel time benefit.
- Red indicates worse travel times on the roadways relative to the other alternatives. Darker red means less travel time benefit.

Corridor	Direction	Travel Times	Travel Times	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
19-1	EB			
19-1	WB			
Stf-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
Stf.53	EB			
SH-SS	WB			
c..tway	NB			
c..tWay	SB			
Prtirk Av,	EB			
Pnilie Avt	WB			
RamseyRd	NB			
RIffl"Y RJ	SB			
Hut.net Rd	NB			
Hunter Rd	SB			
Polel-t/Hiinlf7	EB			
Pol•l-'HInley	WB			
PtuuntVie-.Rd	NB			
Pkasant View Rd	SB			
Gntnsftrty Rd	NB			
Gtettideny Rd	SB			

- Greatest positive difference in congestion and travel time.

- Greatest negative difference in congestion and travel time.

Maps

Change in Level of Service (LOS) from the No Build alternative = How each alternative will affect congestion in the year 2045.

- Dark green: LOS improved from LOS D, E or F to LOS C or better with the alternative

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

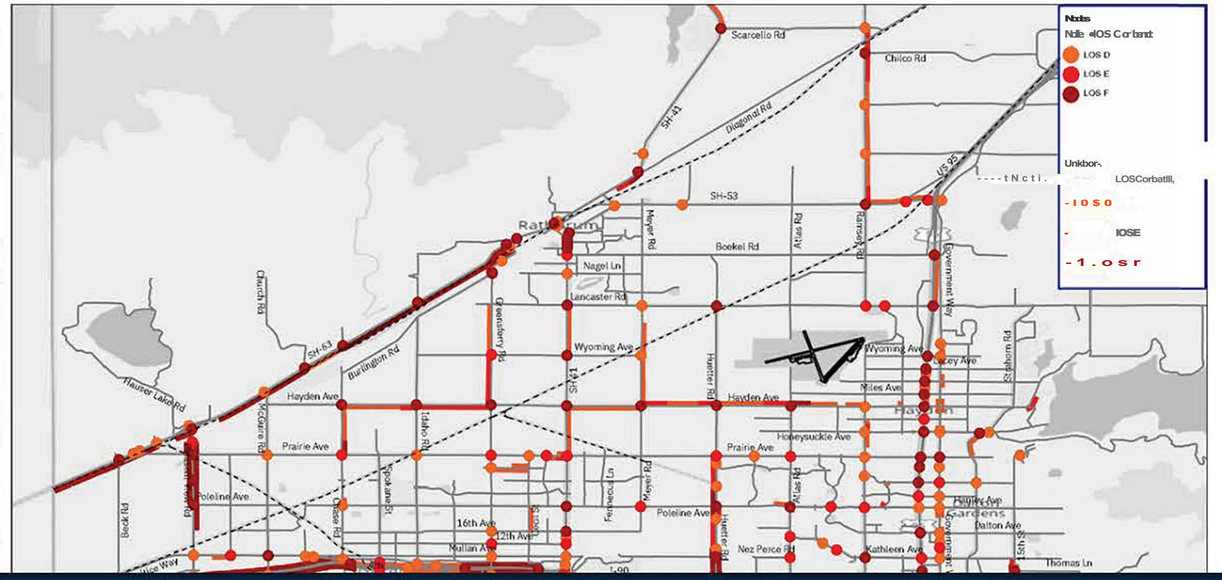
Maps

Change in Level of Service (LOS) from the No Build alternative = How each alternative will affect congestion in the year 2045.

- Dark green: LOS improved from LOS D, E or F to LOS C or better with the alternative
- Light green: LOS improved from LOS E or F to LOS D with the alternative
- Yellow: No LOS change at roadways and intersections that were at LOS E or F in the No Build Alternative
- Red: LOS degraded from LOS C or better to LOS D with the alternative
- Dark Red: LOS degraded from LOS D or better to LOS E or F with the alternative
- Purple: Alternative Alignment

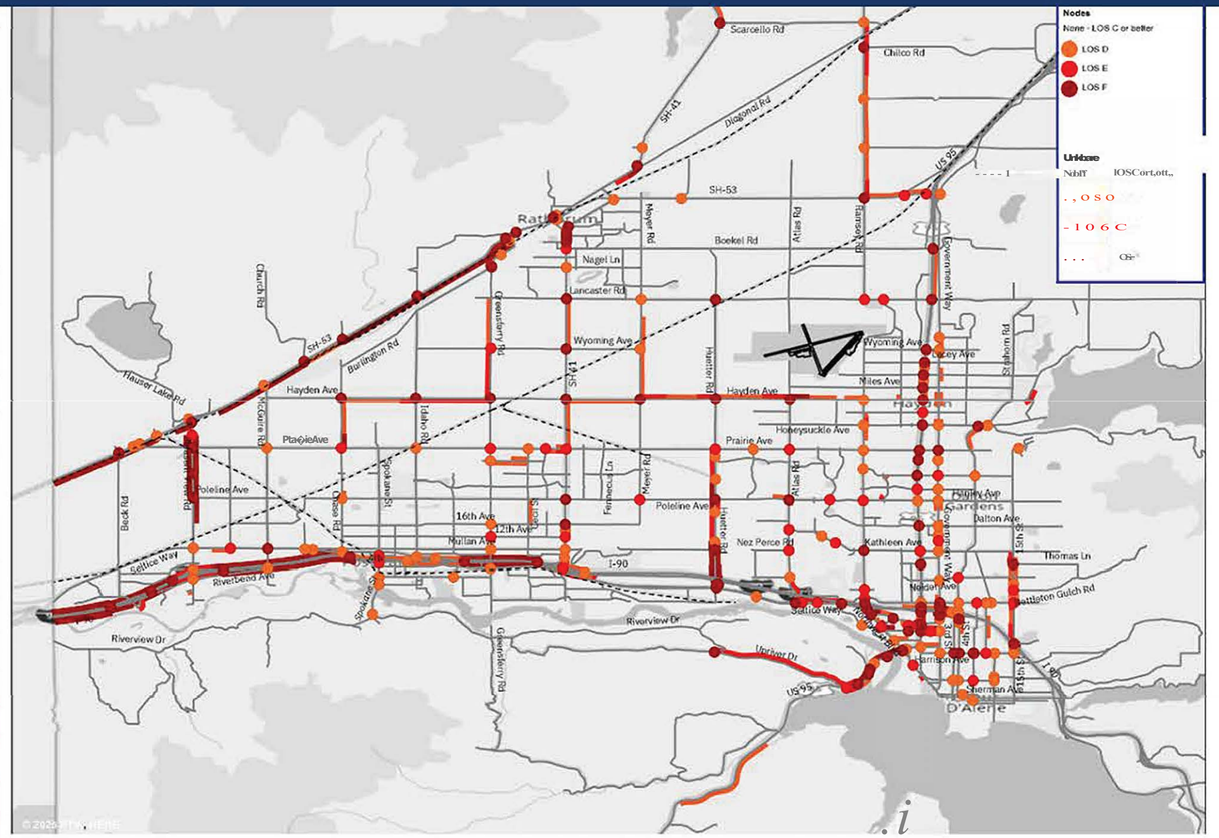
Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)
US-95	NB	
US-95	SB	
I-90	EB	
I-90	WB	
SH-41	NB	
SH-41	SB	
SH-53	EB	
SH-53	WB	
Govt Way	NB	
Govt Way	SB	
Prairie Ave	EB	
Prairie Ave	WB	
Ramsey Rd	NB	

NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE: PM Peak Hour Level of Service



- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)
US-95	NB	
US-95	SB	
1-90	EB	
1-90	WB	
SH-41	NB	
SH-41	SB	
SH-53	EB	
SH-53	WB	
Govt Way	NB	
Govt Way	SB	
Prairie Ave	EB	
Prairie Ave	WB	
Ramsey Rd	NB	
Ramsey Rd	SB	
Huetter Rd	NB	
Huetter Rd	SB	
Poleline/Hanley	EB	
Poleline/Hanley	WB	
Pleasant View Rd	NB	
Pleasant View Rd	SB	
Greensferry Rd	NB	
Greensferry Rd	SB	



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

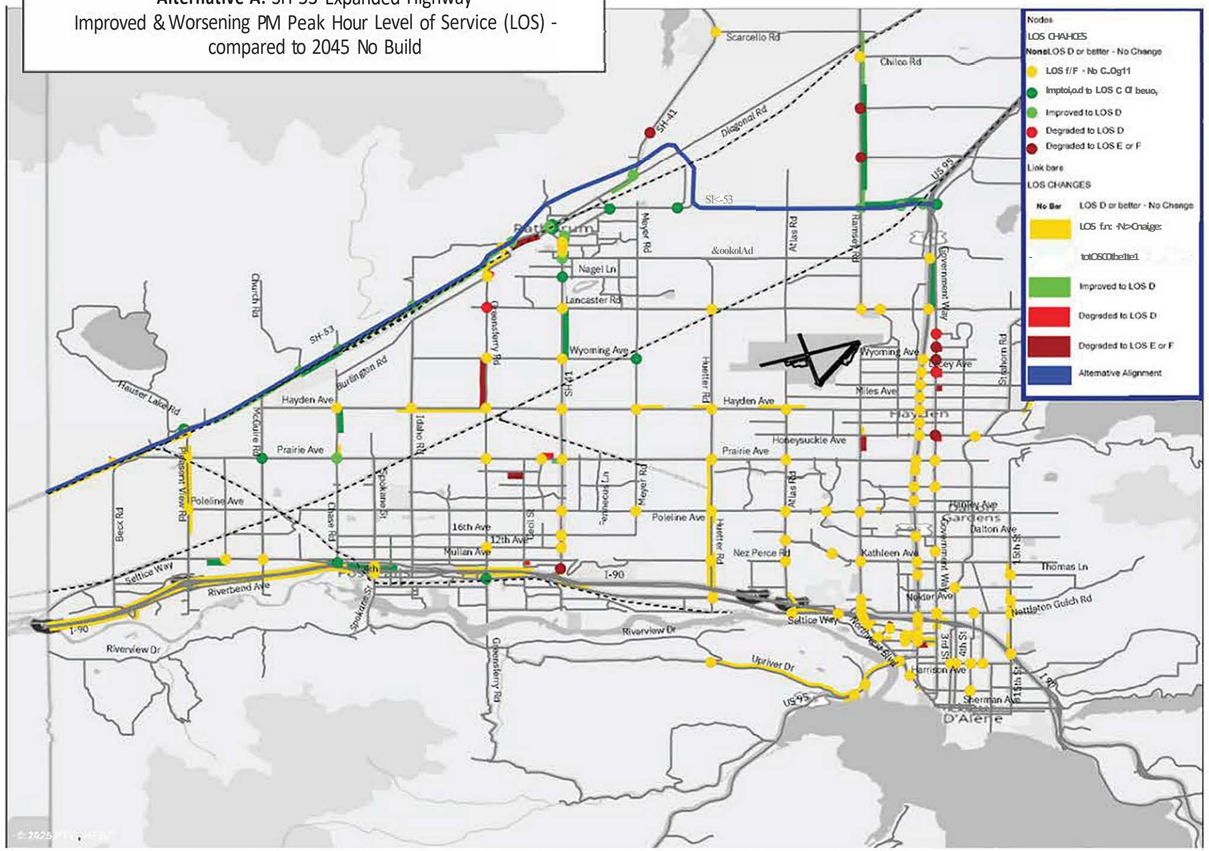
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative A	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	We			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	We			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	We			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative A: SH-53 Expanded Highway
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

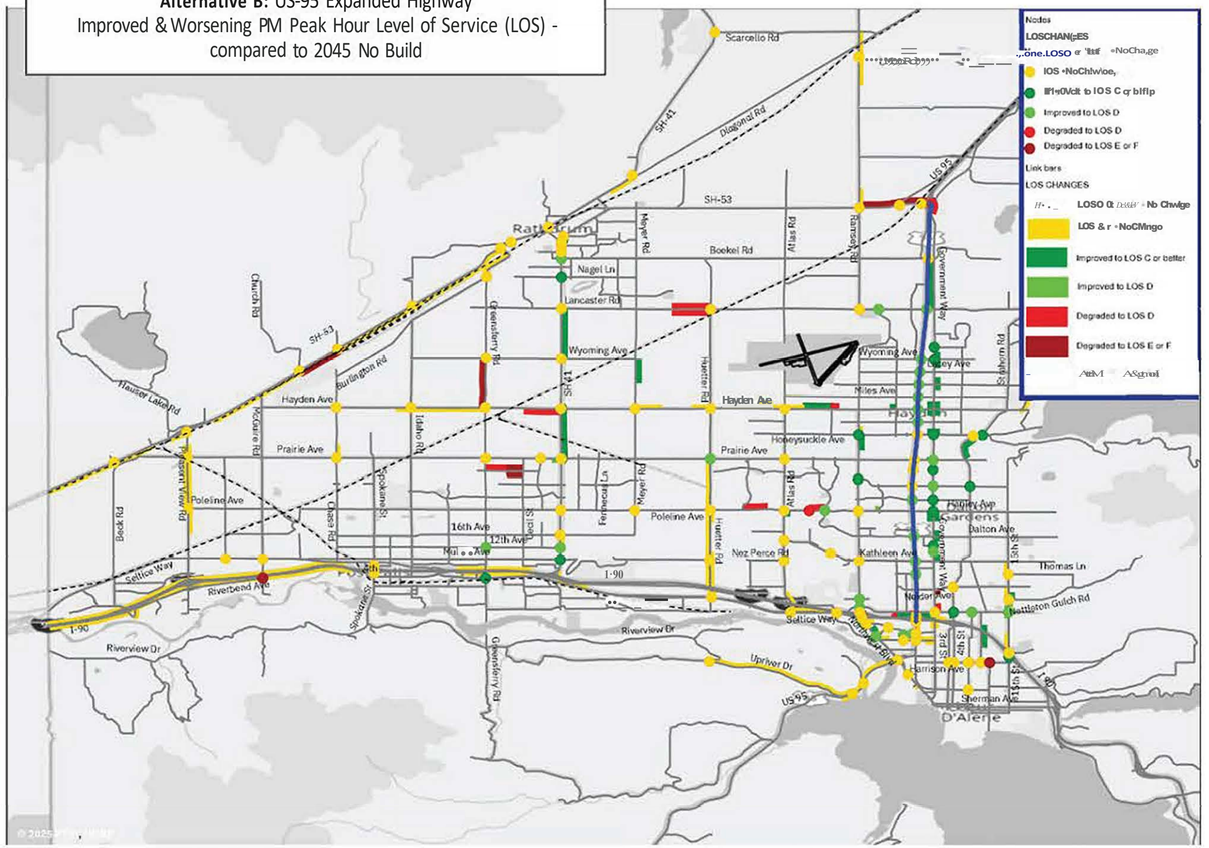
https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-4/docs/2025_0916JTD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM4_Magazine_4Web.pdf

m Working Together
m Purpose and Need
m What is a PEL
m Evaluation Process
m Level 2 Alternatives
m We Heard You
m Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
» Traffic Benefits
m Where are we?
m What's Next?
m Stay Involved
m Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative B	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative B: US-95 Expanded Highway
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

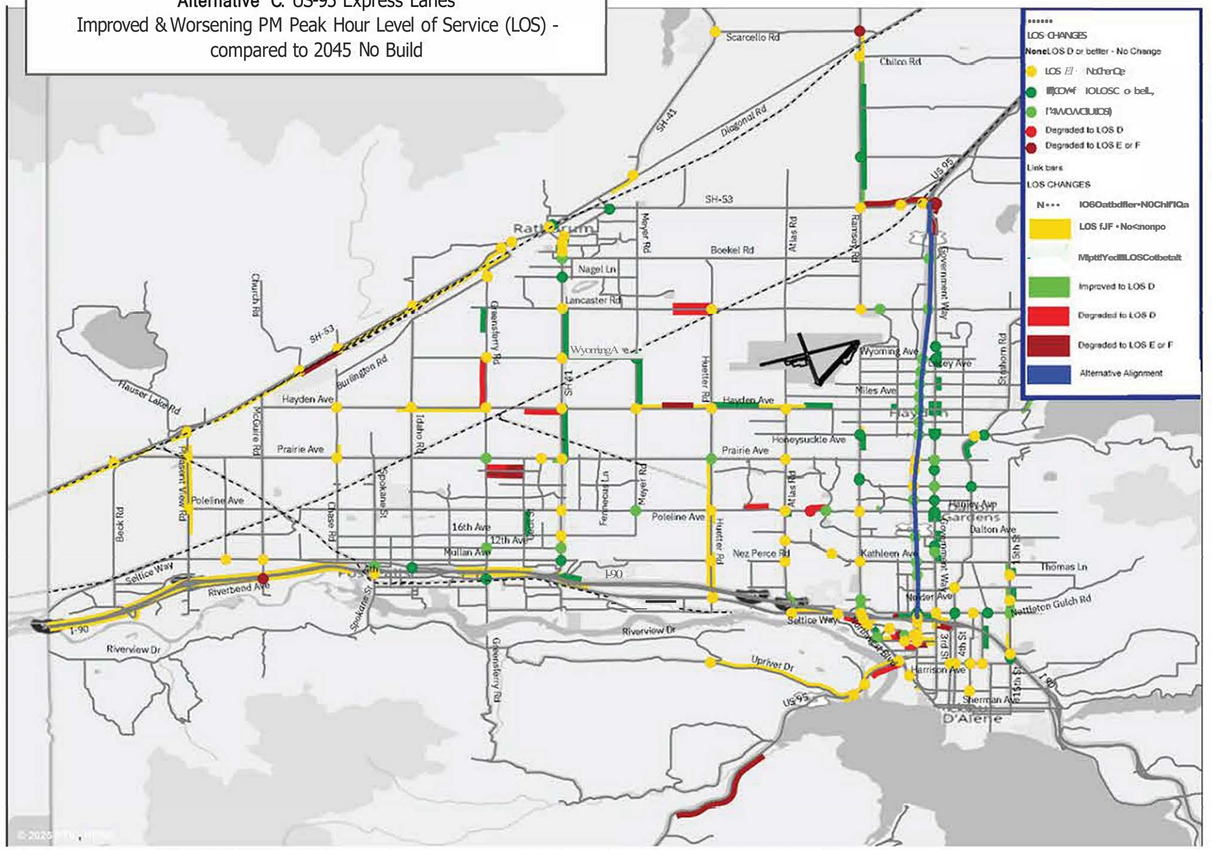
https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-4/images/new-maps/PM_Travel_times3.jpg

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative C	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative C: US-95 Express Lanes
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

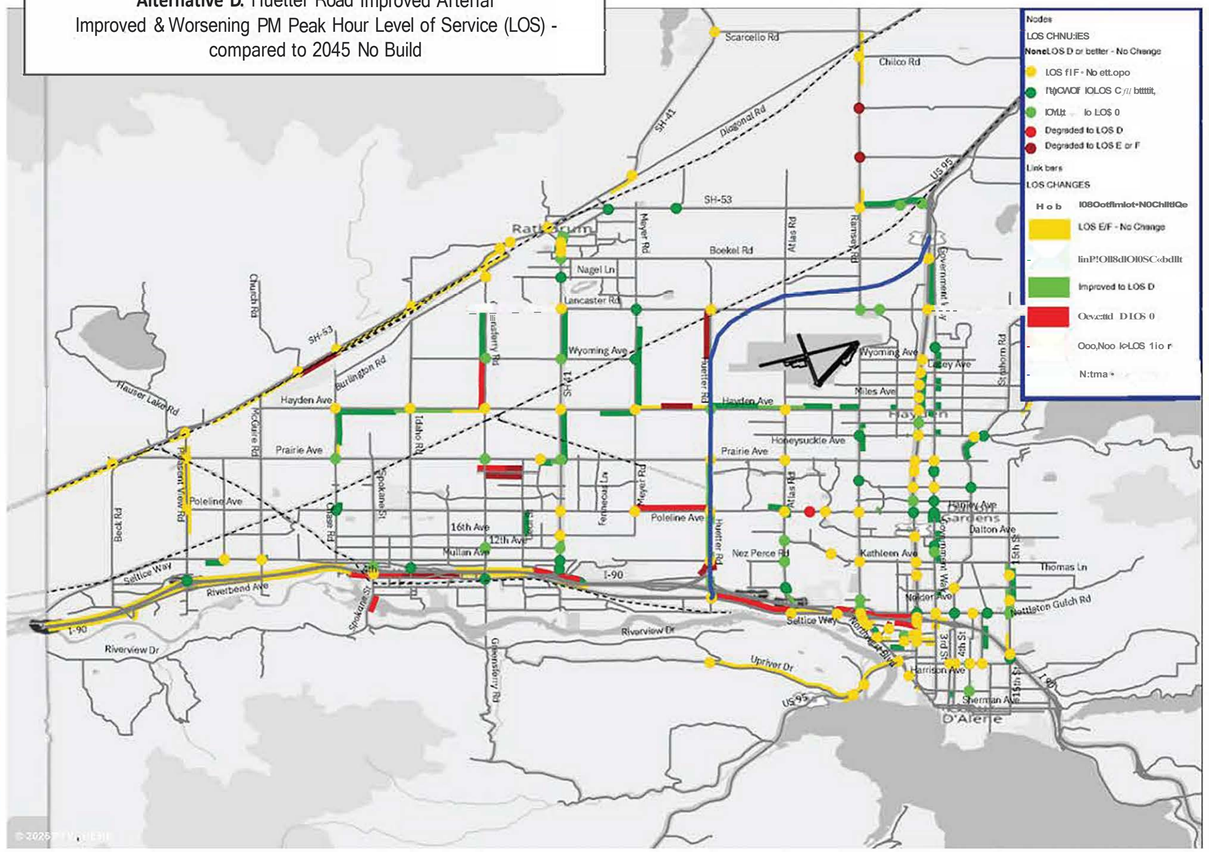
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-4/image;/new-maps/PM_Travel_Times4.jpg

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative D	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	We			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	We			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative D: Huetter Road Improved Arterial
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



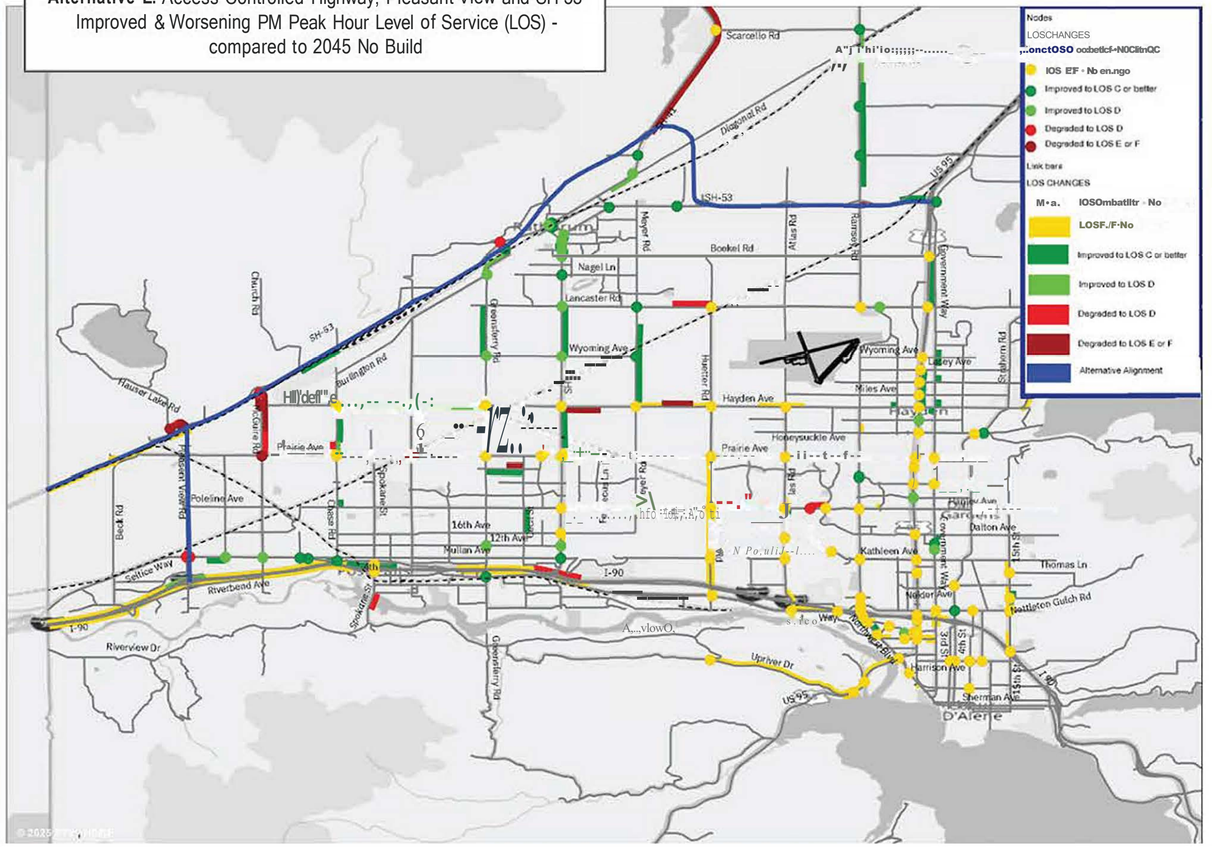
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative E	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative E: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53 Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



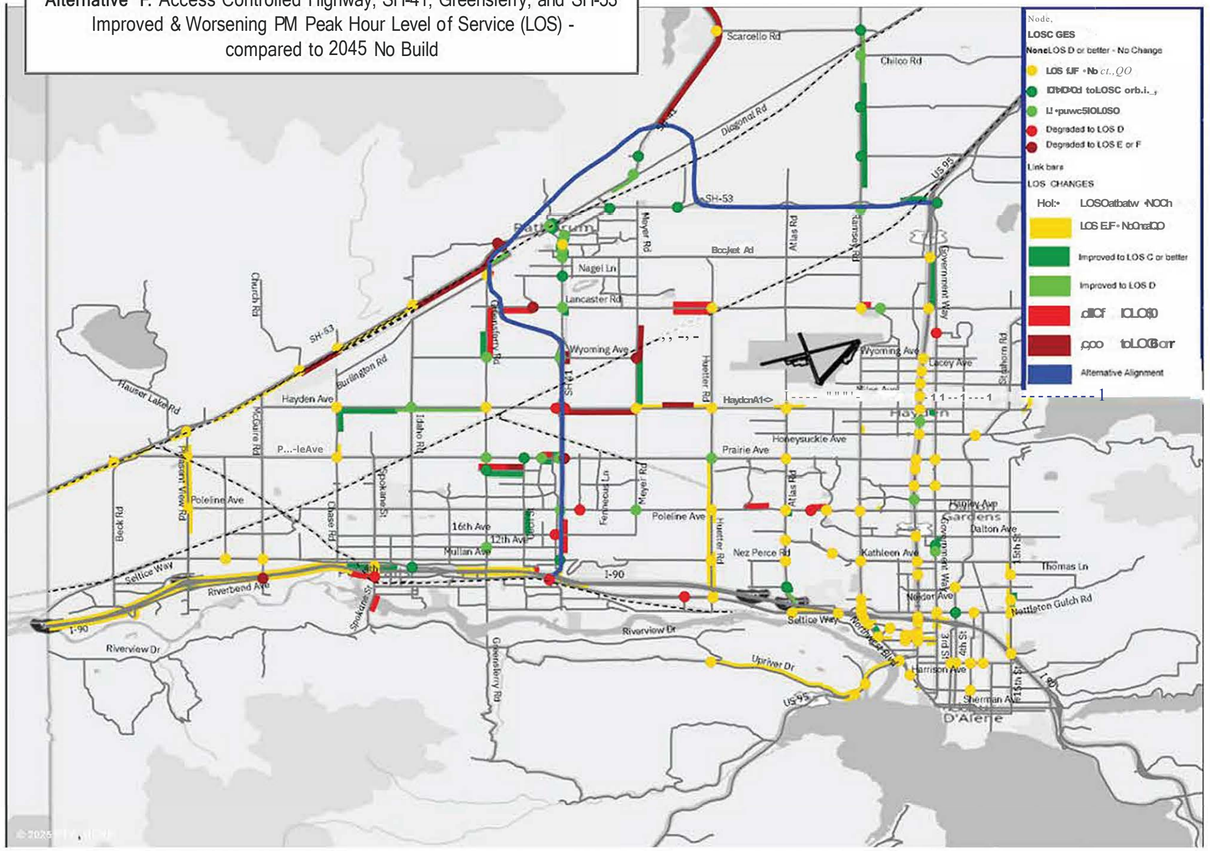
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative F	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative F: Access Controlled Highway, SH-41, Greensferry, and SH-53 Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

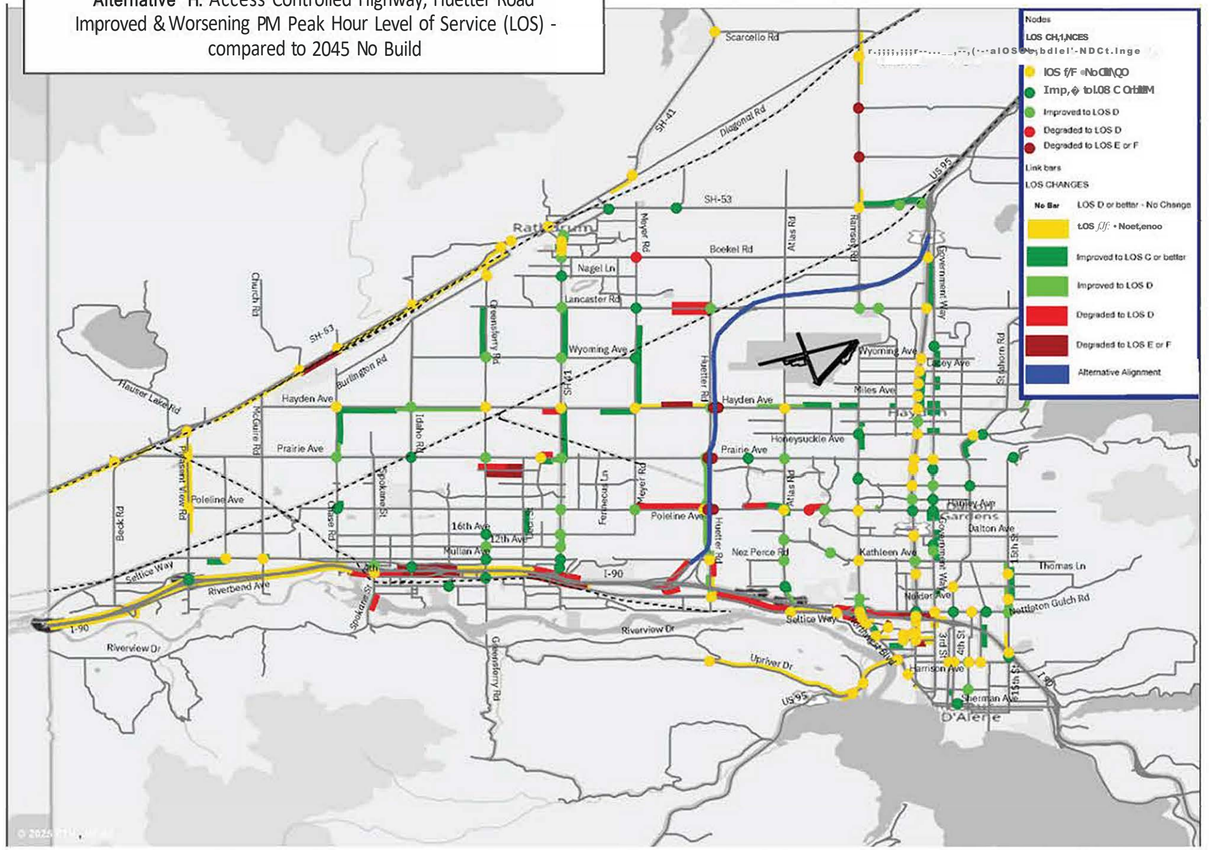
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative H	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
I-90	EB			
I-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative H: Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

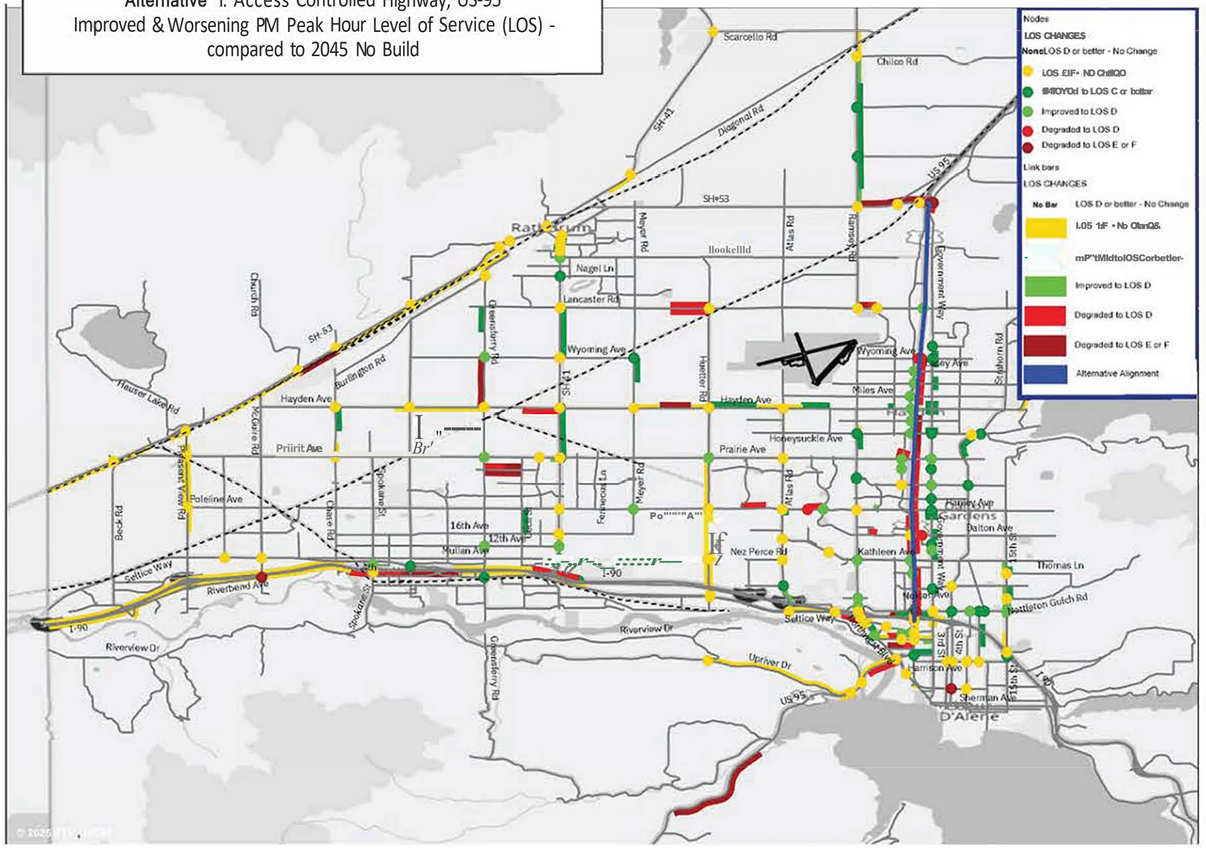
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

https://itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative I	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative I: Access Controlled Highway, US-95
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



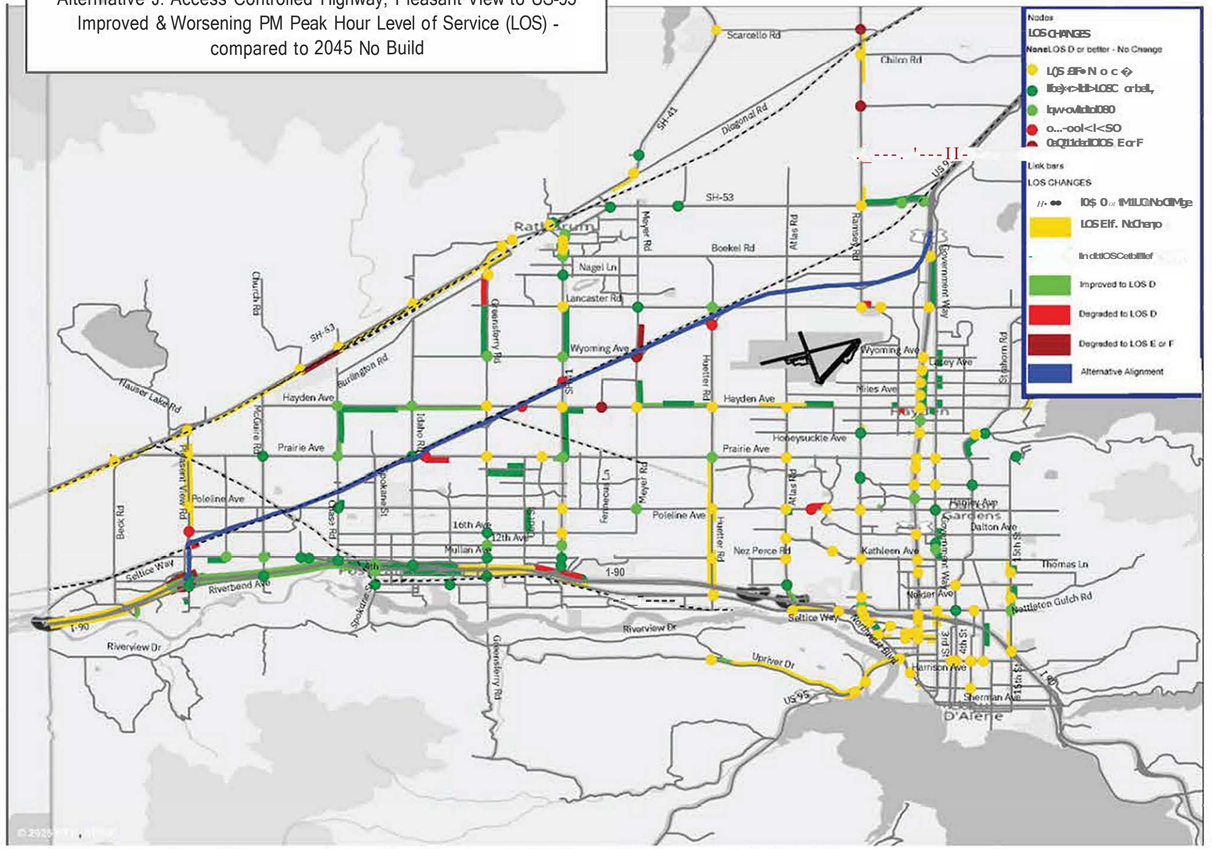
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative J	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Altermative J: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

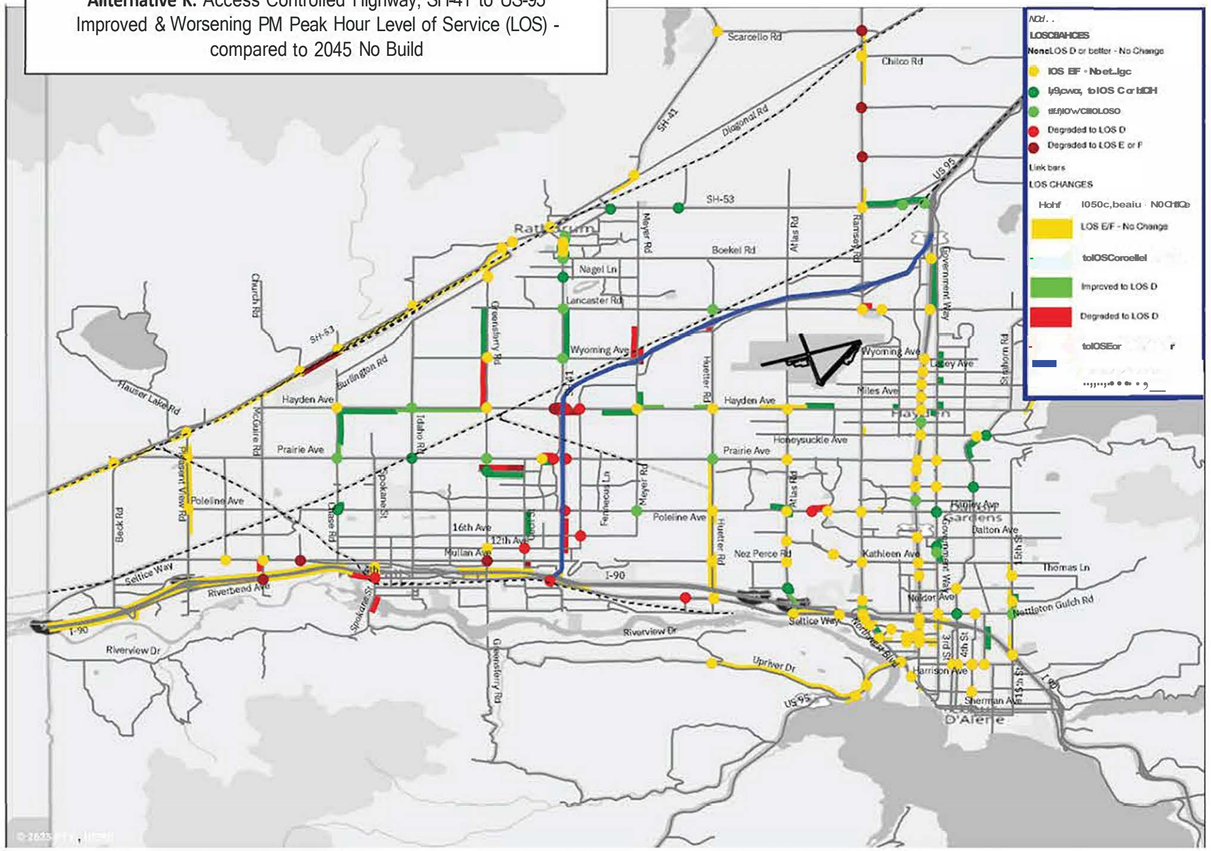
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative K	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Allternative K: Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to US-95
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

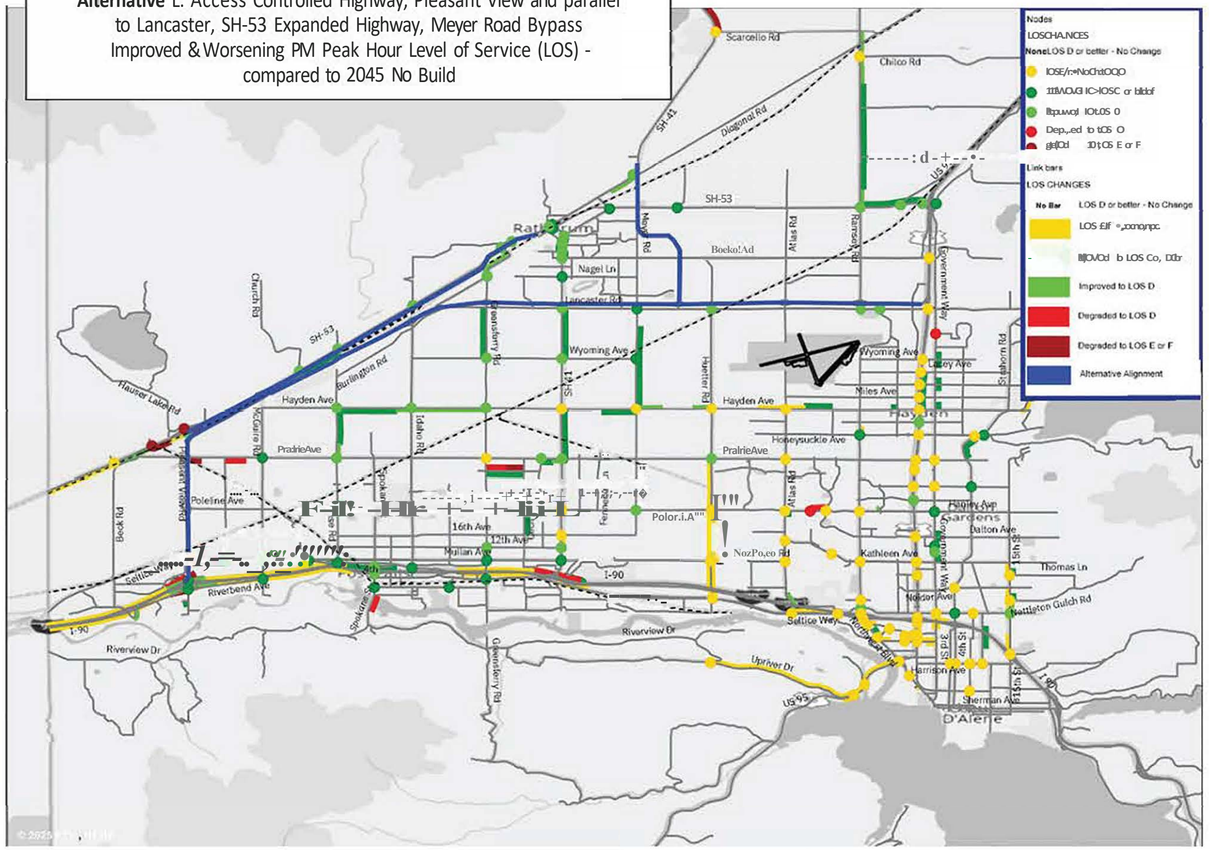
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

https://itdprojects.idahc,.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative L	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	WB			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	WB			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	WB			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	WB			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative L: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service (LOS) - compared to 2045 No Build



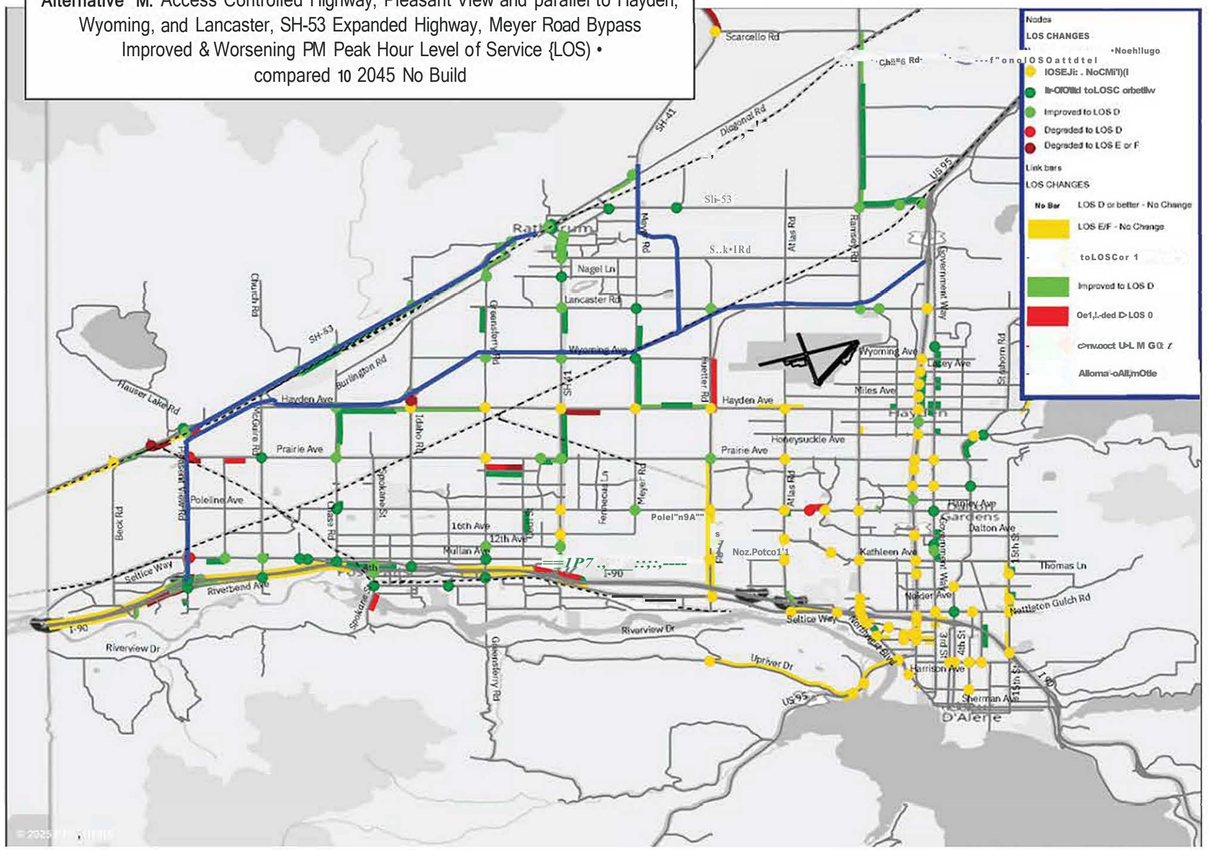
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative M	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	We			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	We			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	We			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	We			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative M: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service {LOS) • compared 10 2045 No Build



Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

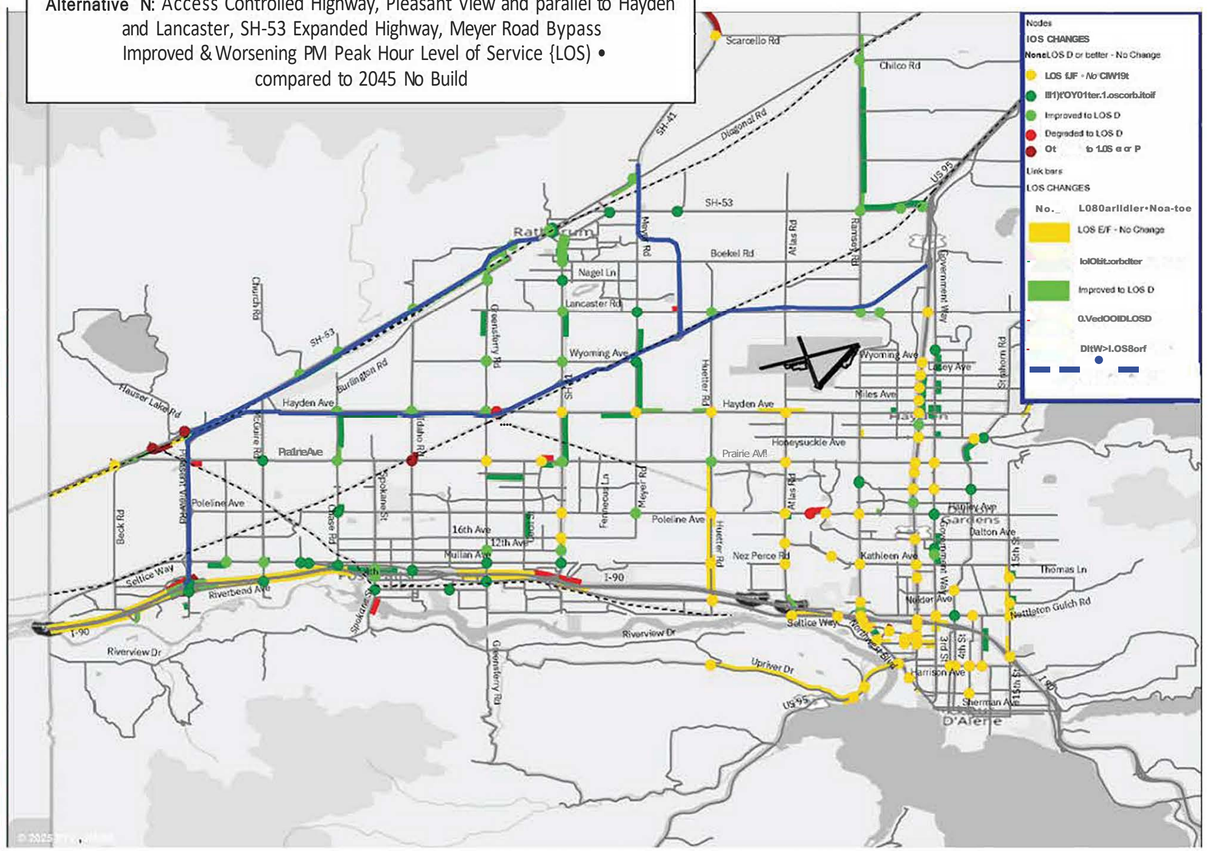
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

- Working Together
- Purpose and Need
- What is a PEL
- Evaluation Process
- Level 2 Alternatives
- We Heard You
- Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
- Traffic Benefits
- Where are we?
- What's Next?
- Stay Involved
- Comments

How to Use this Site

Travel Times Along Corridor & Travel Time Changes from No Build		No-Build	Alternative N	
Corridor	Direction	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Times (PM Peak Hour)	Travel Time Changes
US-95	NB			
US-95	SB			
1-90	EB			
1-90	we			
SH-41	NB			
SH-41	SB			
SH-53	EB			
SH-53	we			
Govt Way	NB			
Govt Way	SB			
Prairie Ave	EB			
Prairie Ave	we			
Ramsey Rd	NB			
Ramsey Rd	SB			
Huetter Rd	NB			
Huetter Rd	SB			
Poleline/Hanley	EB			
Poleline/Hanley	we			
Pleasant View Rd	NB			
Pleasant View Rd	SB			
Greensferry Rd	NB			
Greensferry Rd	SB			

Alternative N: Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass
Improved & Worsening PM Peak Hour Level of Service {LOS) • compared to 2045 No Build



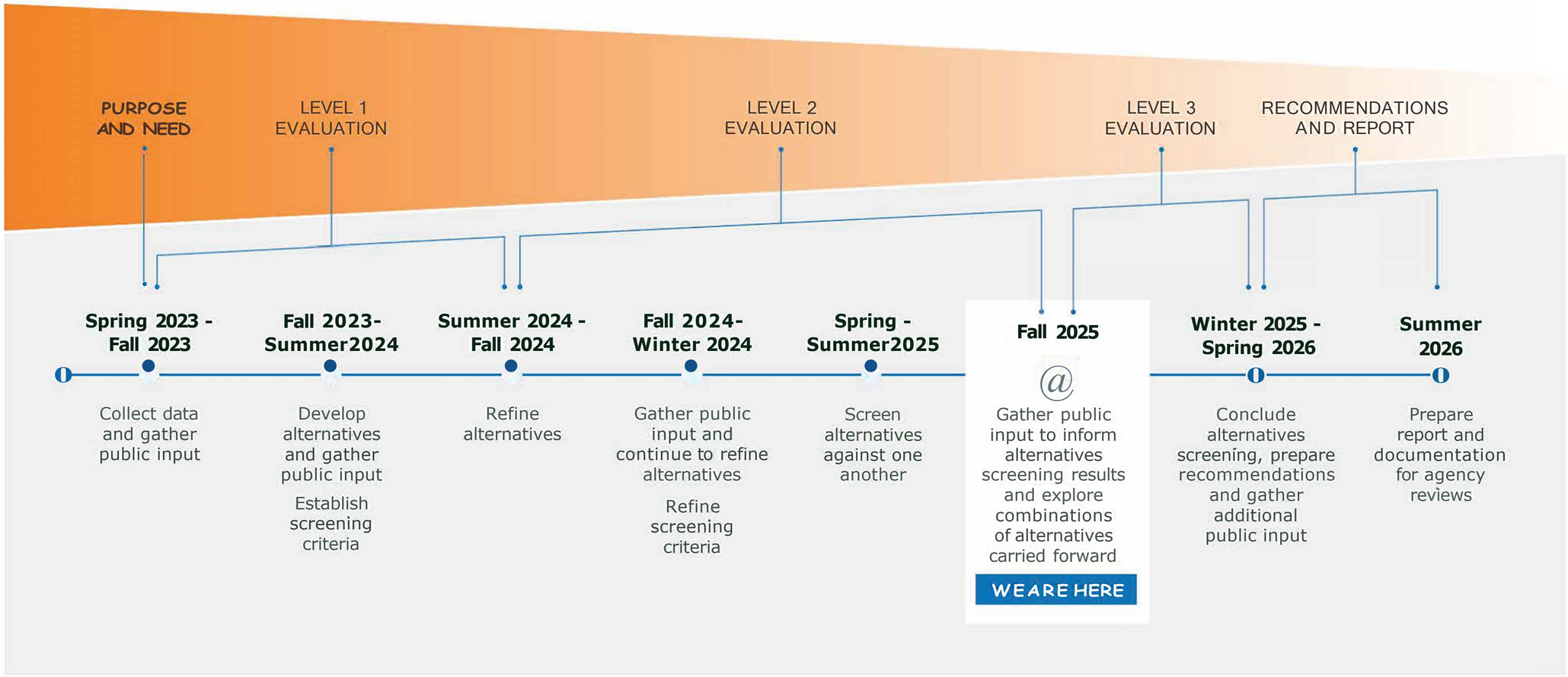
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.
TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Where are we in the process?

ITD initiated the study in 2022 to evaluate the state, and federal highway and local roadway system within the Rathdrum Prairie. No specific project is funded at this time for design or construction. Recommended alternatives could be moved into these steps if funding becomes available.



Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

What's Next?

Level 3 Evaluation

ITD will further develop, combine, and evaluate the alternatives carried forward into Level 3 using the following steps:

- Explore combinations of alternatives carried forward from Level 2 and consider design adjustments to alignments and cross sections.
- Assess in greater detail the benefits, impacts, estimated costs and potential right of way needs of each alternative.
- Hold one more public meeting to share Level 3 alternatives and gather feedback to identify the alternatives recommended to be developed.
- Finish the study spring of 2026 and begin moving the recommended alternatives into the NEPA review process.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Stay Involved

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision-making as we complete the study and continue analysis under NEPA and design. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental and engineering information, and best practices to help shape the best solutions. You can provide comments on the next slide.

Please note:

1. All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final.
2. Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records.

For more information, contact:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

208-772-1230

StudY.WebP-age

The website is the best resource to track progress of the study

Sign UP-for Project UP-dates

info@rathdrumP-rairieP-el.com

You can also submit feedback by mailing ITD at the listed address or emailing the project inbox.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Comments

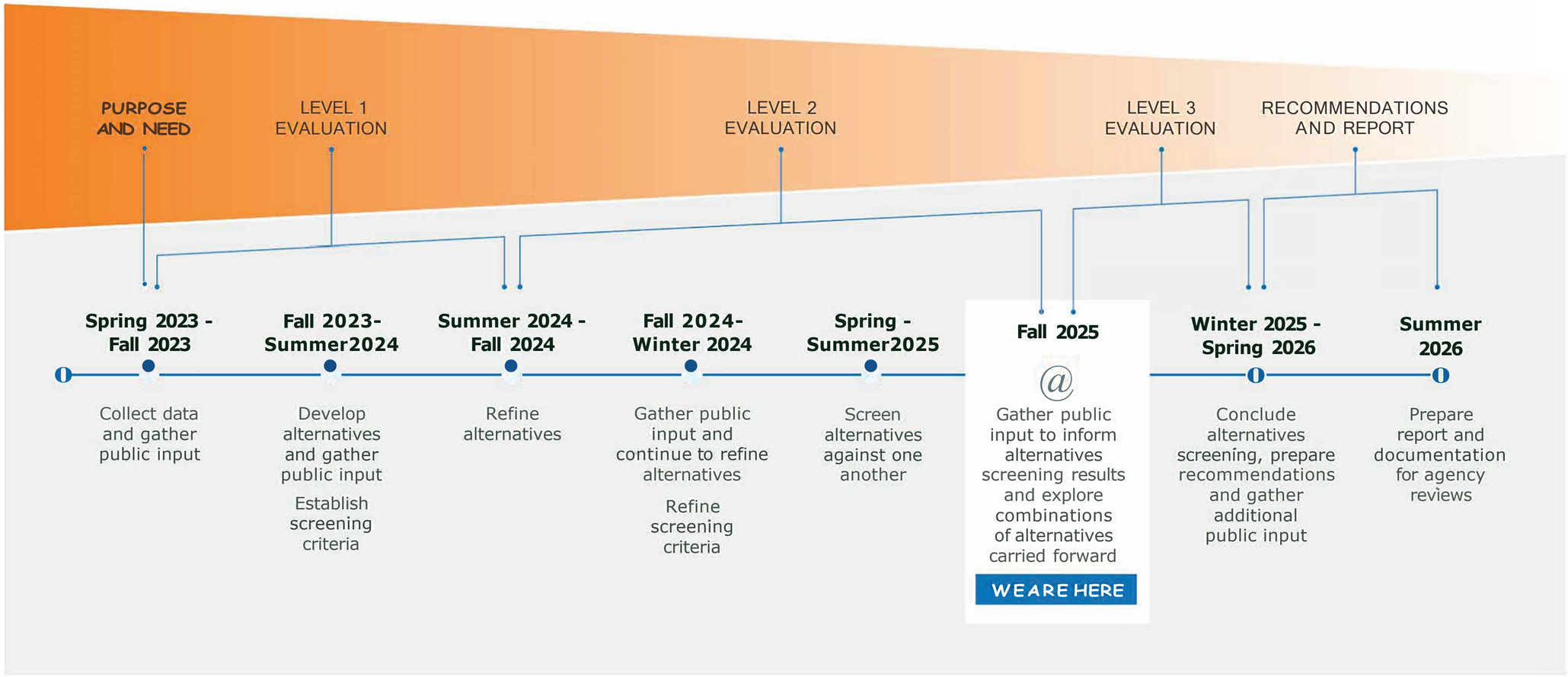
The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the ***Prelimina!Y_Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results*** document available as a handout at the public meetings and linked here for the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative corresponding with more information in the handout.

The comment period has closed.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Where are we in the process?

ITD initiated the study in 2022 to evaluate the state, and federal highway and local roadway system within the Rathdrum Prairie. No specific project is funded at this time for design or construction. Recommended alternatives could be moved into these steps if funding becomes available.



Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

What's Next?

Level 3 Evaluation

ITD will further develop, combine, and evaluate the alternatives carried forward into Level 3 using the following steps:

- Explore combinations of alternatives carried forward from Level 2 and consider design adjustments to alignments and cross sections.
- Assess in greater detail the benefits, impacts, estimated costs and potential right of way needs of each alternative.
- Hold one more public meeting to share Level 3 alternatives and gather feedback to identify the alternatives recommended to be developed.
- Finish the study spring of 2026 and begin moving the recommended alternatives into the NEPA review process.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Stay Involved

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision-making as we complete the study and continue analysis under NEPA and design. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental and engineering information, and best practices to help shape the best solutions. You can provide comments on the next slide.

Please note:

1. All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final.
2. Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records.

For more information, contact:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

208-772-1230

StudY.WebP-age

The website is the best resource to track progress of the study

Sign UP-for Project UP-dates

info@rathdrumP-rairieP-el.com

You can also submit feedback by mailing ITD at the listed address or emailing the project inbox.

Working Together
Purpose and Need
What is a PEL
Evaluation Process
Level 2 Alternatives
We Heard You
Level 2 Screening Evaluation and Steps
Traffic Benefits
Where are we?
What's Next?
Stay Involved
Comments

Comments

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the ***Prelimina!Y_Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results*** document available as a handout at the public meetings and linked here for the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative corresponding with more information in the handout.

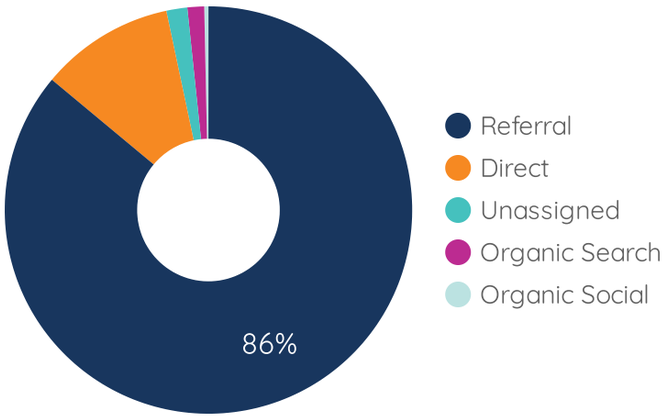
The comment period has closed.

Rathdrum PEL4
Web Analytics

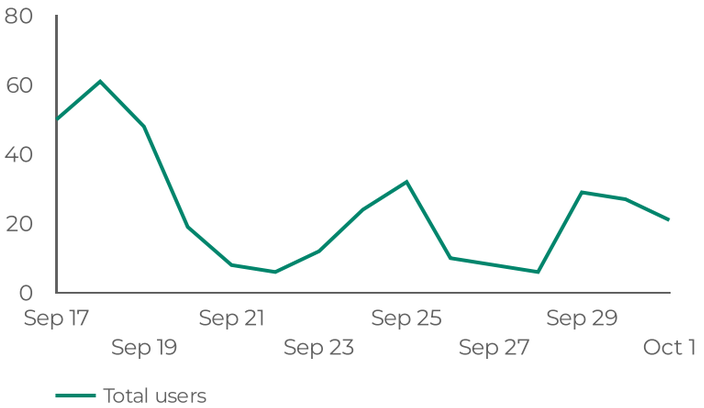
Sep 17, 2025 - Oct 1, 2025

Total users	New users	Engaged sessions	Views	Average Session Duration
314	298	301	446	00:00:22

Sessions by Acquisition Type



Users per Day



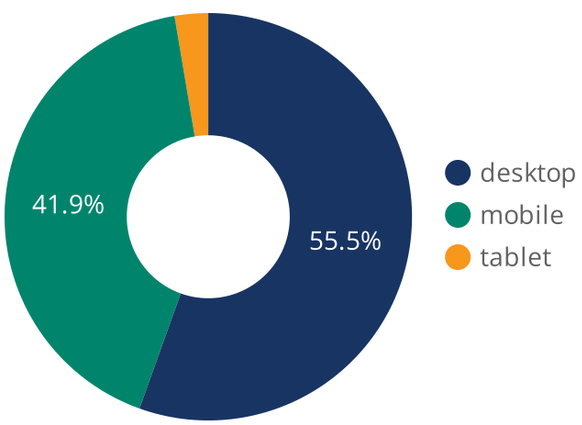
Referrals & Social Media Sources

	Session source	Engaged sessions
1.	itdprojects.idaho.gov	256
2.	statics.teams.cdn.offic...	3
3.	facebook.com	1

Sessions by Regional Cities (ID)

	City	Engaged ...	Total users
1.	Coeur d'Alene	51	50
2.	Post Falls	42	43
3.	Rathdrum	21	22
4.	Hayden	20	20
5.	Spirit Lake	10	10

Sessions by Device Type



Appendix: F
Public comment

In-person comment forms
Table map comments
Emailed comments
³ NJĦjǧƷÅğɾ ɀ ɀ ǧʔʁɻ
ÀʔjĦʔǧåmeeting ğɾ ɀ ɀ ǧʔʁɻ

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: BARBARA HANENBURG

Email: [redacted]

Street Ad

City:

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

Please note: *1} All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- O Strongly support
- ◆ Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Need new interchange at Hwy 90 + Huetter plus so many new homes keep being developed There is a GREAT need for this alternative

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- O Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Alternatives displays TOO many signals It takes over 2 minutes to cross Hwy 95 from Hanley How When traveling Hwy 95 how can some of the signal lights be modified?

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- 0 Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternat1Ve N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- 0 Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-5 3 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to **Level 3:**

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	O	O	O	O	O
C	O	O	O	O	O
E	O	O	O	◆	O
F	O	O	O	O	O
I	O	O	O	O	O
J	O	O	O	O	O
K	O	O	O	O	O
L	O	O	O	O	O

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

E - has RailRoad overPass + more traffic Signals

Hwy 53 is so hard to get across from South to head West. - Especially is a train is

◆◆

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

J -Ji,

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- Public meeting venue
- Online public meeting
- Marketing efforts to promote the event
- Your discussions with the project team
- Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
@"I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

QIi'NL b /ML !?a$7 ..J-v

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

@'Yes - Email Address: [redacted]

O No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

ostcard

O Coverage by local news media
O Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
O Email
O Social media
O Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
O Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

stcard

O Newspaper ad
O Email
O Social media
/I('Meetings
O Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public: meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200. 9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects. idaho. gov/ pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprai riepel. com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Chris Larson

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

Please note: 1} All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3} You will find more space for comments on the back page.

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) Is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Regional Ex from Communities of Rathdrum, Hayden, Athol and CDA. Also Emergency response improved and Long Evacs to Safety for large portion of Population living in WUI. Also Reduce Accidents and vehicles Stress on Ramsey + Govt Way

M

Alternative ages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (1-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

Strongly support
○ Somewhat support
○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
0 Disagree
○ Strongly disagree

M not D

Why did you provide that answer?

Move Freight th,d:: ;-5 #1"0&ff,ng From Canada ,VVlls off 95. Effecient movement to Where projective Growth of Residents & Commercial Zones in Kootenai County. 2nd Bridge crossing in Rathdrum Rail track Help with emergecy Responce and Evac.

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (1-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

○ Strongly support
○ Somewhat support
○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
0 Disagree
○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A		O	O	O	O
C	®	O	O	O	O
E	C	O	O	O	O
F	@	O	O	O	O
I	ct,	O	O	O	O
J	(I	O	O	O	O
K	(9	O	O	O	O
L	Cl	O	O	O	O

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

Because of Traffic Flow data and impact to residents

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- Public meeting venue
- Online public meeting
- Marketing efforts to promote the event
- Your discussions with the project team
- Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

O I have no understanding of the study
O I have a limited understanding of the study
O I have a good understanding of the study
O I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

(j Yes - Email Address: [redacted]

O No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- Postcard
- O Coverage by local news media
- O Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- O Email
- O Social media
- O Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- O Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- f Postcard
- O Newspaper ad
- O Email
- O Social media
- O Meetings
- O Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200. 9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects. idaho. gov Ipages/ Rathdrum-prai rie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathd rumprai riepel. com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Gary Sonnen

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

Please note: *1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- O Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- Ⓡ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (1-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with **center**turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- O Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

11 _ Sr ,; flV/I Vt Dee,! ,v m..vv-< -r,...,f.+rt--

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (1-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

,1„1.1C.. d f tt-taf•u.k ut Srg na l,
Location is good To reduce Traffic on the congested 95 corridor

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- O Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

H... 4... h') b l–tv-f/l of impact

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boeke! Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- O Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

J+C... hr, h / .J ...

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are not recommended to be carried forward to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A		O	O	O	O
C	fl)	O	O	O	O
E		O	O	O	O
F	fi)	O	O	O	O
I	(j)	O	O	O	O
J	(; J	O	O	O	O
K	©	O	O	O	O
L	fJ	O	O	O	O

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

:J- T H-: very good concept with Alt

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

O I have no understanding of the study

O I have a limited understanding of the study

O I have a good understanding of the study

◆ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

6/ Yes - Email Address: [redacted]

O No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

1!f Postcard
b Coverage by local news media
Jill. Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
O Email
fl) Social media
b Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
O Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

Postcard
b Newspaper ad
@. Email
O Social media
O Meetings
O Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pet.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairieoel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Helen Furbee

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public Input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering Information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the ***Level 2 Alternatives*** *Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- O Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Will make US 95 more difficult to cross whether in a vehicle or bike or on foot. I bike A LOT and would support this if pedestrian/bike overpasses were added.

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- Strongly support
- O Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

It will do 2 things: Relieve stress on Both 95 and I 90. I prefer the controlled freeway of Alt. H over this one but it would be better than other alternatives

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- C/ Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- O Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- O Disagree
- O Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

(See above; ALTernative "D" response)

I prefer this one over "D" and certainly over the other alternatives.

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ✱ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

too much like 53... expand 53 and go around Rathdrum as in a portion of ALT. "E"

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	⊗	○	○
C	⊗	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	⊗	○	○
F	⊗	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	⊗	○	○	⊗	○
K	○	○	⊗	○	○
L	○	○	○	⊗	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)? (Tot: 4015)

A: I'm ALL FOR a 2x2 lane HWY 53.

C: is a bad idea and disruptive. Crossing it will be a problem.

E: Neutral

F: You can't lump all the solutions onto SH 41. Hwy 53 makes more sense.

L: Has potential... would 4 lane 53 to Lancaster.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

- ○ I have no understanding of the study
- ○ I have a limited understanding of the study
- ● I have a good understanding of the study
- ○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

Been here 30 years; read the paper & travel the roads. I attended the other meeting. I can't believe even MOSCOW is getting a much needed bypass before we are!

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: [redacted]
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Coverage by local news media
- ◉ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ◉ Email
- ○ Social media
- ◉ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ◉ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Are you disabled?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ○ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ○ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ○ Black
- ○ Asian
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ White
- ○ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: JON FURBEE

Email: _____

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ◉ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

DOES NOT DIVERT TRUCKS OFF OF 95. ADDING LANES WILL NOT WORK.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ◉ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

WOULD HELP TO DIVERT TRUCK TRAFFIC. BUT WOULD NEED TO BE REVISED IN TWENTY YEARS.

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ◉ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

BEST OF ALL OPTIONS. DIVERTS TRAFFIC FROM 95. FIXES SOME TRUCK ALTERNATIVE

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ● Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

TOO CLOSE TO 53

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ● Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

DOES NOT HELP 95 PROBLEMS

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	●	○	○	●	○
C	●	○	○	○	●
E	●	○	○	○	●
F	●	○	○	○	●
I	●	○	○	○	●
J	●	○	○	○	●
K	●	○	●	○	○
L	●	○	○	○	●

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

I misunderstood this question
strongly support elimination

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- ✓ Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- ✓ Public meeting venue
- – Online public meeting
- – Marketing efforts to promote the event
- ✓ Your discussions with the project team
- ✓ Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

- ○ I have no understanding of the study
- ○ I have a limited understanding of the study
- ● I have a good understanding of the study
- ○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

I ATTENDED PREVIOUS MEETING
LIVED HERE 30 YEARS AND SEEN THE PROBLEMS GROW.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- (●) Yes - Email Address [redacted]
- ( ) No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ( ) Postcard
- ( ) Coverage by local news media
- ( ) Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ( ) Email
- ( ) Social media
- (●) Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ( ) Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ( ) Postcard
- ( ) Newspaper ad
- (●) Email
- ( ) Social media
- ( ) Meetings
- ( ) Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Laura Somerton

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Doesn't address Rathdrum / Spirit Lake traffic issues
IF there is enough money, adding a lane both directions could help

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ◉ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

NO one will travel at 35 mph. It will become a speedway. It will take "forever" to get from 90 to 95

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ◉ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

will move traffic faster - Reaching 95 from 90 faster. I get the feeling it will be similar to the current 41 feel. It doesn't address Rathdrum/Spirit Lake traffic - maybe Combine H and M/N

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- (●) Strongly support
- ( ) Somewhat support
- ( ) Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ( ) Disagree
- ( ) Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Moves traffic from freeway up to the north. Addresses Rathdrum/ Spirit Lake traffic

Combine H and M/N

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- (●) Strongly support
- ( ) Somewhat support
- ( ) Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ( ) Disagree
- ( ) Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

See Alternative M answer - Have no opinion on if M or N is better

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	●	○	○	○	○
C	●	○	○	○	○
E	●	○	○	○	○
F	●	○	○	○	○
I	●	○	○	○	○
J	●	○	○	○	○
K	●	○	○	○	○
L	●	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

Leave 41 as is · K, L, F

M + N better alt than E, A

I do~~es~~ not help Rathdrum/Spirit Lake traff. & M/N better

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

Thank you for the opportunity to see what is proposed and have input into the end result!
Good luck!

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

- ○ I have no understanding of the study
- ○ I have a limited understanding of the study
- ● I have a good understanding of the study
- ● I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

Staff at Event was knowledgeable and helpful.
Event promotion was good, space works well in Post Falls

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- (●) Yes - Email Address: [redacted]
- ( ) No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- (●) Postcard
- (●) Coverage by local news media
- (●) Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- (●) Email
- ( ) Social media
- ( ) Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ( ) Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- (●) Postcard
- ( ) Newspaper ad
- (●) Email
- ( ) Social media
- ( ) Meetings
- ( ) Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Laurie Scarcello [redacted] 9-18-25

Heather By Pass is Least Impactful. However As it Runs North it Should go to The C.P. Rail Road then to Highway 95.

It Should Also Be a Through Highway only with No Interchanges. This would Be Less Expensive, Less Impact, It would Take Pressure off 95 & 41 As Through Traffic would go Through.

Intersections or ~~Inter Changes Are~~ Expensive + will Encourge Growth. (See Back)

I Understand Land Use Issues — Im on the Following Boards.

Aquifer Protection District.
Kootenai Shoshone Soil + Water District.
Kootenai Shoshone Farm Bureau
Kootenai County Rep. For F.S.A - U.S.D.A
Kootenai Shoshone Cattle Association
Dam Keeper For Twin Lakes Flood District.

Heather Could Also Run North Then Angle to
And Follow The North Runway of The Airport.

This is Less Miles. Less Impact.

Less Money as its Shorter

Thank you

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: SANDRA SONNEN

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

SIGNALS - Not Interchanges

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ⊗ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

WILL MOVE THE TRAFFIC, IS CLOSE ENOUGH TO CDA THE PEOPLE WILL USE IT TO GO NORTH

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

TO CONFUSED, TO FAR AWAY FROM CdA to GET most PEOPLE to USE IT. HAS to BE MORE ~~EXPESS~~ EXPENSIVE

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

SAME AS OPTION M Comments

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	⊗	○	○	○	○
C	⊗	○	○	○	○
E	⊗	○	○	○	○
F	⊗	○	○	○	○
I	⊗	○	○	○	○
J	⊗	○	○	○	○
K	⊗	○	○	○	○
L	⊗	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

DIDN'T LIKE ANY OF THEM

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
○ I have a good understanding of the study
⊗ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 18, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., Q'emiln Park Trailhead Event Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- [x] Yes - Email Address: [redacted]
- [ ] No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- [x] Postcard
- [ ] Coverage by local news media
- [x] Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- [ ] Email
- [x] Social media
- [ ] Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- [ ] Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- [x] Postcard
- [ ] Newspaper ad
- [x] Email
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] Meetings
- [ ] Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

9-17-25

To: Carrie Ann M. Hewitt, P.E., Idaho Transportation Department 2/3/25
600 W. Prairie Ave, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

From: Art Collins, Past Comprehensive land Use Planner, Eagle, Meridian, Kuna, Ada Planning Association, Ada County, Idaho, 1977 - 1983
[redacted]

Re: Comments/Recommendation re; Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages Study, (PEL), Alternatives A - N.

With my professional background/experience of facilitating the adoption of past Comprehensive Land Use Plans of Eagle, Meridian, Kuna, Idaho as per Idaho Code 65, Local Land Use Planning, which included a "Transportation Planning Component" within each of their Comprehensive Land Use Plans, the following are comments re: the 13 Alternatives and a recommendation of one that should be retained as the 13 Alternatives are narrowed to 3:

- The primary focus of the PEL Study is "to identify ways t6o address safety concerns and current and future congestion, and provide opportunities to increase mobility within the Rathdrum Prairie;" P. 13
- The PEL Study is not intended to facilitate future developmental growth;
- With the additions and new transportation improvements of Alternatives A, D, E, F, H, J, K, L, M, N, each of these alternatives may facilitate, promote urban/rural residential, commercial, industrial developmental growth.
- The primary focus of Alternatives B, C, and I (Highway 95) is to address safety concerns, current and future congestion, and increased mobility
- Of the 3 Alternatives of B, C and I, I recommend that Alternative I be retained as the 13 Alternatives are narrowed to 3.

Concerning Alternative I (Highway 95):

- Presently, 1-95 functions as a local, urban roadway that accesses commercial entities at Wyoming, Lacey, Miles, Dakota, Honeysuckle, Prairie, Wilbur, Canfield, Hanley, W. Dalton, Kathleen and Appleway;
- 1-95 does not function primarily as a state highway/freeway;
- Alternative I primarily addresses: 1) "safety concerns, current and future congestion and increased mobility," and 2) access to present and probable future commercial, residential, industrial entities, Lancaster -Appleway via:
    - No, 1-95 stoplights, Lancaster - Kathleen;
    - Interchanges-Kathleen, Hanley, Prairie, Hayden, Wyoming, Lancaster;
    - Local access roadway between Hanley and Grand Tour Dr.
- Local access to residential, commercial and industrial developments adjacent to 1-95 must be continued;
- All the 1-95 improvements of Alternative I do not facilitate/promote future developmental growth of rural/urban areas of the Rathdrum Prairie that are not adjacent to 1-95;
- In addition to Alternative I, I would recommend an interchange at Appleway and 1-90 (to facilitate East-West mobility to 1-90).

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Bruce Howard

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ⊗ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

As a main N/S arterial the current traffic volume is too much. Expanding this in the 5-10 yr. future is going to be critical with the expected volume.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- (●) Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Fewer proposed signals than H with the potential to add more as demand requires. Install conduit under roads at crossings to facilitate additions in the future.

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- (●) Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Bad option with 2 gravel pits / cement companies on Wyoming. Roads would get torn up to quickly & traffic flow would always be a problem

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ⊗ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Seems to be the most logical

* None of these options will be available in a few years if the land to do them is not acquired soon due to the rapid development of the prairie land

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	○	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	○	○	○	○	○
L	○	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- Public meeting venue
- Online public meeting
- Marketing efforts to promote the event
- Your discussions with the project team
- Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
○ I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: _____
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Coverage by local news media
- ○ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Are you disabled?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ○ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ○ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ○ Black
- ○ Asian
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ White
- ○ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: JEFF TYLER → Post Falls Highway District CHAIRMAN → KMPO COMMISSIONER

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: 83814

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ⊗ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

It helps with 95 traffic but does not fix the major problem on the Prairie

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

This is my #2 pic in case of not enough funding. Also Post Falls Highway District Does not have the money for it, as a "local facility" rather than "ITD facility"

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

This is my #1 pic if there is funding THE MOST IMPORTANT thing is having a I-90 and Huetter interchange

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

53 needs improvement but this is too complicated.

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Again, 53 needs improvement but it's too complicated

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	⊘	○	○	○	○
C	⊘	○	○	○	○
E	⊘	○	○	○	○
F	⊘	○	○	○	○
I	⊘	○	○	○	○
J	⊘	○	○	○	○
K	⊘	○	○	○	○
L	⊘	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

Yes, these should NOT be carried forward

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

To me the MOST IMPORTANT thing is to have a I-90 – Hutter interchange!

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

- ○ I have no understanding of the study
- ○ I have a limited understanding of the study
- ○ I have a good understanding of the study
- ⊘ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

Very good job on the Public meetings!

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- [x] Yes - Email Address: [redacted]
- [ ] No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- [ ] Postcard
- [x] Coverage by local news media
- [ ] Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- [x] Email
- [x] Social media
- [x] Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- [ ] Other At my Highway District job as Chairman

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- [ ] Postcard
- [ ] Newspaper ad
- [x] Email
- [ ] Social media
- [ ] Meetings
- [ ] Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: MARK HUGHES

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: _____

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

NEW I-90 INTERCHANG NEEDED

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

NEW I-90 INTERCHANGE NEEDED

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	○	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	○	○	○	○	○
L	○	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- Public meeting venue
- Online public meeting
- Marketing efforts to promote the event
- Your discussions with the project team
- Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
○ I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: _____
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Coverage by local news media
- ○ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Are you disabled?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ○ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ○ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ○ Black
- ○ Asian
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ White
- ○ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Michael Boyer

Email: [redacted]

Street Address [redacted]

City [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

We need NO more stop Lights on 95-
MAke over PASSES - add FRontage ROADS.
Allows the West side of 95 develop into its own AREA.
The EAST side of 95 will do the SAME -
Build over PASSES - Fly to Houston TX AND see it WORK.

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

NO MORE Stop Lights in Idaho!
Build overPASSES - Do it for the next generations who will thank you!

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ⊗ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

FRontage Roads & overPASSES -
this Route will Impact fewer People while Constructing.
Will Remove a Hwy95 PARKing Lot.
this is a very Progressive design - Love it.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

The most Ridiculous Route – SMokeny Pot is Not Legal in Idaho –
You are Destroying All of the PRAIrie the We hope to SAVE for future Generations

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ⊗ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

VERY POOR Route.
Let's USE A Little MORE Imagination While planning this Road work.
WOW - Disapointing.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	⊗	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	⊗	○	○	○
I	⊗	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	⊗	○	○	○	○
L	○	○	○	○	⊗

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts
- Public meeting venue
- Online public meeting
- Marketing efforts to promote the event
- Your discussions with the project team
- Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
○ I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: _____
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Coverage by local news media
- ○ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Are you disabled?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ○ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ○ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ○ Black
- ○ Asian
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ White
- ○ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: RONDA DAVIS

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◉ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

LIMITED IMPACT FOR EXPLOSIVE GROWTH HAPPENING ON THE PRAIRIE

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ◉ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ◉ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Increasing traffic & existing signals seems that it may be more of a temporary fix with the explosive growth we are experiencing

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ◉ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Feel this access with the interchanges could be a very good relief to Hwy 41 & 95 and could move more traffic more effectively

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ◉ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

I feel this plan adversely affects more areas from West of PF all the way to CDA. It seems choppy & not a fluid flow of space or traffic.

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ◉ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

a more fluid approach across the prairie with interchanges & bypass roads. Seems less invasive.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19): SH-53 Expanded Highway

Alt. C (pages 20-21): US-95 Express Lanes

Alt. E (pages 22-23): Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95

Alt. F (pages 24-25): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95

Alt. I (pages 26-27): Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden

Alt. J (pages 28-29): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95

Alt. K (pages 30-31): Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95

Alt. L (pages 32-33): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	○	○	○	○	○
C	○	○	○	○	○
E	○	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	○	○	○
I	○	○	○	○	○
J	○	○	○	○	○
K	○	○	○	○	○
L	●	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

There is already such a significant load on 53 and area - seems this would make an existing growing problem worse.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
● I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: _____
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Coverage by local news media
- ○ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ○ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ○ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Are you disabled?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

- ○ American Indian (Tribal Native)/Alaska Native
- ○ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- ○ Black
- ○ Asian
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ White
- ○ Ethnicity not listed

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Extra space for comments:

Thank You!

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Comment period is open until midnight on Oct. 1, 2025.

To submit a comment, fill out this form and send to info@rathdrumprairiepel.com or mail to:

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Name: Wes Somerton

Email: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City: [redacted] State: [redacted] Zip: [redacted]

Public input has been a key part of this study and will continue to help guide decision making as we move through the alternatives evaluation. The feedback we receive will be considered alongside technical, environmental, and engineering information and best practices to help shape the best solutions.

***Please note:** 1) All recommendations are preliminary, for public review and comment. Public comments will be reviewed and considered before recommendations from the Level 2 screening are made final. 2) Your comments and contact information become part of the permanent record for this project. Contact information will be redacted prior to publishing any records. 3) You will find more space for comments on the back page.*

Comment Form

The following questions are specifically about Level 2 alternatives described in the *Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input* document available as a handout at the public meetings and link on the online meeting. Page numbers are listed next to each alternative, corresponding with more information in the handout.

Alternative B (pages 8-9): U.S. Highway 95 Expanded Highway (expanded to 3 lanes in each direction) is being recommended to be retained as an element. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative B, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ⊗ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

95 needs to be addressed, but ALT B does not address Rathdrum or hwy 41 by Pass to points north of Rathdrum -

I prefer melding Alt B + H + ~~B~~ N

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Alternative D (pages 10-11): Huetter Road Improved Arterial (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, 2 lanes in each direction with center turn lane and low speeds) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative D, do you:

- ○ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ⊗ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

I like the Huetter Road By Pass ~~but it~~ But it needs to B be high traffic otherwise the future is going to be like 95 is today.
Better to meld Alts B + H + N.

Alternative H (pages 12-13): Access Controlled Highway, Huetter Road (I-90 Interchange at Huetter Road extending to US-95, access controlled freeway with high speeds and frontage roads) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative H, do you:

- ⊗ Strongly support
- ○ Somewhat support
- ○ Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

Good placement between 41 & 95; freeway or Access Controlled highway will avoid the future problem of becoming Hwy 95 in 2025!

best to meld B + H + N

Alternative M (pages 14-15): Huetter Road Improved Arterial, Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden, Wyoming, and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, Wyoming Avenue and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative M, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [x] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

This plan Addresses by PASS for N/S traffic for Areas North of Rathdrum Similar to N but with earlier curve to Wyoming it will congest Area South of 53 west of Greensferry:
Better option B + H + N

Alternative N (pages 16-17): Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and SH-53, Pleasant View and parallel to Hayden and Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass (high speed, access-controlled freeway that runs diagonal across the Rathdrum Prairie from Pleasant View Road to US-95 at Boekel Road zig-zagging along Hayden Avenue, the UPRR line, and Lancaster Road) is being recommended to be carried forward. Regarding the recommendation for Alternative N, do you:

- [x] Strongly support
- [ ] Somewhat support
- [ ] Neutral (neither support nor disagree)
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Strongly disagree

Why did you provide that answer?

This plan covers/Addresses 4/ N/S traffic from Areas North of Rathdrum, the E/W HAYDEN section put more equal space between other major E/W Roads, I like this plan in ~~conjun~~ conjunction with Alt B+H!
Best option B+H+N

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

The following alternatives are <u>not recommended to be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alt. A (pages 18-19):	SH-53 Expanded Highway
Alt. C (pages 20-21):	US-95 Express Lanes
Alt. E (pages 22-23):	Access Controlled Highway from Pleasant View to SH-53, ending at US-95
Alt. F (pages 24-25):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Greensferry Road and north to SH-53 ending at US-95
Alt. I (pages 26-27):	Access Controlled Highway, US-95, converting US-95 into an access controlled freeway with interchanges at intersections through Coeur d'Alene and Hayden
Alt. J (pages 28-29):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View to US-95, new access controlled freeway routed from Pleasant View Road diagonally across the prairie parallel to the UPRR line north to US-95
Alt. K (pages 30-31):	Access Controlled Highway, SH-41 to Hayden Avenue and diagonally northeast to US-95
Alt. L (pages 32-33):	Access Controlled Highway, Pleasant View and parallel to Lancaster, SH-53 Expanded Highway, Meyer Road Bypass

Do you support the <u>recommendation for the following alternatives to NOT be carried forward</u> to Level 3:

Alternative	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	⊗	○	○	○	○
C	⊗	○	○	○	○
E	⊗	○	○	○	○
F	○	○	⊗	○	○
I	○	○	⊗	○	○
J	○	○	○	⊗	○
K	○	⊗	○	○	○
L	⊗	○	○	○	○

Why did you provide that answer(s)?

* F - at least addresses E/W traffic on 53 and utilizes Hwy 41 that has and is being built.
* I - addresses 95 problem but with only 13% thru traffic might be overkill.
* J - is a good middle Hwy option from 95 and 53
* K - doesn't address Rathdrum or N/S 41 traffic North of Rathdrum, but does utilize 41 as now built.
* L - is not feasible due to Rathdrums new town center being located on Lancaster.

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Do you have any general questions or comments for the study team?

Thank you for the information and materials. The materials show how complex this project and project goals are to achieve a good product for future generations.
Having staff to talk with really helps answer our questions and broadens our understanding.
Thank you for the time and energy!

Public meeting feedback. Please mark how effective the public meeting was in improving your understanding of the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study. Consider the following aspects of your experience:

- **Materials - including maps, informational displays, and handouts**
- **Public meeting venue**
- **Online public meeting**
- **Marketing efforts to promote the event**
- **Your discussions with the project team**
- **Other elements that contributed to your experience at the meeting**

○ I have no understanding of the study
○ I have a limited understanding of the study
⊗ I have a good understanding of the study
○ I have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the study

Why did you provide that answer?

We have participated in each of the public comment meetings and have been closely watching the plan get more specific. Logically there is no perfect option but B + H + N alternatives mixed together is getting close

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

GENERAL COMMENT QUESTIONS

Would you like to be added to our mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. By including your email address, you are giving ITD permission to send you updates on this project.

- ○ Yes - Email Address: Already on it. _____
- ○ No

How did you hear about this project? Check all that apply.

- ⊗ Postcard
- ⊗ Coverage by local news media
- ○ Coeur d'Alene Press newspaper ad
- ⊗ Email
- ○ Social media
- ○ Word of mouth (i.e., from your neighbor, friends, or family)
- ○ Other _____

Please let us know the best way to communicate with you.

- ⊗ Postcard
- ○ Newspaper ad
- ⊗ Email
- ○ Social media
- ⊗ Meetings
- ○ Other _____

Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study | Public Meeting

Sept. 17, 2025, 4:30-7:00 p.m., CDA Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

OPTIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Your responses to the following questions are completely optional and will not affect how your comments are considered. All feedback is welcome and valued, whether you choose to answer this section or not.

This information will only be used to monitor attendance at public meetings and for data collection purposes, as specified by law (CFR 23 200.9(4)), and will become part of the public record for this project, though personally identifiable information will be redacted. Your information may be added to the stakeholder database for the project, though you may unsubscribe from updates at any time.

Please check the appropriate box.

[redacted]

Are you disabled?

[redacted]

Please identify your ethnicity. Check all that apply.

[redacted]

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study!

To follow the study or join the online meeting, scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/Rathdrum-prairie-pel.
For more information, email the project team at: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com.

From: Carrie Ann Hewitt
To: Waite, Cameron; Bentzler, Zachary; Gray, Lisa; Sherman, Chonne; 10346091_ITD-Alt Route Huetter Bypass
Cc: Jerry Wilson; Michael Hartz; Heather McDaniel
Subject: FW: Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Feedback - OCT. 1
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 3:49:36 PM
Attachments: Rathdrum Prairie PEL Round 3.zip
Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL_set_1.zip
Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL_set_2.zip
20241208 - Response to Rathdrum Prairie PEL.pdf

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

From: Brian Rogers [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 8:35 PM
To: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Cc: Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>; JPalmer@house.idaho.gov; DougO@senate.idaho.gov; GOOKIN, DAN [redacted]; Ron McGhie [redacted]; Brett Haney [redacted]
Subject: Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Feedback - OCT. 1

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Reader,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback into the PEL study. Although community feedback has been met with a great deal of resistance, when acknowledged at all, we find it important to continue the process.

Over the years of working with local transportation groups, the people have found the process frustrating and obtuse; the PEL study continues that pattern. Many people, well educated, have been dismissed by these entities. Now, because their ideas have not been taken seriously, the traffic issues continue to escalate in the area.

Many of these people do not agree with the proposals that are currently in the Rathdrum Prairie PEL study. The community feels, again, let down by the processes which should have produced better solutions for the area. At this point of the PEL study, we believe that hundreds of voices are going unheard and the outcomes will continue to condemn this area.

It isn't predicting the future, it is the fact that other states have already found parts of these designs to be inaccurate and made the corrections. They have done this by working with larger

agencies, to which the ego of the KMPO and ITD would not entertain.

Further, the community has asked for the raw data and decisions making process so that we can be interactive and adaptive. Instead, this has been denied for over a year. It has been met with further resistance by the Kootenai Metropolitan Plan Organization (KMPO) to not engaging with an open mind on how alternative ideas can produce better results.

We ask that, for each letter, the total number of people be correctly added as cumulative and not grouped together in one article of feedback. We have found, with other local municipalities entities, this is how they have attempted to dimmish the voice of many people.

Round 3 Petition to Correct PEL Study (20 people)

Angela Brooke
April Vossler
Brett Haney
Brian adams
Brian Rogers
Christopher Good
Darla Pavlish
Debra J Shaw
Don mcghie
Jennifer Hickman
Laureen Jacobi
Lindsay Adams
Lloran Johnson
Mark Jacobi
Maureen Marian
Nate Dyk
Ronald C McGhie
Ronda Bowling
Suzanne Knutson
Tamie Bremer

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL (35 people)

BONNIE MCGHIE
Brett Haney
Brian Adams
Christopher Good
Darla Pavlish
Don McGhie
Donna Euler
Jeffrey Pearson
Jennifer Hickman
Lindsay Adams

Lloran Johnson
Lynn A Thompson
Mark L Buntin
Nicholas Payne
Robin Schannep
Ronald C McGhie
Ronda Bowling
Sandra Carney
Sydney Welton
Tamara Martinez
Tracie Nunez
Wes reed
Andrea Baass Peters
Brian Rogers
E Heathcoat
Garth Rogers
Jay L Greer
Jennifer Honshell
John K. McGuire
Laureen Jacobi
Mark Jacobi
Maureen Marian
Nic Ames
Philip Spradley
Sharon M Greer

Thanks,

Brian Rogers
[redacted]
"Intelligence removes complexity." - Me

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Brett Haney
Brett Haney (Sep 2, 2025 07:44:55 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA1iZQa9DGUFUY57sdR8K-nqUJW4kVqmP5

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Brett Haney [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:44:56 PM GMT- IP address: 174.246.16.182

Email verification link emailed to Brett Haney [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:44:58 PM GMT

Email viewed by Brett Haney [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:45:10 PM GMT- IP address: 146.75.136.1

E-signature verified by Brett Haney [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:45:15 PM GMT- IP address: 174.246.16.182

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 2:45:15 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Donna Euler
Donna Euler (Sep 2, 2025 16:53:41 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAY01pUi7h4NdVYmjTr6MfqfBrNf_VLbqV

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Donna Euler [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:53:42 PM GMT- IP address: 76.178.144.225

Email verification link emailed to Donna Euler [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:53:44 PM GMT

Email viewed by Donna Euler [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:54:39 PM GMT- IP address: 76.178.144.225

E-signature verified by Donna Euler [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:54:58 PM GMT- IP address: 104.47.73.126

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 11:54:58 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Brian Adams (Sep 1, 2025 19:49:40 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAZwqN_tZgX0PZeVuzVfd6GSqWJOHEApt7

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Brian Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:49:41 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.150.15

Email verification link emailed to Brian Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:49:42 AM GMT

Email viewed by Brian Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:49:50 AM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.226

E-signature verified by Brian Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:49:57 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.150.15

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 2:49:57 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Christopher Good
Christopher Good (Sep 1, 2025 18:38:31 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAum5G25lwh73RhG4k7mJwRc-qLSBQh895

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Christopher Good [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:36:31 AM GMT- IP address: 173.244.56.103

Email verification link emailed to Christopher Good [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:36:33 AM GMT

Email viewed by Christopher Good [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:40:08 AM GMT- IP address: 173.244.56.103

E-signature verified by Christopher Good [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:40:31 AM GMT- IP address: 173.244.56.103

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 1:40:31 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Darla Pavlish
Darla Pavlish (Sep 2, 2025 20:10:21 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Don McGhie (Sep 2, 2025 15:54:49 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAGm0B88IM_2otUnpBHdCdcLaTh0MvKsMY

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Don McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 10:54:50 PM GMT- IP address: 24.121.149.155

Email verification link emailed to Don McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 10:54:52 PM GMT

Email viewed by Don McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 10:54:59 PM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.226

E-signature verified by Don McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 10:55:21 PM GMT- IP address: 24.121.149.155

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 10:55:21 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Jeffrey Pearson (Sep 1, 2025 22:13:11 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAe7GR5yINZ4qI2wylxOGpaId0Azly5oWF

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Jeffrey Pearson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 5:13:11 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.144.32

Email verification link emailed to Jeffrey Pearson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 5:13:13 AM GMT

Email viewed by Jeffrey Pearson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 5:13:40 AM GMT- IP address: 104.28.78.101

E-signature verified by Jeffrey Pearson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 5:13:48 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.144.32

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 5:13:48 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Jennifer Hickman
Jennifer Hickman (Sep 1, 2025 18:07:01 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAub_SF31M16REf7qL4YHkAhqzw_N_Omg0

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Jennifer Hickman [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:07:02 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.145.18

Email verification link emailed to Jennifer Hickman [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:07:03 AM GMT

Email viewed by Jennifer Hickman [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:07:16 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.145.18

E-signature verified by Jennifer Hickman [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 1:07:16 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.145.18

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 1:07:16 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Lindsay Adams (Sep 1, 2025 20:18:53 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAZraaYP3jn53pxHtZ0MhQ611x25twSa9w

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Lindsay Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:18:53 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.150.15

Email verification link emailed to Lindsay Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:18:55 AM GMT

Email viewed by Lindsay Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:19:15 AM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.229

E-signature verified by Lindsay Adams [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:19:24 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.150.15

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 3:19:24 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Lloran Johnson
Lloran Johnson (Sep 2, 2025 16:04:15 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAnz7AVp8u9UAdr3UiTBPYJkiSfuCh5Oyj

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Lloran Johnson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:04:17 PM GMT- IP address: 98.145.90.213

Email verification link emailed to Lloran Johnson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:04:19 PM GMT

Email viewed by Lloran Johnson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:04:38 PM GMT- IP address: 98.145.90.213

E-signature verified by Lloran Johnson [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:04:43 PM GMT- IP address: 98.145.90.213

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 11:04:43 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Lynn A Thompson
Lynn A Thompson (Sep 2, 2025 19:58:44 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-03

Created:	2025-09-03
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAxolYxTU_ojdX6a-HkJxAn5XIh5kVI-7y

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Lynn A Thompson [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:59:44 AM GMT- IP address: 135.134.164.220

Email verification link emailed to Lynn A Thompson [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:59:46 AM GMT

Email viewed by Lynn A Thompson [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:00:11 AM GMT- IP address: 69.147.90.126

E-signature verified by Lynn A Thompson [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:00:34 AM GMT- IP address: 135.134.164.220

Agreement completed.
2025-09-03 - 2:00:34 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Mark L Buntin
Mark L Buntin (Sep 2, 2025 18:07:07 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-03

Created:	2025-09-03
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAor1YuikkeHtsz8Sh0pHkYQJiXgCbWErs

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Mark L Buntin [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:07:07 AM GMT- IP address: 72.173.107.58

Email verification link emailed to Mark L Buntin [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:07:09 AM GMT

Email viewed by Mark L Buntin [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:07:35 AM GMT- IP address: 72.173.107.58

E-signature verified by Mark L Buntin [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 1:08:04 AM GMT- IP address: 52.102.11.245

Agreement completed.
2025-09-03 - 1:08:04 AM GMT

Adobe Acrobat Sign

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Nicholas Payne (Sep 2, 2025 16:07:30 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA32M00_LfmPTS2VQjR8ccdLXKOw8u0oRX

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Nicholas Payne [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:07:30 PM GMT- IP address: 172.56.50.231

Email verification link emailed to Nicholas Payne [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:07:32 PM GMT

Email viewed by Nicholas Payne [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:08:11 PM GMT- IP address: 64.233.172.204

E-signature verified by Nicholas Payne [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:08:15 PM GMT- IP address: 172.56.50.231

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 11:08:15 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Robin Schannep (Sep 2, 2025 16:12:58 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAQv2_SrmyU4n6mIe_IGC5KLgtyWZTpOqj

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Robin Schannep [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:12:58 PM GMT- IP address: 174.231.131.198

Email verification link emailed to Robin Schannep [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:13:00 PM GMT

Email viewed by Robin Schannep [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:13:22 PM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.228

E-signature verified by Robin Schannep [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:13:30 PM GMT- IP address: 174.231.131.198

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 11:13:30 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Ronald C McGhie
Ronald C McGhie (Sep 1, 2025 18:53:53 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAmQxqbaCnqEjBXB0CbT_e38QMgd7tTYnF

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Ronald C McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:53:54 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.147.246

Email verification link emailed to Ronald C McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:53:56 AM GMT

Email viewed by Ronald C McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:54:35 AM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.228

E-signature verified by Ronald C McGhie [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:55:10 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.147.246

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 2:55:10 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Ronda Bowling
Ronda Bowling (Sep 1, 2025 19:58:02 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA9NnNvydoVv9vucszO-gvPHA-mANRsyz0

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Ronda Bowling [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:59:02 AM GMT- IP address: 135.131.227.113

Email verification link emailed to Ronda Bowling [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:59:04 AM GMT

Email viewed by Ronda Bowling [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:59:20 AM GMT- IP address: 135.131.227.113

E-signature verified by Ronda Bowling [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:59:21 AM GMT- IP address: 135.131.227.113

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 2:59:21 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: [redacted]ep 2, 2025 17:45:54 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-03

Created:	2025-09-03
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAUtxWYDKz5SWJX0bmPTlyu8cf2FdwQ-oT

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Sandra Carney [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 0:45:54 AM GMT- IP address: 75.253.41.175

Email verification link emailed to Sandra Carney [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 0:45:56 AM GMT

Email viewed by Sandra Carney [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 0:46:17 AM GMT- IP address: 104.28.116.99

E-signature verified by Sandra Carney [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 0:46:26 AM GMT- IP address: 75.253.41.175

Agreement completed.
2025-09-03 - 0:46:26 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Sydney Welton
Sydney Welton (Sep 2, 2025 07:15:40 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAIhj3Au9MTRASKGSS1pbmgYBDj50tU0cx

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Sydney Welton [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:15:40 PM GMT - IP address: 98.97.34.176

Email verification link emailed to Sydney Welton [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:15:43 PM GMT

Email viewed by Sydney Welton [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:16:23 PM GMT - IP address: 69.147.90.11

E-signature verified by Sydney Welton [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 2:16:25 PM GMT - IP address: 98.97.34.176

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 2:16:25 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: Tamara Martinez
Tamara Martinez (Sep 2, 2025 18:44:28 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-03

Created:	2025-09-03
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAABMjr4axH0qXJWzX2wuUaTXShC9r0DZJr

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Tamara Martinez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:44:29 AM GMT- IP address: 98.146.244.247

Email verification link emailed to Tamara Martinez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:44:30 AM GMT

Email viewed by Tamara Martinez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:44:44 AM GMT- IP address: 69.147.91.10

E-signature verified by Tamara Martinez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:44:47 AM GMT- IP address: 98.146.244.247

Agreement completed.
2025-09-03 - 2:44:47 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Trade Nunez (Sep 2, 2025 19:24:43 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-03

Created:	2025-09-03
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAXcO-NWm_FgLAC1h13ETUCRwBRIL8XLWD

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Tracie Nunez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:24:43 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.148.160

Email verification link emailed to Tracie Nunez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:24:45 AM GMT

Email viewed by Tracie Nunez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:25:10 AM GMT- IP address: 172.225.80.248

E-signature verified by Tracie Nunez [redacted]
2025-09-03 - 2:25:14 AM GMT- IP address: 76.178.148.160

Agreement completed.
2025-09-03 - 2:25:14 AM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature:
Wes reed (Sep 2, 2025 16:24:46 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17.I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAgGHwkyMhkTM8elZDqJ8EXvuXTAxNGEEx

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by Wes reed [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:24:46 PM GMT- IP address: 98.146.243.175

Email verification link emailed to Wes reed [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:24:48 PM GMT

Email viewed by Wes reed [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:25:22 PM GMT- IP address: 98.146.243.175

E-signature verified by Wes reed [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 11:25:22 PM GMT- IP address: 98.146.243.175

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 11:25:22 PM GMT

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Comments on Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

Ask

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

Summary

The overall Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study performed by the HDR Inc. consulting group sponsored by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is of poor quality and obtuse. The people deserve better planning for the Rathdrum Prairie. The situation continues to compound with a consistent lack of alignment with current solutions for future planning by the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO). Even on the KMPO's website, their main pictures and focus are on roads and only roads.

The solutions produced in the magazine continue to show that the only agenda being driven is one that is old-fashioned and failed. Roads are not the only nor best solution for mobility and continue to be shown as a less effective way to support communities.

Further, the website information does not provide sources and data used to determine the level 2 Screen Matrix definitions and how they were derived. There appears to be a sub-agenda in place to drive conclusions for "Alternative" solutions, which government agencies like the KMPO previously proposed. These conclusions are contrary to current-day financial analysis and federal guidelines.

Review of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie PEL

Failed Report Summary by HDR Inc.

The No Huetter Bypass group had asked several times before the consultants were selected if the consultants would have specialties around the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI). The Idaho Transportation Department representatives reassured us that these consultants would be highly educated and well-versed in all transportation projects. After reviewing the Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description, and Screening Criteria Summary, HDR consultants and other document creators appear to have ignored significant cross reference in modern changes to transportation requirements made by the Federal Government, not to mention more progressive solutions like the SSTI.

The PEL study is, unfortunately, not well-informed of solutions for scale and local planning needs, which should be reviewed for a positive path forward. The consultants did not appear to use modern solutions well documented in the 11th Edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for Streets and Highways, December 2023, and do not consider solutions documented by the State Smart Transportation Initiative.

During the meetings with HDR, they stated that the current summary should only include the “big lines” on the map as the NEPA process will add more details. Unfortunately for the people, this means that several key items brought to their attention in meetings, like improved light management across the Rathdrum Prairie, sizing of arterials, overpass and underpass use instead of road changes, removal of ingress and egress for roads like SH-41 and others were not taken into consideration as stand-alone solutions.

In the meetings, it was also proposed to the consultants that part of the requirements for this should be deeper engagement with Idaho state lawmakers to address inaccuracies in the law that impact positive outcomes in the planning process. The summary doesn’t include any of these statements and only provides a hyper-focus on “big lines” across a map.

Long Range Planning

The Level 2 summary does not provide critical details on the proposed solutions but stays high-level; interpreting the suggestions is nearly impossible to analyze for validity or value. For example, Alternative I from the summary only provides the interchanges and cross-section of the proposed road. However, it does not specify why there needs to be a 40’ median on US-95, why the local access road does not have a turn lane, and how pedestrian and multimodal solutions will be addressed in the design.

The online documentation showing the level 2 Screening Matrix does not provide critical information to understand what the “faces” mean. The lack of transparency here shows a purposeful removal of people’s right to information.

It is concerning to think that "Alterative D" could be a better solution than "Alternative H" because a 4-lane with a turn lane arterial was selected as "Alternative D" instead of a 2-lane with a turn lane. "Alternative H" is also considered to be only "Medium Cost" with no financial scale associated with it when reading it. However, using Federal standard pricing and other states, the estimate for development is above $800,000,000. However, it seems that KMPO has provided an initial forecast for this solution, estimated at a $300,000,000 project.

Without transparent details and sources on the data used to evaluate the solution and an overall improvement in traffic light management, multimodal solutions, underpass and overpass additions, and removal of ingress and egress, long-range planning does not improve.

Arterial Road Planning Biased to 4-lanes with a Turn Lane

It should not be a foregone conclusion that four lanes with a turn lane are required, even for large arterials. The key challenges or significant issues related to 4-lane arterial roads often include the following aspects, generally addressed in road design manuals, including the MUTCD. The design of 4-lane arterials with a center turn lane (often referred to as five-lane roads) is intended to manage traffic volume and facilitate left-turn movements. However, this design can have several negative impacts and actually fails when it becomes saturated.

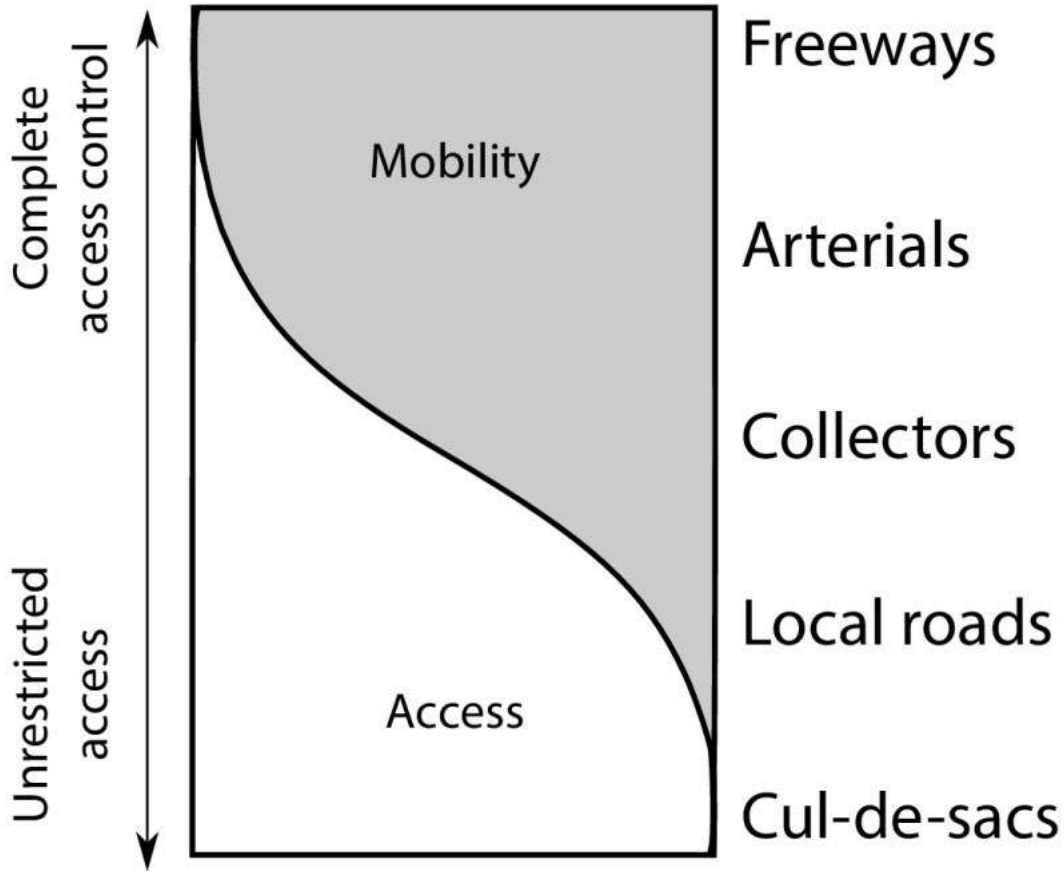


Figure 1Source: Understanding and Improving Arterial Roads to Support Public Health and Transportation Goals

Increased Conflict Points

The presence of a center turn lane can increase the number of conflict points between vehicles, particularly at intersections and driveways. This can lead to a higher likelihood of collisions, especially rear-end and sideswipe accidents as vehicles maneuver into and out of the turn lane (Transportation, n.d.).

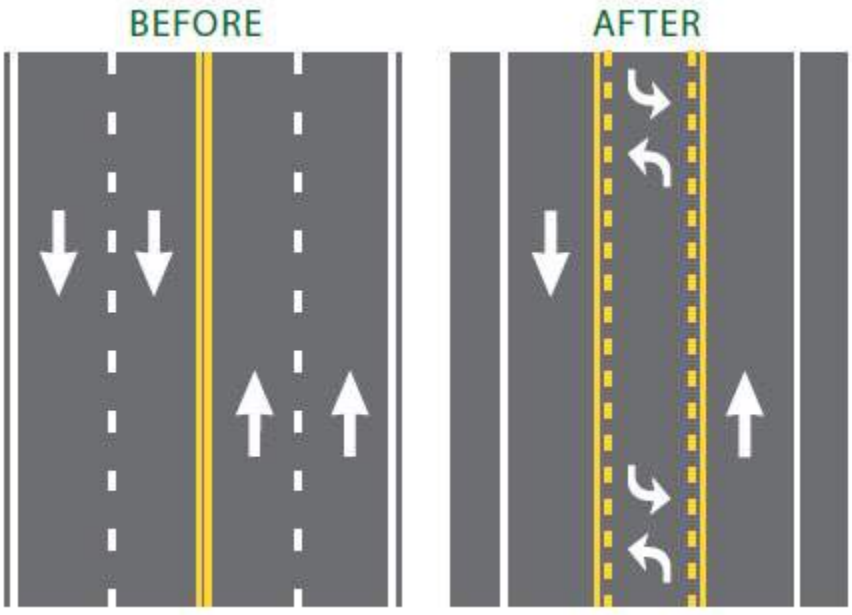


Figure 2 Source Road Diet Summary. Retrieved from Minnesota Department of Transportation

Traffic Flow and Congestion

When traffic volumes exceed the capacity of the center turn lane to provide gaps, it can lead to congestion and reduced flow efficiency. Vehicles waiting to make left turns can back up traffic, especially during peak hours, reducing the overall throughput of the road. "Uncontrolled access to arterial streets can cause the traffic flow to break down, congestion to become almost intolerable and local businesses to suffer," Layton said. " It is important that engineers, travelers, and business owners understand access management is good for everyone." (Layton, 2009).

Safety Concerns for Pedestrians and Cyclists

These roads often do not provide adequate protection or infrastructure for non-motorized users, increasing the risk of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists. The wide cross-section can make crossing distances longer, leading to higher exposure times for pedestrians. Further, putting bike and walking paths does not reduce the overall problems as, the usage patterns for such solutions here in northern Idaho and seasonally limited (McAndrews, 2017).

Health-Promoting Design	Unhealthy Design
Neighborhood asset for access and commerce	Physical barrier that divides neighborhoods
Supports neighborhood social and cultural connections	Exhibits neglect and physical decay
Safe travel speeds for all users	Traffic speeds too high to be safe for all users
Comfortable for all users to cross	Difficult to cross because of design and traffic
Link within pedestrian and bicycle networks	Barrier within pedestrian and bicycle networks
Designed to mitigate air pollution	Near-roadway air pollution
Designed to mitigate noise	Source of noise
Accessible to users of all abilities	Inaccessible to users with disabilities
Supports green infrastructure systems	Impervious paving materials, lack of shade
Contributes to revitalization without displacement	Location of residential and business gentrification

Table 1 Understanding and Improving Arterial Roads to Support Public Health and Transportation Goals

The suggested designs do not provide any information on how they comply with or impact the known standards for the community. The design suggestions by HDR continue to follow the "big lines" concepts; however, they pre-bias the concept of impact to the community in their depictions without providing reasoning and long-term impacts.

In several of the typical section descriptions, pathways were described for bike and pedestrian traffic. However, the connections to these sections are typically impossible and don't align with larger paths like the North Idaho Centennial Trail. These alignments were not done during the PEL study which adds additional concern to the overall goal of the PEL results.

Noise and Pollution

Higher traffic volumes and speed can increase noise levels and air pollution, impacting the quality of life for those living adjacent to these roads. Sound levels can also be considerable due to moderately high traffic volumes characteristic of arterials and also due to considerable braking and acceleration that often occur on arterials that are heavily signalized (Wikipedia, n.d.).

Number of Additional Accidents

The number of additional accidents due to this design and significantly higher. Specific data on how many additional accidents occur yearly because of these designs is not uniformly documented across the U.S. However, studies on similar road configurations suggest that four-lane undivided roads have a higher crash rate compared to other configurations. For example, in Minnesota, the average crash rate for four-lane facilities is reported to be 5.7 crashes per million entering vehicles (MEV) per year, while three-lane configurations (which include a center turn lane) have a rate of 2.0 crashes per MEV per year, indicating a 46% reduction in crash rates with a three-lane design. This implies that four-lane arterials might see more accidents due to their design (Transportation, n.d.).

Traffic Operations

At lower traffic volumes, this design can operate more efficiently than a four-lane setup with a turn lane, as it can handle left turns without significantly disrupting through traffic. However, at higher volumes, this might not always be the case, especially if there are insufficient gaps for turning traffic (Layton, 2009).

No Planning for Train-based Transportation

When considering multimodal transportation for growth expansion, excluding train transportation can lead to several significant issues. There has been no design for this type of transportation in all designs presented. Even the larger median reservations are outside locations that would support the addition of this type of transportation in the future. The missing inclusion and design for this is another example of a request that disappeared during meetings with HDR consultants.

Reduced Efficiency for Long-Distance Travel

Trains are highly efficient for long-distance travel, offering speed and capacity that can significantly reduce travel times compared to road-only options. Without trains, people must rely more heavily on slower, less efficient road or air travel for long distances, which can increase travel time and cost (LTD, 2023).

Environmental Impact

Rail transport is generally more environmentally friendly than road transport, with lower emissions per passenger mile. Excluding trains means missing out on opportunities to reduce carbon footprints, increase air quality, and promote sustainable transport options, especially for bulk passenger movement (Wireless, 2018) (Goulet, 2024).

Congestion and Infrastructure Strain

Without rail options, there's a greater dependency on road infrastructure, leading to increased congestion, particularly in urban areas. This can exacerbate traffic issues, lead to longer commute times, and increase the wear and tear on roads, necessitating more frequent and costly maintenance.

> *In the United States, transportation planning goals and existing road design are often out of sync. In many U.S. cities, roads were built first for vehicles, with little thought given to other types of transportation*.
>
> *This imbalanced approach has far-reaching effects, impacting public health and well-being in many ways. In 2022, there were over 7,600 pedestrian deaths in the U.S., more than 17% of all traffic-related fatalities. [1] Meanwhile, the transportation sector is responsible for more than 25% of all pollution-related deaths each year. [2] Not only that, but the existing road infrastructure in many cities fails to account for the 9% of U.S. households that don't have a car [3] or the 45% of Americans who lack access to public transportation. [4].* (STREETLIGHT, n.d.)

Economic and Urban Development Limitations

Rail services can drive economic growth by connecting urban centers with suburbs or rural areas, fostering development along rail corridors. Omitting train transportation can hinder this development, limiting access to jobs, education, and services, and potentially slowing down regional economic growth.

> *The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, offers U.S. states and cities the chance to invest in transportation systems that modernize infrastructure, expand access and mobility for all people in a community, improve public health and safety, and boost local economies.*
>
> *Transportation emits more climate-warming greenhouse gases than any other sector in the United States, so cutting carbon from transport is also essential to achieving the ambitious goal of reducing emissions 50%-52% by 2030. Recent modeling from America Is All In, a coalition of state and local climate leaders, shows that emissions reductions in the transportation sector can contribute more than one-third of what's needed to reach the 2030 U.S. climate goal.*
>
> *The key is to go multi-modal: not just cars, buses, rail, bicycles or walking, but a coordinated system of various modes of transportation. States, tribes, cities, universities and businesses have vital roles to play in developing clean multi-modal transportation systems that work for the entire community while fostering health, safety and economic prosperity.* (Liz Bridgwater, 2022).

Cost Implications

While the initial investment in rail infrastructure might be high, the long-term operational costs per passenger can be lower compared to maintaining extensive road networks or relying solely on air travel. Excluding trains might lead to higher transportation costs over time due to the inefficiencies of other modes for certain types of travel.

Not including trains in a transportation planning study can lead to several negative cost implications.

Increased Long-Term Transportation Costs

Trains are highly efficient for moving large numbers of people and goods over long distances. Without considering rail in planning, there might be an over-reliance on road infrastructure, which is generally more costly to maintain and expand due to higher wear and tear, congestion, and the need for extensive road networks (RUNGWANICHSUKANON, 2015).

Higher Environmental Costs

Rail transport tends to have lower emissions per passenger or ton of freight compared to other modes. Excluding trains from planning studies means potentially missing out on reducing external costs like air pollution, noise pollution, and carbon emissions, which can have significant economic implications in terms of health costs, environmental cleanup, and compliance with environmental regulations (Wisnicki, n.d.).

Increased Traffic Congestion and Its Associated Costs

Trains can significantly reduce road traffic, particularly in urban areas or busy corridors. Without rail, increased road congestion leads to higher economic costs due to lost productivity, increased fuel consumption, and more frequent vehicle repairs. The cost of congestion in terms of time and fuel can be substantial (Logistics, 2023).

Operational Inefficiencies

Without rail, multimodal logistics plans might not be as efficient, leading to higher operational costs for transport providers and shippers. This includes costs associated with more frequent handling of goods, longer transit times, and less optimal routing (Dandan Chen, 2019).

Public Perception and Future Flexibility

If rail is not considered, future adjustments to include rail might be more costly or politically challenging due to established infrastructure and public expectations. This can limit future flexibility and increase costs when rail becomes necessary or desirable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Rathdrum Prairie PEL level 2 summary is open to immense debate on how the conclusions were drawn. It further ignores concepts brought up in meetings with the people and blatantly overlooks the need for more than roads to solve the needs of the community over the next decade or more.

Narrowing down the “Alternatives” provided could only be done through personal bias from the data presented to the community. Even that data appears to be carefully tailored from previous local government projects.

Primary Selection for Alternatives would be the following:

ALTERNATIVE	VOTE	COMMENT
A	Yes	Further design details and reasoning should be provided on how it impacts ingress and egress. Having multiple ingress/egress locations for a 4-lane with turn lane road is problematic as stated above. Other solutions could be found here.
B	No	The design has been shown to be ineffective throughout the United States.
C	Yes	The section design provides for an excessive amount of land and space. There is no reason presented showing a need for medians as large as shown along with drainage areas.
D	Maybe	The section design is not valid for the environment. Nothing currently shows that a 4-lane with a turn lane is better than a 2-lane with a turn lane.
E	No	Parts of the suggestion might be viable, but much must be redesigned to be usable.
F	No	Parts of the suggestion might be viable, but much must be redesigned to be usable.
H	No	Much information has already been presented on the ineffectiveness of this solution due to many other North/South

		routes and the issues that would occur on I-90 between SH-41 and US-95. Further, the design continues to show local corruption in the layout that the work would only happen in the Post Falls jurisdiction and not in the Coeur d'Alene jurisdiction.
I	Yes	It is the burden of the State to make this an access-controlled highway. This must be completed before "need" can be found in taking land for several other projects.
J	Yes (change design)	The design does not take into account the train tracks and tunnels. It should be expanded in research more thoroughly before moving forward for this level of voting.
K	Yes	Look to remove ingress and egress as much as possible to reduce the need for arterial construction and focus on making this the primary route to go from I-90 to US-95 above Lancaster Rd.
L	Yes	Look to remove ingress and egress as much as possible
M	No	Leave Wyoming intact and focus on faster options for East to West traffic
N	Yes	Remove large medians and look to remove ingress and egress to the roads as much as possible.

The community continues to be let down, even after this $3,000,000 investment. The consultant team appears to have focused more on local government feedback than on the appropriate design for the community. The consultant team did not take into account the average temperature and winter conditions when looking to support mobility in these solutions.

The initial "asks" at the being of the letter are still required.

Sincerely,

The No Huetter Bypass Group

References

Dandan Chen, Y. Z. (2019, 9). *Optimizing Multimodal Transportation Routes Considering Container Use*. Retrieved from MDPI: https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/11/19/5320

Goulet, F. (2024, 5 20). *The latest Intermodal transportation advantages in 2024!* Retrieved from RAILGATEWAY: https://railgateway.ca/blog/intermodal-transportation-advantages

Layton, R. (2009, 9 1). *Urban traffic congestion linked to "arterial" access*. Retrieved from Oregon State University: https://news.oregonstate.edu/news/urban-traffic-congestion-linked-arterial-access

Liz Bridgwater, S. R. (2022, 6 21). *For Vibrant US Cities, Invest in Multi-modal Transportation*. Retrieved from World Resources Institute: https://www.wri.org/insights/us-cities-multi-modal-transportation-benefits

Logistics, I. (2023, 10). *Multimodal Transportation: Definition, Examples, and Advantages*. Retrieved from Inbound Logistics: https://www.inboundlogistics.com/articles/multimodal-transportation/

LTD, O. L. (2023, 6 12). *What is Multimodal Transportation and its benefits?* Retrieved from OM Logistics LTD: https://omlogistics.co.in/what-is-multimodal-transportation-and-its-benefits/

McAndrews, C. P. (2017). *Understanding and Improving Arterial Roads to Support Public Health and Transportation Goals*. Retrieved from American journal of public health: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5508169/

RUNGWANICHSUKANON, T. &. (2015, 12). *Multicommodity Flow Model for Multimodal Transportation Planning*. Retrieved from Research Gate: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317870324_Multicommodity_Flow_Model_for_Multimodal_Transportation_Planning

STREETLIGHT. (n.d.). *Multimodal Transportation: What Is*. Retrieved from STREETLIGHT: https://www.streetlightdata.com/what-is-multimodal-transportation/

Transportation, M. D. (n.d.). *Road Diet Summary*. Retrieved from Minnesota Department of Transportation: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/trafficeng/safety/road-diet-summary.html

Wikipedia. (n.d.). *Arterial road*. Retrieved from Wikipedia: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arterial_road

Wireless, D. (2018, 9 14). *Here's Why Multi-Modal Transport is the Future of Travel*. Retrieved from DDS Wireless: https://ddswireless.com/blog/heres-why-multi-modal-transport-is-the-future-of-travel/

Wisnicki, B. (n.d.). *Analysis of Multimodal Terminal Costs*. Retrieved from Academia: https://www.academia.edu/26307111/Analysis_of_Multimodal_Terminal_Costs

ITD District 1
Attn: Carrie Ann Hewitt, P.E.
600 West Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-8764

Subject: Escalation of Level 2 Alternatives for the Rathdrum Prairie Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study and Concerns

Dear Mrs. Hewitt,

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. My insights are based on the materials presented during multiple meetings and my observations from ITD, KMPO, City, and County meetings over the last four years.

In the last letter from the No Huetter Bypass group sent December 17th, 2024, we made the following four requests.

1. An extension to the level 2 planning process must be initiated. Additional funding must be allocated to reviewing the sources, data, and concepts presented to the HDR Inc. consultants.
2. A review, open to the people with complete transparency, must be conducted to validate that people's inputs were used in deriving the "Alternative" solutions.
3. Pricing models, environmental impacts, implementation, property, mobility, and safety values must be presented to the public for review. The review process should include public feedback on how the "faces" are determined.
4. The Level 2 magazine must be redone to include only information on the website, including the "faces" Screen Matrix and how those faces were determined.

We then met in person on Monday, March 10th at 10:00 in the morning. During that meeting, the No Huetter Bypass group was originally met with a "training" session to help us understand what the PEL process is and what stage it was currently in at that time. However, the group was then and is now fully aware of the PEL process and what should be reviewed at this time. Further, none of the asks from our original letter had been addressed before or at the meeting ITD hosted on August 26th, 2025, titled "Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study Working Group."

During the meeting, the group voiced its continued concern with the direction of the PEL process. Given that this process is based on a Regional Planning design, there are large concerns due to quick turn to a narrow focus on needs for roads and highways. There is a large lack of details about how these items have been selected and why so many other changes to road designs and multi-modal needs have been, apparently, purposely overlooked. Moreover, the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations is by far the largest issue.

At the meeting, the group made it abundantly clear that the current contractors, HDR, are not specialized and well versed in current regional design requirements and goals. We also brought up

the lack of information and transparency on how conclusions have been derived in the data presented. Missing details on morning traffic patterns compared to evening traffic, the need to "stay broad" while entire areas of concern have been dismissed due to costs, land impacts, or other reason not produced for review, and the continued use of ongoing programs rather than looking at the actual needs as described in the PEL definition itself (1) have lead the group to severe concern and distrust of the process and the stage it is currently at today.

Re-Ask

The No Huetter Bypass group requests that the initial requests be acted upon before doing outreach to the public. The material presented at the August 26th meeting does nothing more than state there are road options for the public to review and nothing else that would be equally valuable and could start addressing issues today. The data does not show the actual need but rather assumes need for an entire highway or road without looking at several Federal recommendations that should occur before these suggestions are presented as required.

Further Asks

Failure to Follow 23 U.S.C. 168

The Federal Highway Administration provides the requirements for a PEL study to move into NEPA based on the 23 U.S.C. 168 which we believe needs to be addressed immediately (2). Specifically, the following steps need to be completed.

Specific Items

5. During the environmental review process, the relevant agency has made the planning documents available for public review and comment by members of the public and federal, state, local, and tribal governments that may have an interest in the proposed project; provided notice of the intention of the relevant agency to adopt or incorporate by reference the planning product; and considered any resulting comments.
6. There is no significant new information or new circumstance that has a reasonable likelihood of affecting the continued validity or appropriateness of the planning product.
7. The planning product has a rational basis and is based on reliable and reasonably current data and reasonable and scientifically acceptable methodologies. (3)

Training for Local Resource Agencies

We can see why the PEL process may need to be further trained with local resource agencies. Upon reviewing the Idaho PEL Handbook (4), it is obvious that Idaho is not as mature in the process as many other states. In short, even in Idaho's version, utilities are to be documented. This has not been one of the criteria that is part of the evaluations and comparisons.

What is a planning product? (1)

Since 1978, NEPA regulations have stated that "agencies shall integrate the NEPA process with other planning at the earliest possible time to insure that planning and decisions reflect environmental values, to avoid delays later in the process, and to head off potential conflicts."

In 2012, 23 U.S.C. 168 was established by the MAP-21 legislation to facilitate the use of planning products in the environmental review process. In 2015, the FAST Act updated and refined the process, and a 2016 update of the transportation planning regulations incorporated 23 U.S.C. 168.

The term "planning product" means a decision, analysis, study, or other documented information resulting from the transportation planning process as further described in 23 U.S.C. 168. Regardless of statutory or regulatory authority, planning products coming from the metropolitan or statewide transportation planning processes can support subsequent decision-making in the NEPA process.

Planning Analyses

Planning data and analyses (at the State and local level) that are pertinent to the study area can also inform the development of a planning product and can be utilized in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA:

- **Travel Demand Forecasting and Traffic Modeling:** These predictive statewide and metropolitan transportation planning methods are used to help make informed planning decisions.
- **Regional and Local Land Use and Growth Management:** These existing conditions and trends influence how transportation problems are defined and how alternatives are considered and compared against one another.
- **Population and Employment:** Understanding community needs is part of the transportation planning process and is a vital component of identifying project concepts to shape project decisions and outcomes under NEPA. This is also important when considering environmental justice.
- **Natural and Built Environment:** Geographic information systems (GIS) and other mapping tools can be used to identify existing environmental resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, and land use. This can identify existing conditions, potential community impacts, and effects on the natural and built environment (including climate and/or equity).
- **Mitigation:** A State DOT or MPO may develop programmatic mitigation plans as part of the transportation planning process to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

Planning Data and Decisions

The transportation planning process is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive decision-making process that provides for implementation of projects, strategies, and services. Planning decisions may be used in subsequent environmental reviews under NEPA as long as the data that support them are accurate, current, and meet the requirements of NEPA or whichever PEL authority that applies:

- **Travel Corridor:** The travel corridor can be carried forward into project development to help narrow the range of alternatives studied in NEPA and promote more efficient decision-making.
- **Transportation Mode Choice:** Highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail, ferry, or other modal options are **often a fundamental element of alternatives analysis during the environmental review process.(bold added)**
- **The Environmental Setting:** The State or metropolitan planning process reflects consideration and analysis based on the scale and complexity of many issues, including transportation system development, land use, employment, economic development, human and natural environment, and housing and community development.
- **Purpose and need may be a statement of the objectives that the proposed action is intended to achieve.** These may be identified in statewide or metropolitan transportation plans; supporting land use, economic development, or growth objectives established in applicable Federal, State, local, or tribal plans; and in Federal laws, plans, or policies serving national defense, national security, or other national objectives.
- **Preliminary screening of alternatives and elimination of unreasonable alternatives:** The planning level screening of alternatives is supported by the purpose and need of a project, which is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives for subsequent NEPA analysis.

Little to No Alignment with the FHWA PEL Goals

The analysis draws from the uploaded documents: the Rathdrum Prairie PEL Level 2 Alternatives handout (2), the "Innovative DOT" handbook (3), and the response letter the No Huetter Bypass Group submitted last time. We compared these against FHWA best practices for PEL studies, federal requirements, and examples from other regional PEL efforts (e.g., Colorado's I-25 PEL (4), Washington's SR 167 PEL (5), and Minnesota's US 52 PEL (6)). The Rathdrum study shows strengths in stakeholder engagement and screening criteria but has inaccuracies and failures in scope, leading to overly narrow alternatives that prioritize roadway expansion over multi-modal options, potentially increasing condemnation needs without fully addressing safety or federal mandates.

Procedural and Analytical Failures

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study, as presented in the "Level 2 Alternatives Development, Description and Screening Criteria Summary" pamphlet, exhibits profound procedural and analytical flaws that undermine its credibility and its compliance with federal PEL guidelines, specifically around then need for Context Sensitive Solutions (10) (11).

A primary failure is the severe lack of transparency. The study document presents a list of screening criteria—Safety, Congestion, Mobility, Property Impacts, Community Planning, Environmental Resources, and Implementation—but provides no underlying data, methodology, or weighting to explain how these criteria were applied or how conclusions were reached. The "faces" symbology used in the online screening matrix is functionally meaningless without this backup documentation, constituting a "purposeful removal of people's right to information". This opacity is

a direct violation of the core PEL principle of a clear, collaborative, and defensible decision-making process.

Furthermore, the process appears to have systematically dismissed substantive public and expert input. The public critique alleges that numerous lower-impact, higher-value solutions—including improved traffic light management, standalone overpasses and underpasses to resolve specific bottlenecks, and comprehensive access management—were proposed in public meetings but are completely absent from the 13 formal Level 2 alternatives as standalone design alternatives. This indicates that the process was not one of genuine, collaborative alternative development but of retroactively justifying a pre-selected set of "big lines on a map." This approach directly contradicts the PEL requirement for early and continuous public involvement in shaping the range of alternatives considered (12).

Finally, the study demonstrates a failure to adhere to modern, federally-endorsed transportation standards. The study ignores the principles of the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) and the updated 2023 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The presented alternatives show no evidence of applying the principles of Practical Design, Context-Sensitive Solutions, TDM, or integrated land use, all of which are central to modern, fiscally responsible, and federally-endorsed planning

Fundamental Design Flaws and Missed Opportunities

The specific designs proposed within the ITD study are as flawed as the overall process, reflecting an outdated engineering philosophy that prioritizes vehicle speed and capacity above safety, cost-effectiveness, and community context. These design choices are not merely technical details; they are instrumental in justifying the study's pre-determined, high-impact conclusion. By establishing a massive footprint as the "default" solution, the study makes any discussion of less impactful alternatives seem inadequate by comparison. The engineering choices serve to systematically exclude the very solutions that would minimize the need for property condemnation.

Over-Engineered for a Single Purpose

The default proposal of four-lane roads with a center turn lane (a five-lane cross-section) for arterials like "Alternative D" and the massive six-lane-plus-median design for US-95 are prime examples of over-engineering that ignore decades of safety research. Federal research and widespread state practice have demonstrated that "Road Diets"—converting a four-lane undivided road to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center two-way left-turn lane)—often result in significant safety improvements, with crash reductions ranging from 19% to 47%, with minimal impact on capacity for roads carrying up to approximately 20,000 vehicles per day. **The ITD study provides no traffic volume analysis or safety performance data to justify why these safer, less impactful, and more cost-effective designs were not considered as a primary alternative.** Similarly, the proposed wide medians and swells (e.g., 40 foot media and 18 foot swells on US-95) are presented without justification, consuming significant amounts of land that could be avoided entirely or repurposed for high-capacity transit like bus rapid transit or light rail or an entire local access road with several grade separation crossings.

The Critical Omission of Grade Separation

The most glaring design failure across all alternatives is the near-total absence of underpasses and overpasses as primary, standalone solutions. The study only proposes them as incidental components of massive new highway alignments, such as the railroad overpass included in Alternative A's new bypass route. **This overlooks one of the most effective tools in the transportation engineer's toolkit.** Resolving key intersection conflicts (e.g., US-95 at Prairie Avenue or Hayden Avenue) or the BNSF rail line conflict in Rathdrum with targeted grade separation could alleviate major bottlenecks and safety hazards with a fraction of the property condemnation required for constructing a multi-mile bypass. This failure to consider targeted, surgical solutions in favor of massive new construction is a hallmark of an outdated and inefficient planning process that fails to seek the most cost-effective solution to the identified problem.

Insufficient and Impractical Multi-Modalism

The token inclusion of "pathways" in some cross-sections is a superficial nod to multi-modalism, not a genuine transportation solution that provides a viable alternative to driving.

- **Lack of Network Integration:** The plans show isolated pathway segments running parallel to high-speed highways with no indication of how they connect to a larger community network of trails, sidewalks, or key destinations like schools, parks, and commercial centers. This violates the fundamental principle of street connectivity and creates "paths to nowhere" that do not serve a real transportation purpose.
- **Failure to Address 4-Season Requirements:** The climate in Kootenai County includes significant snowfall (an average of 37 to 42 inches annually) and extended periods of freezing temperatures. The proposed simple pathway designs show no consideration for winter maintenance, which is essential for year-round utility. Best practices for snowy climates require specific design considerations, such as adequate clear width for plowing equipment (a minimum of 6.5 to 7.5 feet), designated snow storage areas to prevent piles from blocking the path, and proper grading and drainage to prevent hazardous freeze-thaw icing cycles. Without these features, the proposed facilities would be unusable for a significant portion of the year, failing to provide reliable, 4-season transportation choices.
- **Absence of Transit and Rail:** The complete lack of dedicated bus lanes, bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure, or any consideration for passenger rail, as emphatically noted in the public critique, is a profound failure for a long-range planning study. In a growing region, ignoring these high-capacity, low-impact modes are indefensible and contrary to the federal goal of providing a range of transportation choices.

Overview of Best Practices for Regional PEL Studies

PEL studies, per FHWA guidance (e.g., "PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States" (7) and "Planning and Environment Linkages Handbook" (1)), are pre-NEPA processes to identify transportation solutions collaboratively, incorporating environmental, community, and economic goals early. Key best practices include:

- **Broad Scope and Flexibility:** Start with a wide range of concepts (e.g., 50+ in Level 1, as in Rathdrum) but ensure progressive screening retains diverse options, including non-roadway solutions. FHWA emphasizes flexibility (e.g., Colorado DOT's PEL Handbook (10) recommends phased implementation and multi-agency coordination).
- **Multi-Modal Integration:** IIJA and 23 U.S.C. § 134 require considering transit, biking, walking, and rail to reduce vehicle demand and congestion. Examples: Washington's SR 167 PEL included bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes and bike paths to minimize new land needs; Colorado's SH 119 Multi-Modal PEL (8) added rail corridors and pedestrian overpasses.
- **Safety and Traffic Flow:** MUTCD and FHWA's "Effective Practices" mandate addressing conflicts via grade-separated crossings (underpasses/overpasses), access management (e.g., reducing driveways), and complete streets designs. Minnesota's US 52 PEL used underpasses to separate rail/pedestrian traffic, improving flow without wide expansions.
- **Minimizing Property Impacts:** FHWA's PEL Questionnaire stresses using existing corridors, "road diets" (reducing lanes) (8),and compact designs to avoid eminent domain. California's PEL Guidebook (10)highlights revalidating data every 5 years to refine alternatives and reduce land takings.
- **Environmental and 4-Season Considerations:** NEPA integration requires assessing impacts on natural resources; IIJA promotes resilient designs for all-weather use (e.g., cleared bike paths in snowy regions like Idaho).
- **Transparency and Re-Evaluation:** FHWA case studies (e.g., Missouri's I-70 PEL (9)) emphasize public input on screening matrices, cost models, and data sources to avoid bias.

The "Innovative DOT" handbook (3) aligns with these, advocating smart growth principles like multi-modal shifts to reduce congestion without widening roads, thereby limiting eminent domain. It cites examples where states like North Carolina used transit investments to bolster economic security while minimizing environmental footprints.

The Modern DOT: A Mandate for Innovation, Efficiency, and Choice

National best practices, as compiled in the "The Innovative DOT" handbook (3) and promoted by organizations like the State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), show a clear and decisive shift away from a singular focus on highway expansion to solve transportation problems. Modern Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are now tasked with a broader mission: delivering mobility, ensuring equitable access, and building communities, all while facing the challenges of declining revenues and aging infrastructure.

Adopting Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD)

The revised PEL study must be grounded in the principles of Performance-Based Practical Design (PBPD), a federally-endorsed approach that combines the cost-saving ethos of Practical Design with a rigorous focus on performance management. This means that every design choice must be explicitly justified by its quantitative contribution to achieving a defined performance goal (e.g., a specific percentage reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes, an improvement in travel time reliability, or an increase in access to jobs) at the lowest possible life-cycle cost. Under PBPD, features that are "nice to have" but do not contribute to a core, defined need are eliminated.

Key Principles

This modern approach is built on several key pillars that directly contradict a simple "build-more-lanes" philosophy:

- **Asset Management ("Fix-it-First"):** Prioritizing the maintenance and optimization of the existing transportation system before building new capacity is demonstrably more cost-effective. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) estimates that every $1 spent on keeping a road in good condition avoids $6 to $14 in future reconstruction costs. This principle demands a focus on preserving the billions of dollars already invested in public infrastructure.
- **Practical Design & Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS):** These federally-endorsed approaches demand that projects be "right-sized" to meet a specific, well-defined purpose and need. They require using design flexibility to fit the project to its unique community and environmental context, rather than defaulting to the highest—and often most expensive and impactful—design standards found in manuals. This includes explicitly questioning and reforming traditional Level of Service (LOS) metrics that can drive over-design and lead to projects that are out of scale with their surroundings.
- **Multi-Modalism and System Efficiency:** The most cost-effective way to increase the person-carrying capacity of a corridor is often not to add lanes for cars, but to manage demand and improve the efficiency of the existing network for all users. This includes a robust toolkit of strategies such as Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips , improving local street connectivity to disperse short trips off of major arterials , and modernizing access management to preserve traffic flow and improve safety.
- **Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning:** A core tenet of smart transportation is the proactive coordination between state DOTs and local governments to foster development patterns that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and leverage existing transportation investments. This breaks the costly cycle of transportation agencies perpetually chasing sprawling development with new, expensive infrastructure.

Revised Screening Criteria

The vague criteria used by ITD must be replaced with specific, measurable, and publicly vetted metrics aligned with modern transportation goals :

- **Safety:** Measured by predicted crash reduction for all users (pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles), using methodologies from the Highway Safety Manual, not just vehicle-vehicle conflicts.
- **Accessibility**: Measured by the change in the number of jobs, schools, and essential services reachable within a 30-minute trip by automobile, transit, bicycle, and walking—not by abstract vehicle speed or Level of Service.
- Property Impact: Measured quantitatively by the number of parcels impacted**, the total acreage of right-of-way required**, and the number of residential and business displacements. This must be treated as a primary constraint on design, not a secondary consideration.

- **Life-Cycle Cost:** Including initial construction costs, long-term maintenance obligations, and operational costs over a 30-year planning horizon.
- **Multi-Modal Performance:** Measured by the miles of connected, 4-season bikeways created; the percentage of population and jobs served by new or improved transit service; and the improvement in pedestrian level of comfort and safety. venues and aging infrastructure.

Building a True Range of Alternatives

The revised study must analyze, at a minimum, the following four distinct "families" of alternatives, comparing each against a "No-Build" baseline. This approach ensures that a genuine spectrum of solutions is considered, from low-cost management strategies to transformative infrastructure investments. Each alternative within a family must have multiple design options (e.g., different intersection treatments, varying lane widths) to allow for genuine comparison and optimization.

Alternative Family 1: System Optimization and Management (The "Fix-It-First" and "Smarter" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Maximize the capacity and safety of the existing road network without significant widening or new construction. In accordance with federal asset management principles, this should be the first alternative fully explored.
- **Components:**
    - **Access Management:** Implement a comprehensive access management plan for key corridors like SH-41 and US-95. This involves consolidating driveways, installing raised medians where appropriate to control turning movements and reduce conflict points, and developing a supporting local street and cross-access system for local circulation. This preserves through-capacity and dramatically improves safety.
    - **Advanced Signal Coordination:** Implement an adaptive, coordinated traffic signal system across the prairie to optimize traffic flow based on real-time demand, reducing unnecessary stops and delays.
    - **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** Partner with major employers, school districts, and local jurisdictions to implement a suite of TDM programs, such as carpool/vanpool incentives, telework support, and subsidized transit passes, to reduce peak-hour single-occupancy vehicle trips.
    - **Targeted Safety Improvements:** Apply low-cost, high-impact safety countermeasures at identified high-crash locations, such as improved signage, enhanced lighting, and high-visibility intersection markings per the MUTCD.

Alternative Family 2: Strategic Grade Separation and Connectivity (The "Surgical Solution" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address the most critical bottlenecks and safety hazards with targeted, high-value grade separation projects, avoiding the immense cost and property impact of full corridor reconstruction or new bypasses.
- **Components:**

- **Key Intersection Grade Separation:** Analyze the feasibility and impact of constructing overpasses or underpasses at the most congested intersections on US-95 (e.g., at Prairie Avenue, Hayden Avenue, and Kathleen). A modern design like a single-point urban interchange (SPUI) or Tight Diamond can dramatically increase traffic throughput with a significantly smaller footprint than a traditional cloverleaf interchange.
- **Local Street Connectivity:** In partnership with local jurisdictions, fund the construction of key missing links in the local street grid to provide viable alternative routes for local trips, thereby taking pressure off the state highway system.

Alternative Family 3: The Multi-Modal Corridor Transformation (The "Complete Streets" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Reconstruct key arterial corridors within their existing or minimally expanded footprints to function as true multi-modal thoroughfares that are designed to move more people, not just more cars.
- **Components:**
  - **Road Diet Application:** Analyze the conversion of existing four-lane sections of SH-41 and other suitable arterials to a three-lane cross-section (one travel lane each way with a center turn lane). This proven safety countermeasure improves safety for all users and creates space for other modes within the existing pavement width.
  - **Dedicated Transit Infrastructure:** Incorporate dedicated bus-only lanes or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes, especially during peak hours, along US-95 and SH-41. This makes transit a faster, more reliable, and more competitive option than driving alone.
  - **4-Season Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities:** Design protected bike lanes and sidewalks that meet winter maintenance design guidelines. This includes ensuring sufficient width for small plows, designating snow storage zones, and designing for proper drainage to prevent icing. All facilities must be designed to be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Alternative Family 4: Integrated Rail and Land Use (The "Long-Range Vision" Alternative)

- **Concept:** Address long-term growth and fundamentally reshape travel demand by integrating high-capacity rail transportation with supportive local land use policies.
- **Components:**
  - **Passenger Rail Feasibility:** Conduct a formal, comprehensive study on the feasibility, costs, and benefits of restoring or enhancing passenger rail service through the corridor, connecting to Spokane and other regional centers.
  - **Land Use Coordination and Scenario Planning:** Work proactively with Kootenai County and the cities to use scenario planning tools to model the transportation impacts of different future growth patterns. The state should then tie future transportation infrastructure funding to the adoption of local comprehensive plans and zoning codes that encourage more compact, mixed-use development around

existing town centers and potential future transit nodes, thereby reducing future VMT and the need for costly road expansions.

Conclusion

The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study's failures are not isolated technical errors; they represent a systemic and cascading non-compliance with this entire federal framework. The study fails the spirit of PEL by presenting a narrow, pre-ordained set of alternatives, which suggests a lack of genuine early and continuous stakeholder engagement. This failure to consider a true range of lower-impact alternatives—such as TDM, access management, or grade separation—directly causes the proposed solutions to have unnecessarily large property impacts.

The manufactured need for extensive property acquisition then puts the agency on a collision course with the principles of the Uniform Act, which treats condemnation as a last resort. This entire flawed process stands in direct opposition to the modern, innovative, and fiscally responsible approach advocated by the FHWA. The Rathdrum Prairie PEL study is not just a poor plan; it is fundamentally misaligned with the entire modern federal transportation planning paradigm and represents a legacy approach that is no longer considered acceptable or defensible at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Signature: BONNIE MCGHIE
BONNIE MCGHIE (Sep 1, 2025 20:18:27 PDT)

Email: [redacted]

Works Cited

1. **Federal Highway Administration.** Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook. *Planning and Environmental Linkages Handbook.* [Online] 1 2, 2024. https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/FHWA_PEL_Handbook_508_2024-01-02.pdf.

2. **Federal Highway Administration: PEL Flow Chart. [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/PEL/publications/PEL_Flow_Chart-Authorities_508_2024-01-16.pdf.**

3. CALTRANS PEL STUDY GUIDEBOOK. [Online] https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/ser/ct-pel-guidebook-a11y.pdf.

4. Idaho: PEL Procedures Handbook. [Online] https://itd.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ENV_PEL_Procedures.pdf.

5. Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study: Level 2 Alteratives PDF. [Online] https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-3/docs/ITD_RathdrumPrairie_PIM3_Magazine_v1_PDFUA.pdf.

6. The Innovative DOT: A handbook of policy and practice. [Online] https://ssti.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/1303/2014/01/The-Innovative-DOT-1.8.15-1.pdf.

7. I-25 Central Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i-25-santa-fe-20th-street-pel.

8. SR 167 Master Plan. [Online] https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan.

9. Hwy 52 — Hader to Zumbrota study. [Online] https://talk.dot.state.mn.us/hwy-52-hader-zumbrota-study.

10. Introduction to Context Sensitive Solutions. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/i70mountaincss/assets/docs/css/introduction-to-context-sensitive-solutions.

11. Context Sensitive Solutions Overview. [Online] https://environment.transportation.org/focus-areas/context-sensitive-solutions/context-sensitive-solutions-overview/.

12. Planning and Environmental Linkages Questionnaire. *Federal Highway Administration.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/pel_quest.aspx.

13. *PEL in Practice: Examples from Discussions with States.* [Online] https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_initiatives/pel/publications/PEL_in_Practice-Discussions_with_States.aspx.

14. Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Handbook . *CODOT.* [Online] https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/pel/assets/pel_handbook.pdf.

15. SH 119 MULTI-MODAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY. [Online] https://www.codot.gov/projects/co119mobility/assets/co-119-multi-modal-planning-and-environmental-linkages-study.pdf.

16. Federal Highway Administration. Road Diets (Roadway Reconfiguration). [Online] https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures/road-diets-roadway-reconfiguration.

17. I-70 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study. [Online] https://www.modot.org/i-70-planning-and-environmental-linkages-pel-study.

Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025

Final Audit Report 2025-09-02

Created:	2025-09-02
By:	Brian Rogers [redacted]
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAVdYvT5HmwzfyJtT1wOK1NZkf7_KDeeYz

"Escalation to Rathdrum Prairie PEL - 9/1/2025" History

Web Form created by Brian Rogers [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 0:25:46 AM GMT

Web Form filled in by BONNIE MCGHIE [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:18:28 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.147.246

Email verification link emailed to BONNIE MCGHIE [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:18:30 AM GMT

Email viewed by BONNIE MCGHIE [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:20:37 AM GMT- IP address: 66.249.84.226

E-signature verified by BONNIE MCGHIE [redacted]
2025-09-02 - 3:20:59 AM GMT- IP address: 98.145.147.246

Agreement completed.
2025-09-02 - 3:20:59 AM GMT

From: Sherman, Chonne
To: "Dave Maxwell"
Cc: Gray, Lisa
Subject: RE: Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!
Date: Sunday, September 28, 2025 7:20:00 PM

Hi Dave,

Glad you were able to make it to the Post Falls event! I appreciate your insights on the Heutter Road bypass and the broader corridor options. Public engagement continues to play a key role in shaping the screening criteria, alternatives, and recommendations — thank you for being part of that process.

We hope to see you at the next public meeting!

Cheers,

Chonne

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Dave Maxwell [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 9:04 PM
To: Sherman, Chonne <chonne.sherman@hdrinc.com>
Cc: Gray, Lisa <Lisa.Gray@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Re: Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

You don't often get email from frdmftr422@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Made the Post Falls event. Could not remember your names so unsure if I saw you our not (got there about 6:30).

Appreciate the view. Hope to learn more as these options mature. (Heutter Road) bypass appears to have most potential to move traffic off current 95 but only as a limited access corridor.

My bet is the Spokane North/South freeway will be finished before anything breaks ground here…

Cheers!

Dave Maxwell
[redacted]

From: Sherman, Chonne <chonne.sherman@hdrinc.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2025 8:16:32 PM
To: Dave Maxwell [redacted]
Cc: Gray, Lisa <Lisa.Gray@hdrinc.com>
Subject: RE: Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

Hello Dave,

Great question!

Yes, representatives from the study team will be available at both upcoming open house events. The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), along with partners from Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), will be there to answer questions and gather feedback. And if you have questions that aren't directly covered in the displays or materials, the team will do their best to help or connect you with someone who can.

We hope to see you at one of the upcoming meetings on Sept. 17 or Sept. 18.

Thank you for your interest in the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study.

Best regards,

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Dave Maxwell [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 1:59 PM
To: Sherman, Chonne <chonne.sherman@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Re: Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

You don't often get email from frdmftr422@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Will representatives from each city, county, and district be available? I attended the recent City of Post Falls long-range traffic open house only to learn that most of my questions/concerns involved the Post Falls Highway District area of responsibility (I assume county roads fall into that category as well).

Thanks,

Dave Maxwell

[redacted]

From: Idaho Transportation Department <chonne.sherman-hdrinc.com@shared1.ccsend.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 12:51:49 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

Help shape the future of transportation across the Rathdrum Prairie!

Join us for one of two public meetings on Sept. 17 or Sept. 18

The Idaho Transportation Department invites you to learn more about the Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Study and provide input about the future of our region's transportation system. The study will help identify ways to reduce congestion, enhance connectivity and keep traffic moving efficiently throughout the Rathdrum Prairie.

The study began with more than 50 ideas for improving travel across Kootenai County. Through earlier rounds of public input and technical review, those concepts have been narrowed to 13 alternatives. These options focus on improving safety, reducing congestion, and keeping traffic moving as the region grows.

Two upcoming public meetings will give community members a chance to:

- See how the alternatives were compared and which ones are recommended to move forward.
- Ask questions and talk directly with the study team.
- Share ideas for what matters most to you.

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce
Visitor Center
105 N. 1st St.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025
4:30-7 p.m.
Q'emiln Park
Trailhead Event Center
12361 W. Parkway Dr.
Post Falls, ID 83854

Both meetings will be held in an open-house style so people can drop in anytime. Displays will show updates, and staff will be available to answer questions and gather feedback.The meetings are family-friendly, children are welcome to attend with their parents.

Join the conversation online

Sept. 17 to Oct. 1, 2025

Visit the online meeting anytime during this period to review study materials and share your feedback at itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel.

- The same information will be presented at both the public and online meetings.
- Although your comments are always welcome, the public comment period for providing official feedback closes **Oct. 1.**

We're listening! Your feedback will help us shape the direction of the study.

Questions?

Email the study team at info@rathdrumprairiepel.com

Study Area

Project Website

Sign up for study updates

*Individuals who need special accommodations should contact **CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov** or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.*

Idaho Transportation Department | 600 W. Prairie Ave. | Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815 US

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

From: Jeff and Lori Barker
To: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Subject: Rathdrum Prairie Project
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:10:08 AM

You don't often get email from [redacted] Learn why this is important

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning.
After reading the latest article printed in the Coeur d'Alene Press this morning I wish to submit a thought I have had for the future of Highway 95 in Cd'A. As a resident of Kootenai County for 62 years, I remember a day(s) when traveling Hwy 95 beginning from Interstate 90 through Hayden, and the ease of getting from point A to point B.
Here's my idea. Consider removing all traffic signals on Hwy 95 through town with the exception of those affecting on and off ramps at the I90 intersection. Construct over-passes at certain intersections on Hwy 95 (Neider, Kathleen, Dalton, Prairie and Hayden), then use Government Way and Ramsey streets as arterials to move traffic north and south.
Business along Hwy 95 can still be accessed and traffic moving north and south may once again move freely all the way to Sagal, Idaho. Wish I could provide a cost analysis but I will leave this up to the ITD engineer team.
Appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the future of North Idaho traffic.
Sincerely,
Jeff Barker
Rathdrum, ID

From: Carrie Ann Hewitt
To: Waite, Cameron; Bentzler, Zachary; Gray, Lisa; Sherman, Chonne; 10346091_ITD-Alt Route Huetter Bypass
Cc: Jerry Wilson; Michael Hartz; Heather McDaniel
Subject: FW: Pel Study
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 3:49:29 PM
Attachments: Exhibit A .pdf
Exhibit C .pdf

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I'm going to forward emails from Ron and Brian that we'll need to discuss in more detail.

From: Ronald McGhie [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 11:43 PM
To: infor@rathdrumprairie.com; Brian Rogers [redacted] Brett H [redacted]
Don McGhie [redacted]; Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>
Subject: Pel Study

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Attn:Carrie Ann Hewitt PE

The PEL study area is 12 miles wide on the southerly border, along I-90 and Seltice.Ave. Its Easterly border is 8 miles along US-95 & Government Way from I-90 northerly to SH-53.

Exhibit A shows the location of the Cities and Existing Hwy's with the location of all the Arterials and my suggested adjustments to Alt N and Alt D.

The Study Area has east/west and north/south arterials almost every square mile. They need to be arterials, that cross under or over the Highways. You should not put new highways down existing arterials, or they will become Main Streets with Signals just like
SH-41.

The Adjusted N Alt should travel parallel to Hayden Ave until it crosses SH 41 and then continues cross country crossing over or under arterials at Huetter and Landcaster Roads and intersects at US-95@ Boekel. Thus, the adjusted Alt N travel through the entire study area will distribute traffic a lot more efficiently.

SH53 Typical Sections pg 34
Alternative N does not need 5 lanes plus 2 more for local access roads on each side of SH-53. It would be safer with only two lanes with the center turn lane being the center of the existing highway. The adjusted Alt N should greatly reduce the traffic on the northerly part of US 53 and greatly increase safety.

The New Highway 1 typical section is good but there is no need for a local access road. The travel between the two fastest growing cities, Post Falls & Rathdrum, are

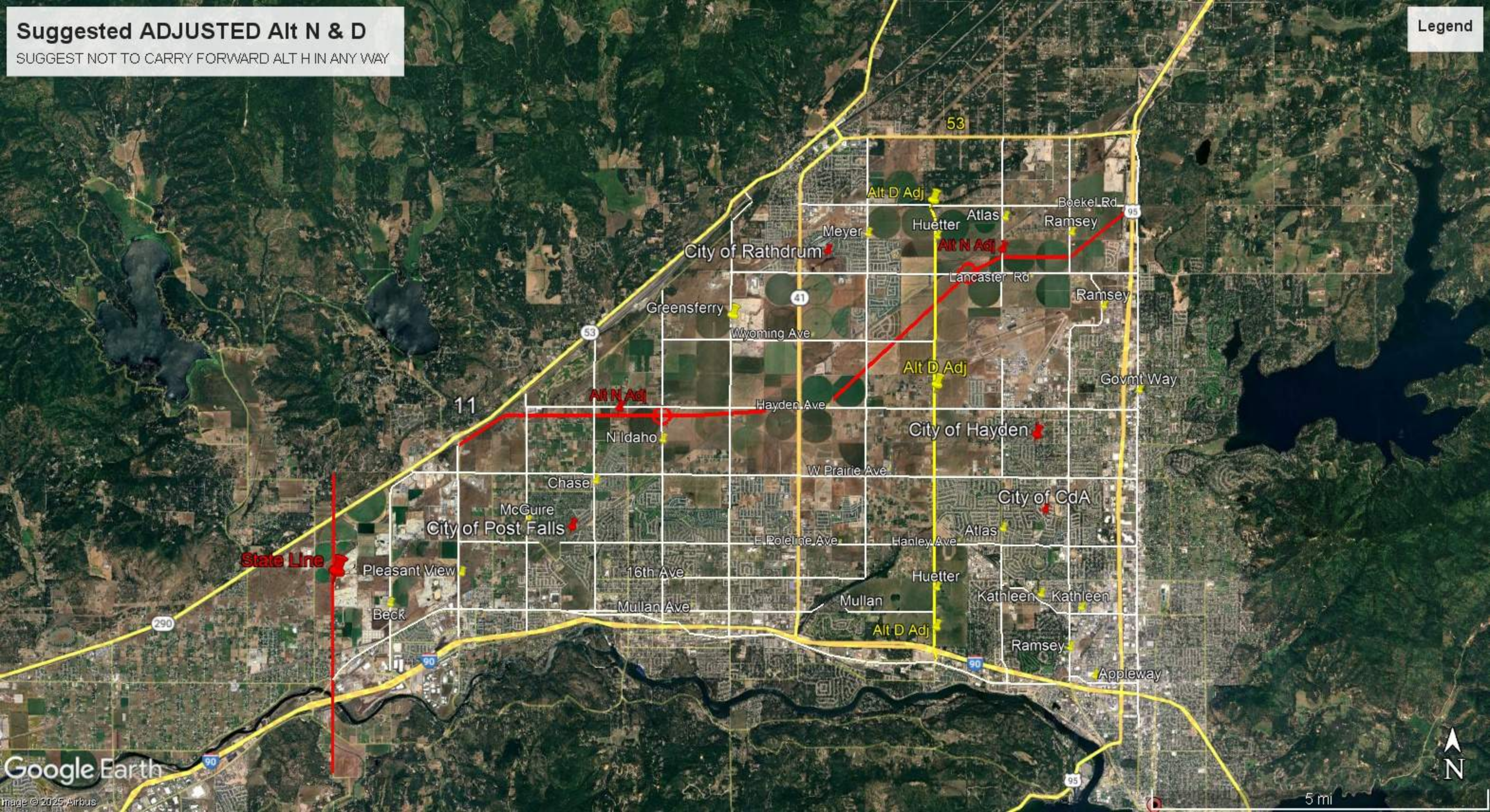
being totally ignored by KMPO and the proponents of the existing Alt H & D.

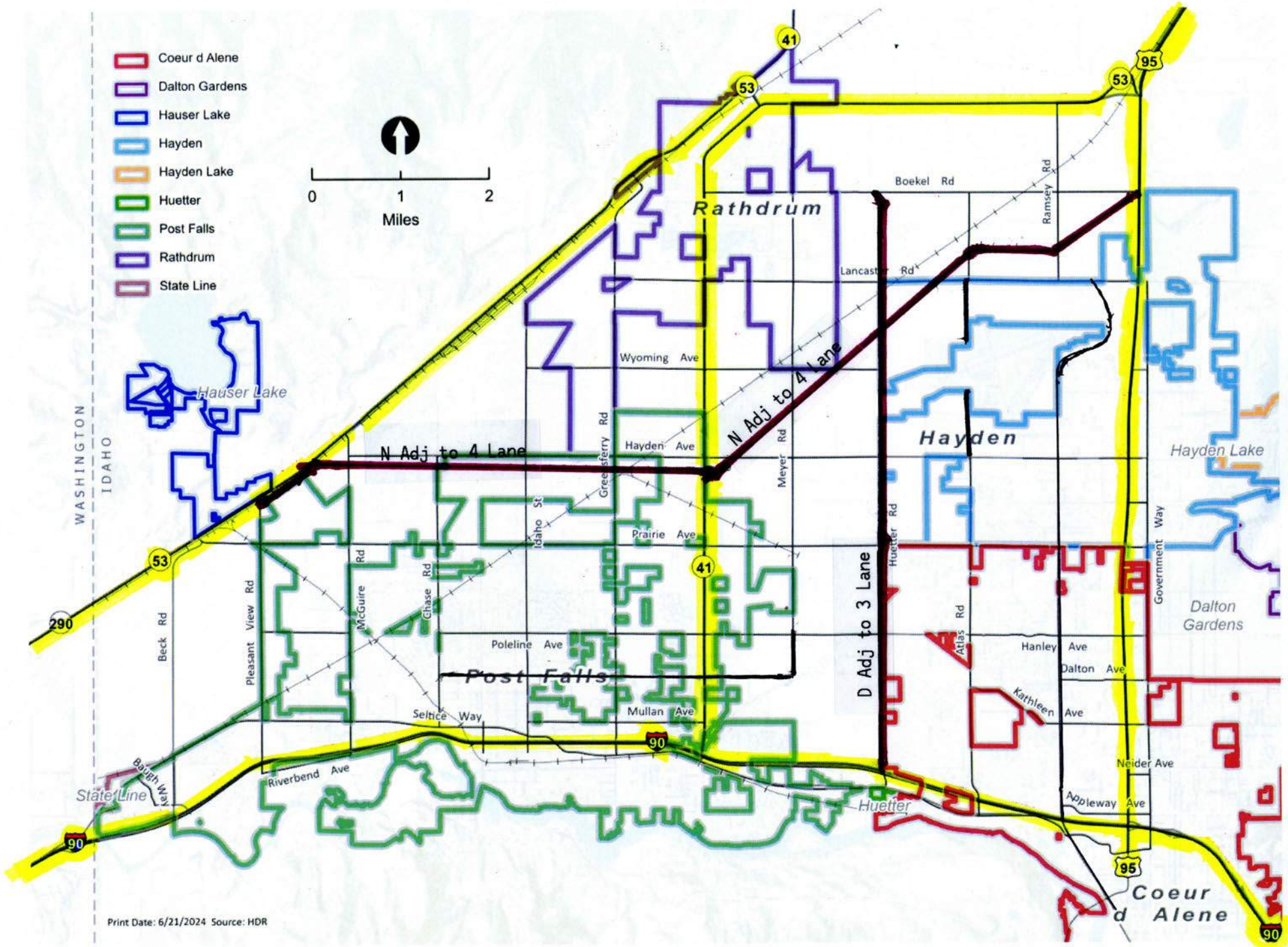
Alternative D should be adjusted to a three-lane arterial that runs northerly down the center of the existing Huetter Road from the north side of I-90 to W Boekel Rd. The adjusted alternative N leaves no reason for D or H to start or end at US-95 @ Boekel Rd. or I-90. Over 200 power poles will not have to be moved from Huetter by not making Huetter 5 lanes.

Alternative H This should be named the Bypass around CDA or the Glen Miles shortcut to Canada. I am through trying to point out the problems with this or showing people that it totally ignores Post Falls, Rathdrum, most if not all the City of CDA. to those with a special interest, or don't care. If it continues to go through, we will see how the courts handle taking all the property from the west side of Huetter Road without just cause.

Carrie Ann
Thank You for trying to help, I don't blame you.

Ronald C McGhie
[redacted]


Suggested ADJUSTED Alt N & D
SUGGEST NOT TO CARRY FORWARD ALT H IN ANY WAY
Legend
53
Alt D Adj
Boekel Rd
Atlas
Ramsey
Huetter
Meyer
City of Rathdrum
Alt N Adj
Lancaster Rd
Ramsey
41
Greensferry
Wyoming Ave
53
Alt D Adj
Govmt Way
11
Alt N Adj
Hayden Ave
City of Hayden
N Idaho
W Prairie Ave
Chase
City of CdA
McGuire
City of Post Falls
Atlas
E Poleline Ave
Hanley Ave
State Line
Pleasant View
16th Ave
Huetter
Kathleen
Kathleen
Mullan Ave
Mullan
Beck
290
Alt D Adj
90
Ramsey
90
Appleway
95
Google Earth
Image © 2025 Airbus
N
5 mi


Coeur d Alene
Dalton Gardens
Hauser Lake
Hayden
Hayden Lake
Huetter
Post Falls
Rathdrum
State Line
0
1
2
Miles
WASHINGTON
IDAHO
Rathdrum
Hayden
Hayden Lake
Hauser Lake
Dalton Gardens
Post Falls
Huetter
State Line
Coeur d Alene
N Adj to 4 Lane
N Adj to 4 Lane
D Adj to 3 Lane
Boekel Rd
Ramsey Rd
Lancaster Rd
Wyoming Ave
Hayden Ave
Prairie Ave
Poleline Ave
Mullan Ave
Seltice Way
Riverbend Ave
Meyer Rd
Greensferry Rd
Idaho St
Chase Rd
McGuire Rd
Pleasant View Rd
Beck Rd
Huetter Rd
Atlas Rd
Government Way
Hanley Ave
Dalton Ave
Kathleen Ave
Neider Ave
Appleway Ave
Bauch Way
41
53
95
290
90
Print Date: 6/21/2024 Source: HDR

Alternative D
Huetter Road Improved Arterial

Level 2 Alternative ID: D (North-South) Recommended to Carry Forward

Level 2 Alternative Description

Alternative D would add a new four-lane arterial with a median/turn lane from I-90 to US-95 following the Huetter Road alignment.

The alternative would add two lanes in each direction with a center turn lane, and a 35-45 mph speed limit.

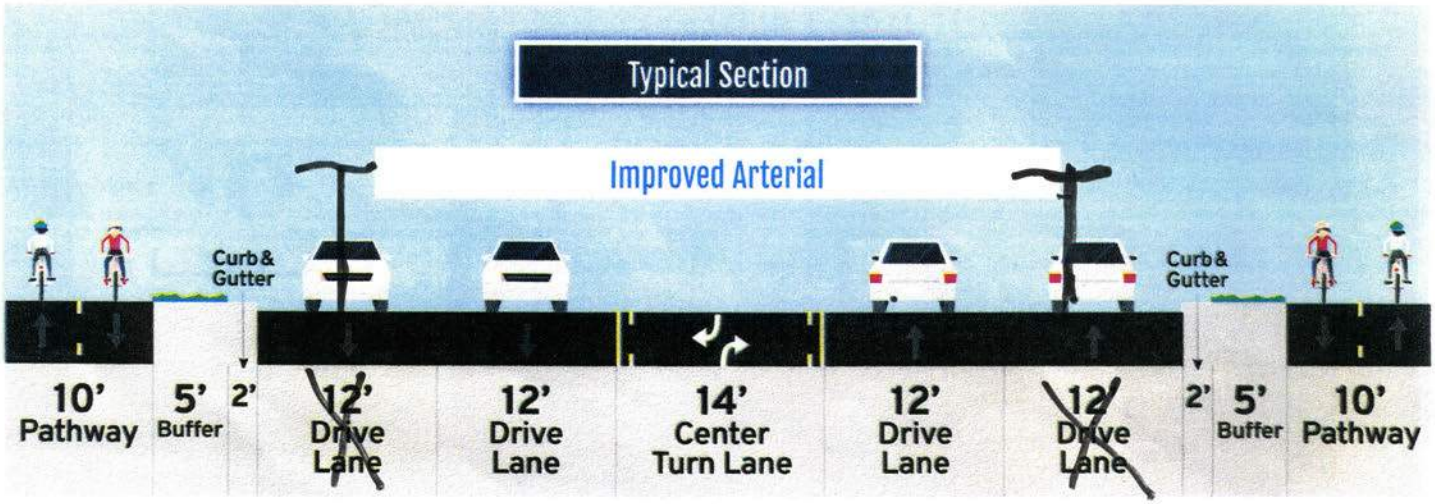
Comparative Screening Benefits and Challenges

Benefits:

- Addresses study area congestion, travel efficiency, and network redundancy better than most other north-south alternatives.
- Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Fewer right of way (56 properties, 107 acres) than most other north-south alternatives.
- Maintains existing access points.
- Adds new I-90 interchange access.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Challenges:

- May be more appropriately implemented as a local facility rather than ITD facility.
- Increases potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on Huetter Road.



From: Sherman, Chonne
To: "Todd Herman"
Cc: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Subject: Transit Mode Shift Estimate
Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 2:27:00 PM

Hello Todd,

I forwarded your request to the project team for review.

Thank you for reaching out.

Best regards,
Chonne

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Todd Herman [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 1, 2025 9:50 AM
To: Sherman, Chonne <Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com>
Cc: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Subject: Re: Request for Meeting Materials

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Quick question: what percentage of people does your team contend will leave their cars to use buses instead?

On Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 9:12 AM Sherman, Chonne <Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com> wrote:

> Hi Todd,
>
> Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.
>
> Best regards,
> Chonne

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Sherman, Chonne
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:43 AM
To: 'Todd Herman' [redacted]
Cc: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com; Gray, Lisa <Lisa.Gray@hdrinc.com>
Subject: RE: Request for Meeting Materials

Hello Todd,

The Level 2 Alternatives Screening Results for Public Review and Input and Understanding the Screening Matrix and Travel Analysis is available through the online meeting link https://rathdrumprairiepel.com/PIM-4/. The compressed files are still quite large, so hopefully my email will go through sending the materials in separate emails.

Best regards,

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Todd Herman [redacted]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 8:30 AM
To: Sherman, Chonne <Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com>
Cc: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com; Gray, Lisa <Lisa.Gray@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Re: Request for Meeting Materials

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Chonne,

Please send me the 13 alternatives your team presented at the September 17th and 18th meetings as per below

Thanks,

-Todd

On Sun, Sep 7, 2025 at 5:17 PM Sherman, Chonne <Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com> wrote:

> Hi Todd,
>
> Thank you for following up, and I apologize for missing your initial request.
>
> The materials for the September 17the and 18th public meetings are not yet finalized. As part of our standard process, we release meeting materials at the time of the public meeting to ensure they are made available to everyone simultaneously. This approach helps maintain transparency and fairness in our public engagement efforts.
>
> We appreciate your interest and encourage you to attend one of the two in-person meetings. Identical information will be presented at both meetings and made available online from September 17 through October 1. Once finalized, the materials will be publicly accessible to all.
>
> Please let me know if you have any other questions.
>
> Best regards,
>
> **Chonne Sherman**
> *Strategic Communications Coordinator*
>
> **HDR**
> 412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
> Boise, ID 83706-6659
> O 208-387-7000
> Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com
>
> hdrinc.com/follow-us
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Todd Herman [redacted]
> **Sent:** Sunday, September 7, 2025 5:10 PM
> **To:** info@rathdrumprairiepel.com

Subject: Re: Please email me the 13 alternatives

You don't often get email from onemoretodd@gmail.com. Learn why this is important
CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi again -

This is my second request. Please email me the 13 alternatives you will be presenting at the meetings on September 17th and 18th.

Thanks,

-Todd

On Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 8:06 AM Todd Herman [redacted] wrote:

> Hello Team ITD,
>
> Would you kindly email me the 13 alternatives you will be presenting at the meetings on September 17th and 18th?
>
> Thanks,
>
> -Todd

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
8047 W. Main Street
Rathdrum, ID 83858
P 208.687.2700
F 208.687.1377

Memo

To: Carrie Ann Hewitt (via email)
From: Kevin Jump
CC:
Date: October 7, 2025
Re: Rathdrum Prairie PEL Study Alternatives – from Public Meeting #4

GENERAL

There are 5 Alternative Elements being considered by ITD at this time (Alternatives B, D, H, M and N).

This memo pertains to only these 5 remaining alternatives.

Alternative B

This alternative is an expansion of US95. Since US95 does not bisect any portion of the City of Rathdrum, we have no comment.

Alternative D

In general, this is the Huetter bypass with a deviation alignment following the UPRR.

The City of Rathdrum is in support of this alternative – and has designated the Huetter Bypass on the Rathdrum Transportation Master Plan.

Cursory-identified concerns:

- None

Alternative H

In general, this is the true Huetter bypass. This alternative has an alignment deviation from Alternate D.

Again, the City of Rathdrum is in support of this alternative – and has designated the Huetter Bypass on the Rathdrum Transportation Master Plan.

Cursory-identified concerns:

- This alignment is deemed favorable to the City of Rathdrum – although, more and more private developments are being permitted without setting aside right-of-way for the Huetter bypass.

Alternative M

This alternative generally appears to package a few predecessor alternatives; thus linking SH53 (near the future Pleasant View interchange) to US95, by means of a west-to-east alignment.

Cursory-identified concerns:

- There are some residential developments (Brookshire South and Hollice Woods, Trossix), between Meyer Road and the proposed Meyer Road Bypass, who are directly impacted by the proposed Alternative M alignment.
- The Meyer Road Bypass alignment also offers the potential for further conflicts with the recently-constructed Westwood Pines, Hadley Meadows, Quail Ridge, Corbin Crossing developments as well as prospective future developments.
- We have also not contemplated potential ramifications with this being an Access-controlled alignment.
- The new interchange at the south-end of the Meyer Road Bypass will need to evaluated further due to the presence of existing & proposed residential developments in this area.
- SH53 Bypass - Economic impacts to bypassing existing Rathdrum businesses.

As new developments are processed, the City of Rathdrum is currently setting aside public right-of-way in accordance with Rathdrum Transportation Master Plan. Any footprint wider than that currently being obtained by the City could have significant impact to both residences, businesses and schools. Further, much of the Alternative M alignment is not illustrated on Rathdrum's Transportation Master Plan; thus, we are not acquiring right-of-way donations for the Alternative M alignment.

Alternative N

The above-comments provided for Alternative M are also relevant for this Alternative N alignment. However, in many aspects, the City of Rathdrum prefers Alternative N over Alternative M.

From: Sherman, Chonne
To: Tom McNulty; info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Cc: Gray, Lisa
Subject: RE: Traffic congestion possible solutions
Date: Sunday, September 28, 2025 6:50:48 PM

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Mr. McNulty,

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your concerns. I completely understand how frustrating it can be to only now be learning about activities that began some time ago. Transparency and community input are essential, and I'm truly sorry you weren't made aware sooner.

As part of HDR's role, we serve as communications consultants supporting the Idaho Transportation Department in its public outreach efforts. ITD's goal throughout this process has been to engage the community in a meaningful and consistent way. Since 2022, ITD has conducted a range of outreach activities, including:

- Mailing over 9,000 meeting notice postcards (per meeting)
- Running multiple radio ads
- Issuing press releases and participating in news coverage
- Gathered input from community members, stakeholders, and agencies through interviews, workshops, and public meetings

Each round of public engagement has helped to shape the screening criteria, alternatives, and recommendations. Some alternatives were originally suggested and drawn out by the public at previous meetings. At the fall/winter 2024 public meetings, ITD introduced the Level 2 screening process to show how alternatives would be evaluated and heard the following from the community:

- The community wants to protect existing neighborhoods and resources
- Avoiding cultural and historic sites
- A combination of alternatives may be needed to address regional traffic needs

Most recently, on September 17 and 18, 2025, ITD hosted the fourth round of public meetings to share preliminary recommendations for which alternatives could move forward. For those unable to attend in person, an online meeting is available from September 17 through October 1, featuring the same information presented at the in-person events. You can access it here:

https://itdprojects.idaho.gov/pages/rathdrum-prairie-pel.

At the end of the online meeting, there's a comment section where you can share feedback on the alternatives recommended for Level 3 screening. Community feedback will help shape final recommendations and decisions for the study—it's not too late to be part of the conversation.

If you'd prefer hard copies of the meeting materials and comment form, I'd be happy to mail them to you. Just let me know your mailing address.

Again, I'm sorry you weren't aware of the study earlier. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like to speak with someone from the study team.

Thank you again for taking the time to connect.

Best regards,

Chonne Sherman
Strategic Communications Coordinator

HDR
412 E Parkcenter Blvd., Ste. 100
Boise, ID 83706-6659
O 208-387-7000
Chonne.Sherman@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Tom McNulty [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 8:21 PM
To: info@rathdrumprairiepel.com
Subject: Traffic congestion possible solutions

You don't often get email from mcnultom@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

This is the first I've heard of your activity. Unfortunately it appears that decisions were already being made 9 months ago....in December of 2024. I hope you truly did get to share your plans with people and get their input over the last several years. We've lived north of Rathdrum for 6.5 years and are just now aware of what is/has been going on.

From: Brian Rogers [redacted]

Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 2:43 PM

To: Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>; Brett Haney [redacted] Ronald McGhie [redacted]

Cc: Jerry Wilson <Jerry.Wilson@itd.idaho.gov>; Heather McDaniel <Heather.McDaniel@itd.idaho.gov>; Michael Hartz <Michael.Hartz@itd.idaho.gov>; GOOKIN, DAN [redacted]; DougO@senate.idaho.gov; JPalmer@house.idaho.gov; Dustin.woods@dot.gov

Subject: Re: Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Plan Data

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Merging Threads

Dear Carrie Ann,

I hope you had a great weekend. It looks like the summer is closing out with some cooler weather on the horizon.

I thought it best to merge the email thread together as I am not sure how they became separated.

I have been speaking with community members and even reached out to the CDA Press on the article that was written from one of the in-person meetings for the PEL study. It is concerning how the propagation of misinformation is continuing around this Rathdrum Prairie PEL study. Before this PEL study was initiated, the No Huetter Bypass group was actively involved with State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI), ITD, KMPO, local businesses, and others when defining the need for such a study and the goals to promote a better community, safer roadways, and the ability to scale the population of the area with the least amount of impact to traffic as possible.

Over the course of the PEL study, the No Huetter Bypass group and others have experienced a deliberate removal of ideas which focused on the supporting the original goals. In fact, the PEL study, at this time, appears to be a $3 million cost which is void of value. With the latest public handouts, all but a few ideas that have been presented to the community are what have been on the "drawing boards" for years.

As has been presented in the attached letters to ITD, the lack of looking at new ways of developing roadways and alternative transportation, as recommended by the FHWA,

appears to be on the back burner if used at all. In the last email, the following statement was made, and we don't agree that submitting the documentations and getting a checkbox means that FHWA standards (best practices) and regulations are being followed due to the process in place. The letters reference and quote many FHWA standards, best practices, and other items that are being overlooked if not completely avoided.

From the Attached Email Thread:

In your letter, we noticed that you mention quite a bit about "the lack of the PEL following Federal standards and regulations". We wanted to assure you that we meet on a regular basis with Sajonara Tipuric from FHWA and she has approved Part 1 of Concurrence Point #3 with no comments – that is currently our draft memo that was sent out. Part 2 of Concurrence Point #3 will detail a "results memo" which will be submitted to FHWA for approval after we're done with Level 3 screening.

As stated in the letters and in other corrispondence, the NHB group and its members, continue to be met with vast resistance to looking at modern solutions by local goverment entities involved in the PEL. Decisions, which have been made in less than transparent ways, continue to lead to non-modern solutions for supporting the local community. As stated in the below Infographic, the PEL is not focused on broad bush concepts as the NHB group has been told, but perscriptive concepts based on outdated engineering, litteraly brought forward from before 2009. Missing items in traffic anaylisys for grade separation concepts and 'road diets' (per FHWA), along with studies from other states does not support the original goals of this PEL study, but rather the original agenda of local goverment entites.

The group has asked, now two times over the last year, for raw data and decision making criteria. The request has not been fullfiled.

It would be great if there was a positive path to transperency and a review of decisions which have been made and which actors have contributed to those decisions. Providing details from the requested letters and members of the community is a priority as well.

Thanks,

Brian Rogers
[redacted]
[redacted]
"Intelligence removes complexity." - Me

From: Brian Rogers <im@brro.me>

Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 20:37

To: Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>; Brett Haney [redacted]; Ronald McGhie [redacted]

Subject: Re: Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Plan Data

Hey Carrie Ann,

Here is another set of documents and signers totally 35 so far by my count.

The community is looking forward to improving on the current details, many folks have shared their concerns which align strongly with what the NHB group has discussed as per the atta

Round 2 Signers

Andrea Baass Peters
Brian Rogers
E Heathcoat
Garth Rogers
Jay L Greer
Jennifer Honshell
John K. McGuire
Laureen Jacobi
Mark Jacobi
Maureen Marian
Nic Ames
Philip Spradley
Sharon M Greer

Thanks,

Brian Rogers

[redacted]

[redacted]

_____

From: Brian Rogers [redacted]

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 21:21

To: Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>; Brett Haney [redacted]; Ronald McGhie [redacted]

Subject: Re: Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Plan Data

Hey Carrie Ann,

I hope you are doing well and had a great Labor Day weekend! Personally, I am looking forward to a drop in the temperature 🙄

The NHB group doesn't see a problem with a simplified version of the data which supports the areas of need and shows the current issues. We do believe there are issues with showing over simplified decisions or concepts like the "smiley" faces with no data displayed.

That said, we are more interested in making sure that the raw data, in text, CSV, or some other usable format (not a PDF), is made available for review. The public should also have all the details needed to understand any and all decisions happening between parties involved in decisions making and analysis. We continue to be highly concerned with what was shown at the last meeting.

We have reached out to our members and provided them with the attached letter to you (see attached) (Infographic). We wanted them to understand where the group currently stands on the Rathdrum Prairie PEL study. We are also concerned, after reading this memo submitted to you by HDR, why section 3 is completely missing from any of the 13 Level 2 Alternatives. Showing a bike path 10' wide does not address any of these issues along with the Transit problems (see Purpose and Need Memo from HDR).

You will find in the letter the Federal definition for a 'Planning Product' along with references to other State's PEL Handbooks. Further, there will be a reference to a PEL flow diagram provided by the FHWA. The NHB group doesn't appreciate statements to stop us for addressing more than a "broad brush" concept due to NEPA. The documents are very clear about how the PEL data and analysis can transfer directly into NEPA and more than a broad brush is required.

Here are the current signatures we have received. I am traveling this week and will follow up with additional signatures later this week or early next.

Also, I would like to setup time with you folks to discuss the letter and an action plans around it since the last letter did not appear to be taken into account.

Current Signers

BONNIE MCGHIE
Brett Haney
Brian Adams
Christopher Good
Darla Pavlish
Don McGhie
Donna Euler
Jeffrey Pearson
Jennifer Hickman
Lindsay Adams
Lloran Johnson
Lynn A Thompson
Mark L Buntin
Nicholas Payne
Robin Schannep
Ronald C McGhie
Ronda Bowling
Sandra Carney
Sydney Welton
Tamara Martinez
Tracie Nunez
Wes reed

Thanks,

Brian Rogers
[redacted]
[redacted]
“Intelligence removes complexity.” - Me

_____

From: Carrie Ann Hewitt <CarrieAnn.Hewitt@itd.idaho.gov>

Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 16:30

To: Brian Rogers [redacted]; Brett Haney [redacted]; Ronald McGhie [redacted]

Subject: RE: Rathdrum Prairie Area Transportation Plan Data

Brian, Brett, and Ron:

HDR is in the process of preparing a handout with the data matrices from the evaluation of the 13 Level 2 Alternatives to send to the Community Working Group (CWG) about a week before the public meeting. There would be a "public-reader-friendly-version" and then a full version of all the data. We think it would be best to put out the "public-reader-friendly-version" at the public meetings, but we'd like the CWG to comment on the two versions to see which version they think would be best to be presented at the public meetings.

I believe that the full version will address the questions that you had about the data used to make the recommendations.

After you've had a chance to look the information over, if you'd like to meet with ITD, we can answer any questions that you may have about the data or the recommendations if that's helpful for you.

Hope you have a relaxing Labor Day Weekend. Thanks for your input.

Carrie Ann M. Hewitt, P.E.
Idaho Transportation Department â€“ District One
Technical Engineer Services Leader â€“ Planning Services
Mon.-Fri. 8 am-4:30 pm
Office: 208-772-1230
Cell: 208-620-8291

Alternative A

Typical Sections

SH-53 Expanded Highway

- Interchange @ 41
- WB slip lane @ S end of bridge over RR tracks

Drop

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Would not address study area performance issues as well as other east-west alternatives.
- Would not reduce congestion and travel time on SH-53 as much as other alternatives.
- Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
- Does not significantly reduce potential crash conflicts at driveways on SH-53.
- High level of impacts to wetlands (3.7 acres) and historic sites (1 sites)

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

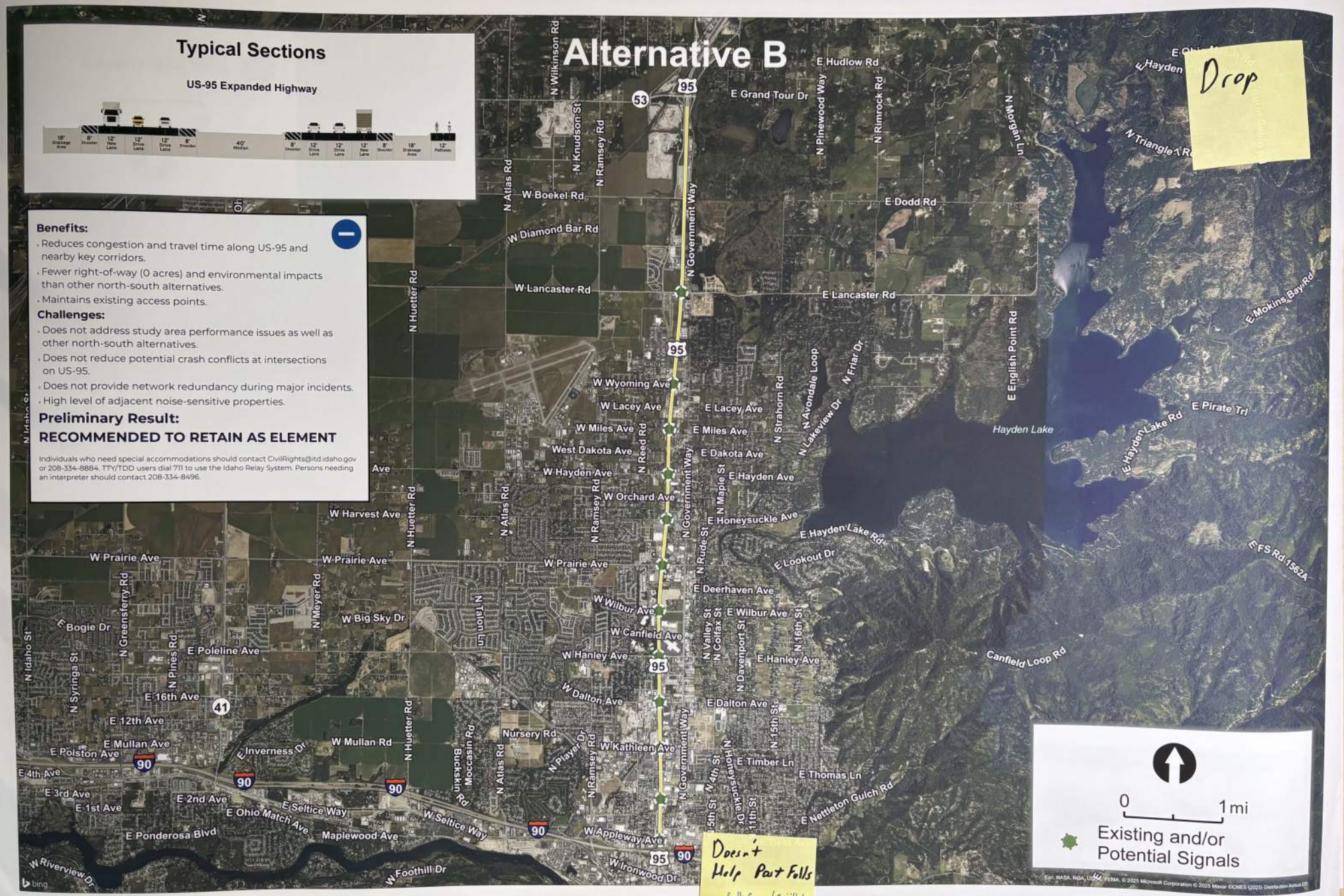
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact Civi1Rights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

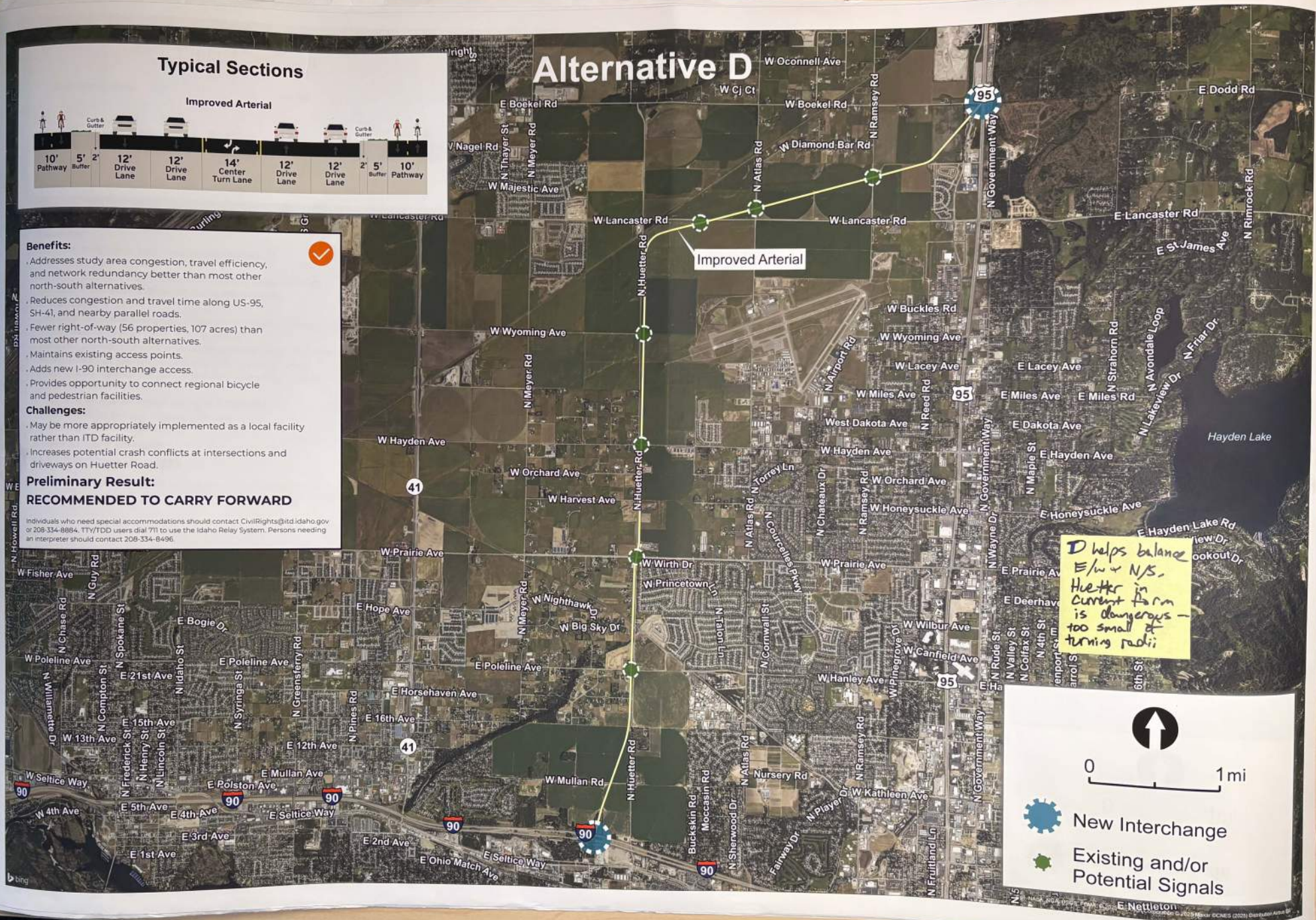
0 1mi

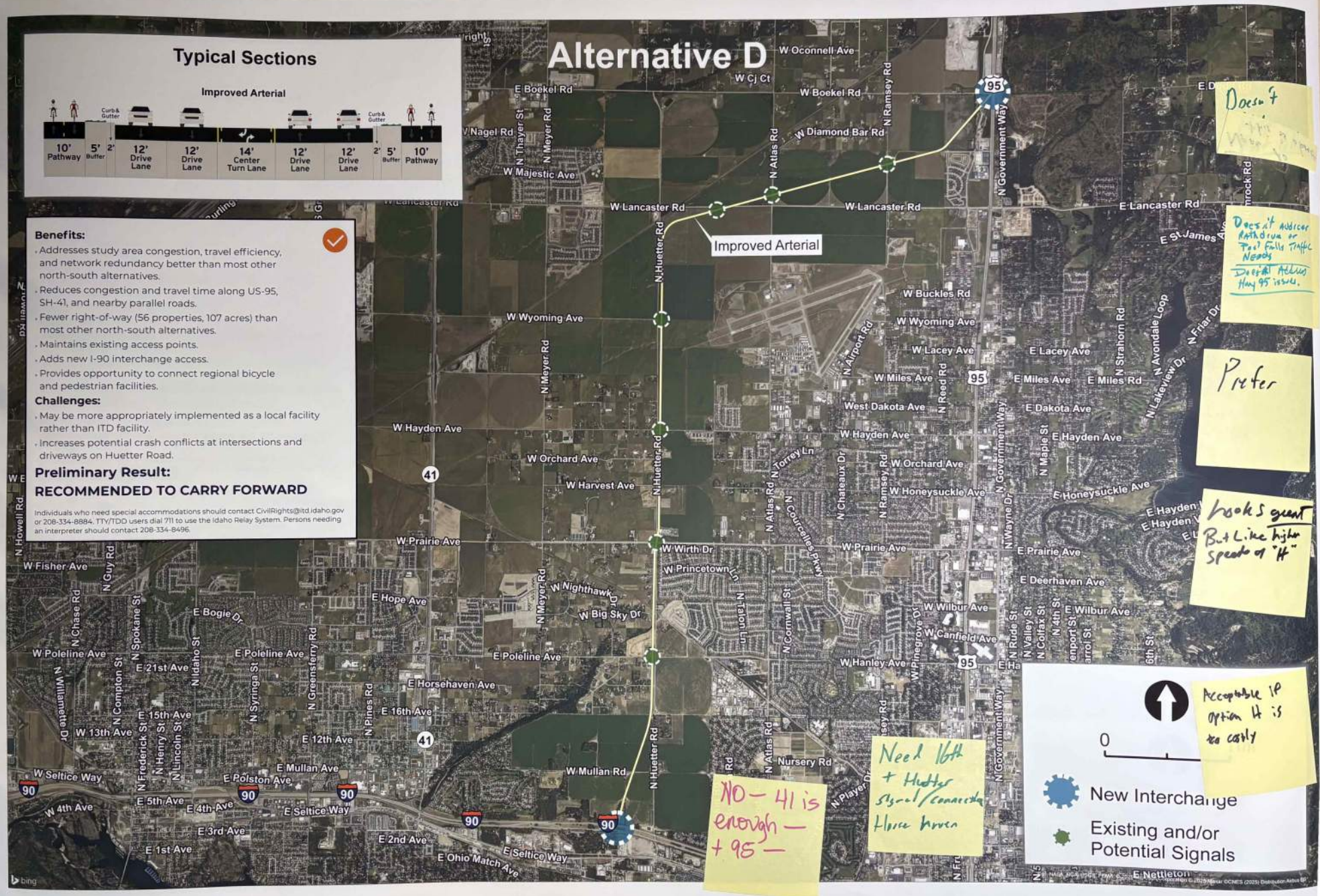
New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals


Alternative B
Typical Sections
US-95 Expanded Highway
Benefits:
Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby key corridors.
Fewer right-of-way (0 acres) and environmental impacts than other north-south alternatives.
Maintains existing access points.
Challenges:
Does not address study area performance issues as well as other north-south alternatives.
Does not reduce potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95.
Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO RETAIN AS ELEMENT
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Drop
Doesn't Help Post Falls
Ol Rath Beum / Spirit Lake
0 1 mi
Existing and/or Potential Signals
Hayden Lake
Canfield Loop Rd
N Government Way
N Ramsey Rd
N Atlas Rd
N Huetter Rd
N Reed Rd
N Rude St
N Maple St
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Lakeview Dr
N Friar Dr
E English Point Rd
N Pinewood Way
N Rimrock Rd
N Wilkinson Rd
N Knudson St
N Meyer Rd
N Greensferry Rd
N Idaho St
N Syringa St
N Pines Rd
N Player Dr
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N Davenport St
N 16th St
N 15th St
N 4th St
N Honeysuckle Dr
N 11th St
N Moggan Ln
E Hudlow Rd
E Grand Tour Dr
E Dodd Rd
E Lancaster Rd
W Lancaster Rd
W Boekel Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
E Hayden Lake Rd
E Lookout Dr
E Deerhaven Ave
W Wilbur Ave
E Wilbur Ave
W Canfield Ave
W Hanley Ave
E Hanley Ave
W Dalton Ave
E Dalton Ave
W Kathleen Ave
E Timber Ln
E Thomas Ln
E Nettleton Gulch Rd
W Appleway Ave
W Ironwood Dr
W Foothill Dr
W Riverview Dr
E Ponderosa Blvd
Maplewood Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
E Seltice Way
W Seltice Way
E 1st Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 3rd Ave
E 4th Ave
E Polston Ave
E Mullan Ave
E 12th Ave
E 16th Ave
E Bogie Dr
E Poleline Ave
W Big Sky Dr
W Harvest Ave
W Prairie Ave
W Mullan Rd
E Inverness Dr
Nursery Rd
Buckskin Rd
Moccasin Rd
E Mokins Bay Rd
E Pirate Trl
E Hayden Lake Rd
E FS Rd 1562A
E Hayden
N Triangle Dr
95
90
53
41
bing


Alternative D
Typical Sections
Improved Arterial
10' Pathway
5' Buffer
2'
Curb & Gutter
12' Drive Lane
12' Drive Lane
14' Center Turn Lane
12' Drive Lane
12' Drive Lane
2'
5' Buffer
10' Pathway
Curb & Gutter
Benefits:
Addresses study area congestion, travel efficiency, and network redundancy better than most other north-south alternatives.
Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
Fewer right-of-way (56 properties, 107 acres) than most other north-south alternatives.
Maintains existing access points.
Adds new I-90 interchange access.
Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
Challenges:
May be more appropriately implemented as a local facility rather than ITD facility.
Increases potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on Huetter Road.
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Improved Arterial
D helps balance E/W & N/S. Huetter in current form is dangerous — too small of turning radii
0
1 mi
New Interchange
Existing and/or Potential Signals
W Oconnell Ave
W Cj Ct
E Boekel Rd
W Boekel Rd
E Dodd Rd
N Ramsey Rd
N Government Way
95
W Nagel Rd
N Thayer St
N Meyer Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
N Atlas Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Lancaster Rd
E Lancaster Rd
N Rimrock Rd
E St James Ave
N Huetter Rd
W Buckles Rd
W Wyoming Ave
N Airport Rd
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Friar Dr
N Lakeview Dr
W Miles Ave
N Reed Rd
E Miles Ave
E Miles Rd
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
Hayden Lake
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
N Torrey Ln
N Chateaux Dr
N Maple St
W Honeysuckle Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
E Hayden Lake Rd
W Prairie Ave
W Wirth Dr
W Princetown Ln
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Wayne Dr
W Fisher Ave
N Howell Rd
N Guy Rd
N Chase Rd
N Spokane St
E Bogie Dr
E Hope Ave
N Meyer Rd
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
N Idaho St
E 21st Ave
N Greensferry Rd
N Cornwall St
W Wilbur Ave
W Canfield Ave
W Hanley Ave
N Rude St
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N 4th St
N Compton St
N Syringa St
E Horsehaven Ave
N Pines Rd
E 16th Ave
E 15th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
41
W Mullan Rd
Nursery Rd
W Kathleen Ave
N Ramsey Rd
N Government Way
N Player Dr
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
E Mullan Ave
E Polston Ave
W Seltice Way
E 5th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
W 4th Ave
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
Buckskin Rd
Moccasin Rd
N Sherwood Dr
Fairway Dr
N Fruitland Ln
90
E Nettleton
bing


Alternative D
Typical Sections
Improved Arterial
10' Pathway
5' Buffer
2'
12' Drive Lane
12' Drive Lane
14' Center Turn Lane
12' Drive Lane
12' Drive Lane
2'
5' Buffer
10' Pathway
Curb & Gutter
Curb & Gutter
Benefits:
Addresses study area congestion, travel efficiency, and network redundancy better than most other north-south alternatives.
Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
Fewer right-of-way (56 properties, 107 acres) than most other north-south alternatives.
Maintains existing access points.
Adds new I-90 interchange access.
Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
Challenges:
May be more appropriately implemented as a local facility rather than ITD facility.
Increases potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on Huetter Road.
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Improved Arterial
W Oconnell Ave
W Cj Ct
E Boekel Rd
W Boekel Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Lancaster Rd
E Lancaster Rd
N Huetter Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Buckles Rd
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
E Miles Rd
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Honeysuckle Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
W Prairie Ave
E Prairie Ave
W Wirth Dr
W Princetown Ln
E Deerhaven Ave
W Wilbur Ave
E Wilbur Ave
W Canfield Ave
W Hanley Ave
E Hope Ave
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
E Bogie Dr
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
E 21st Ave
E Horsehaven Ave
E 16th Ave
E 15th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
E Mullan Ave
W Mullan Rd
Nursery Rd
E Polston Ave
W Seltice Way
E Seltice Way
E 5th Ave
E 4th Ave
W 4th Ave
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
W Fisher Ave
N Howell Rd
N Guy Rd
N Chase Rd
N Spokane St
N Compton St
N Idaho St
N Greensferry Rd
N Syringa St
N Pines Rd
N Meyer Rd
N Thayer St
N Ramsey Rd
N Atlas Rd
N Government Way
N Airport Rd
N Reed Rd
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Lakeview Dr
N Friar Dr
N Maple St
N Wayne Dr
N Rude St
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N 4th St
N Chateaux Dr
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Cornwall St
N Pinegrove Dr
N Player Dr
N Torrey Ln
N Taion Ln
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N Williamette Dr
N Howell Rd
E Nettleton
0
New Interchange
Existing and/or Potential Signals
Doesn't
Does it address Rathdrum or Post Falls traffic Needs
Doesn't address Hwy 95 issues.
Prefer
Looks great But Like higher speeds of "H"
Acceptable if option H is too costly
Need 16th + Huetter signal/connectivity Hoiser Haven
NO — 41 is enough — + 95 —

Alternative E

Typical Sections

Local Access Road

New Highway

Future Park being developed by Atlas Buildings

Doesn't help very many people

Keep Help PF

Benefits:

- Reduces congestion and travel time along SH-53, Pleasant View Road, SH-41, and nearby parallel roads.
- Generally addresses study area travel time and travel efficiency.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
- Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum, moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Highest level of impacts to residential zoned properties (345 acres).
- High level of floodplain (14 acres), wetland (8.1 acres), and historic site impacts (16 sites).
- Would not provide as much access to SH-53 as other alternatives.
- High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

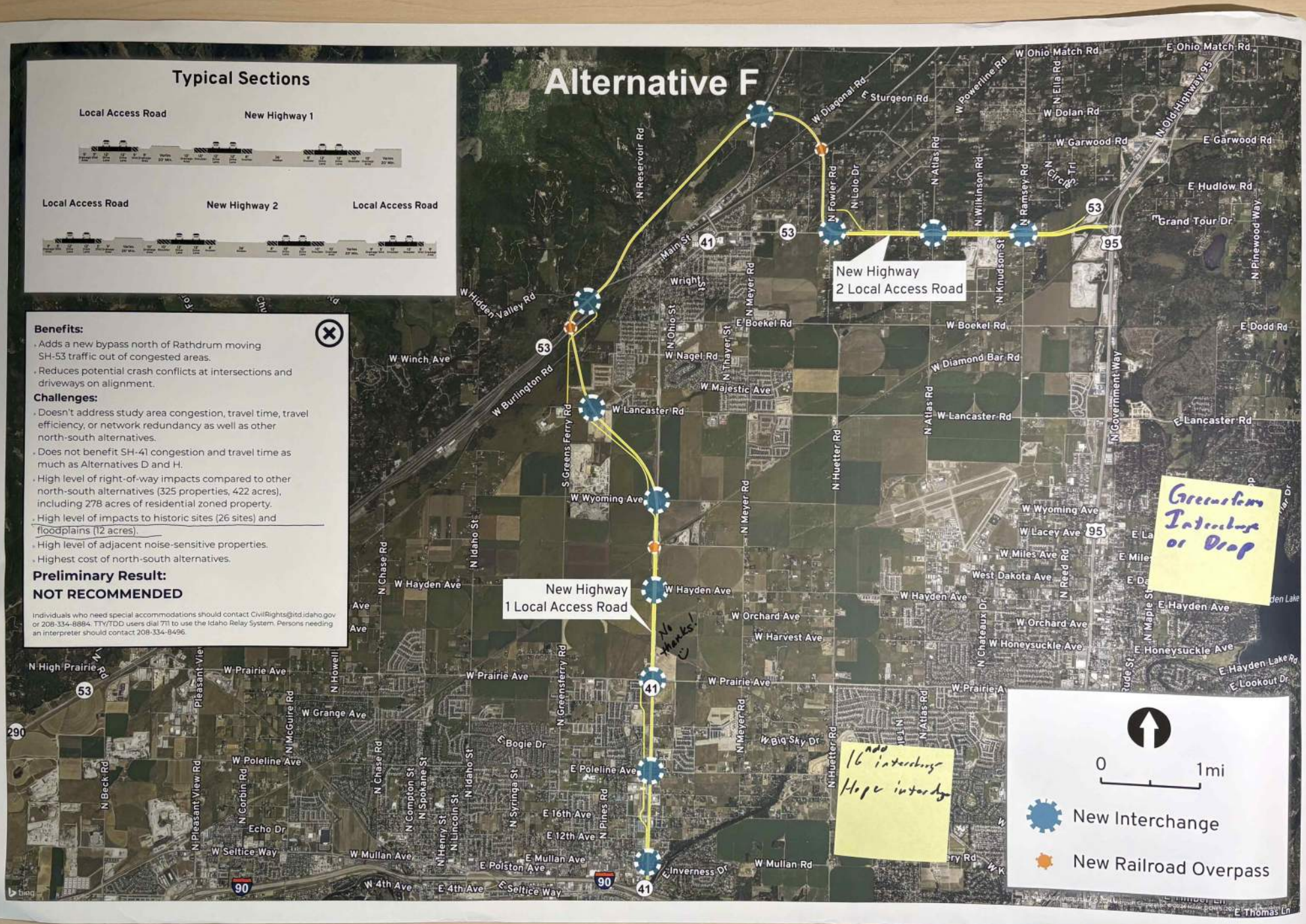
NOT RECOMMENDED

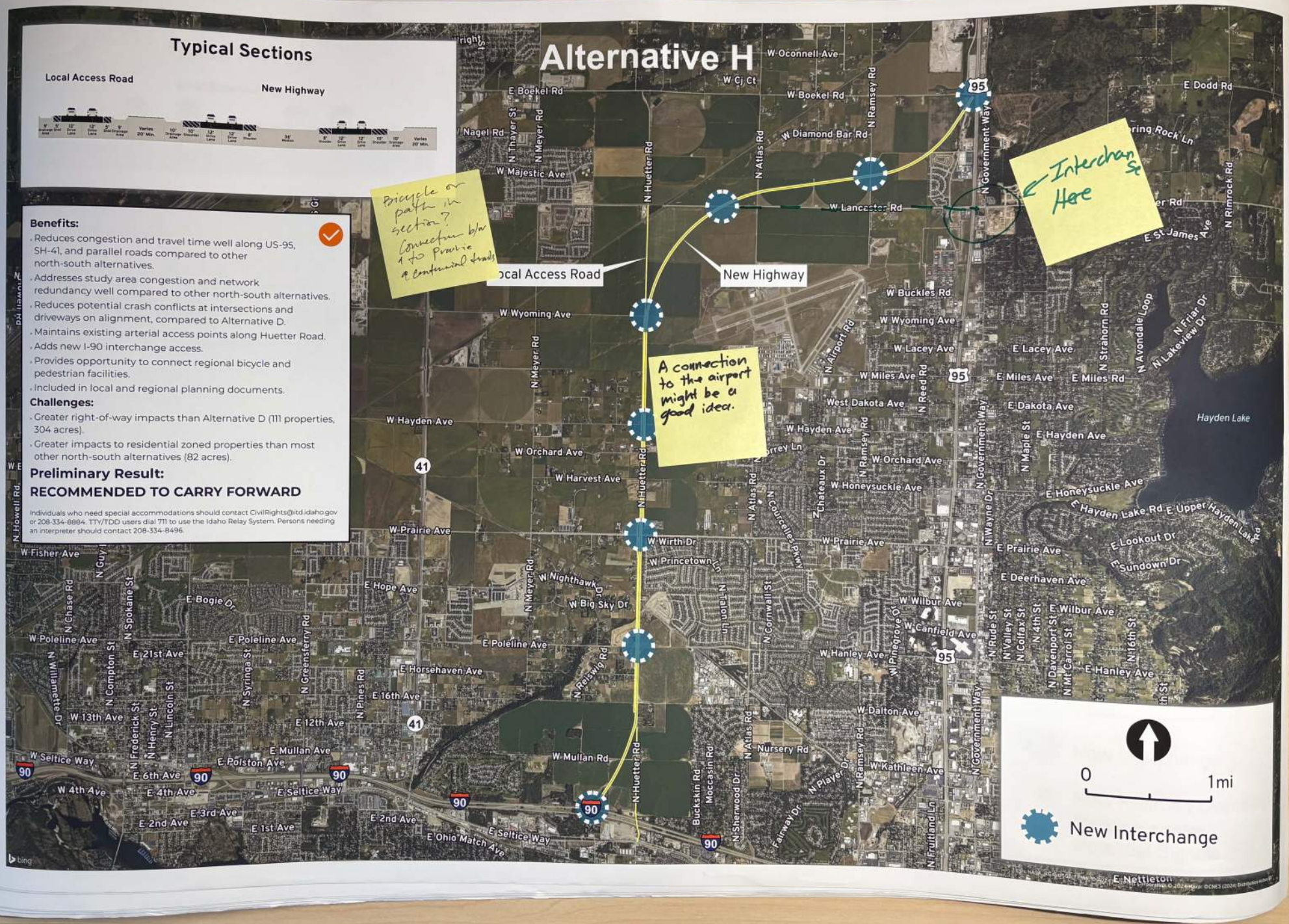
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

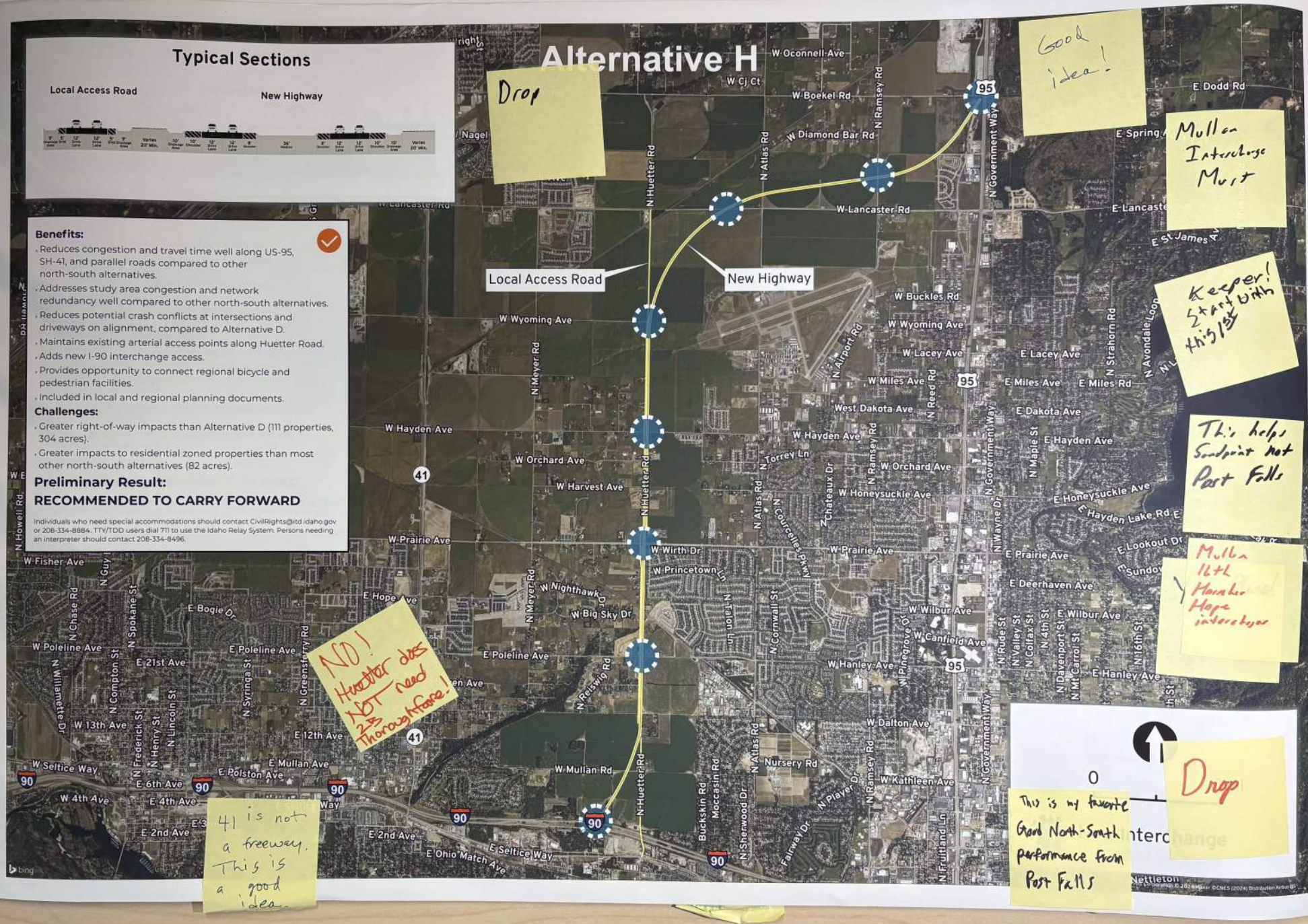
0 1mi

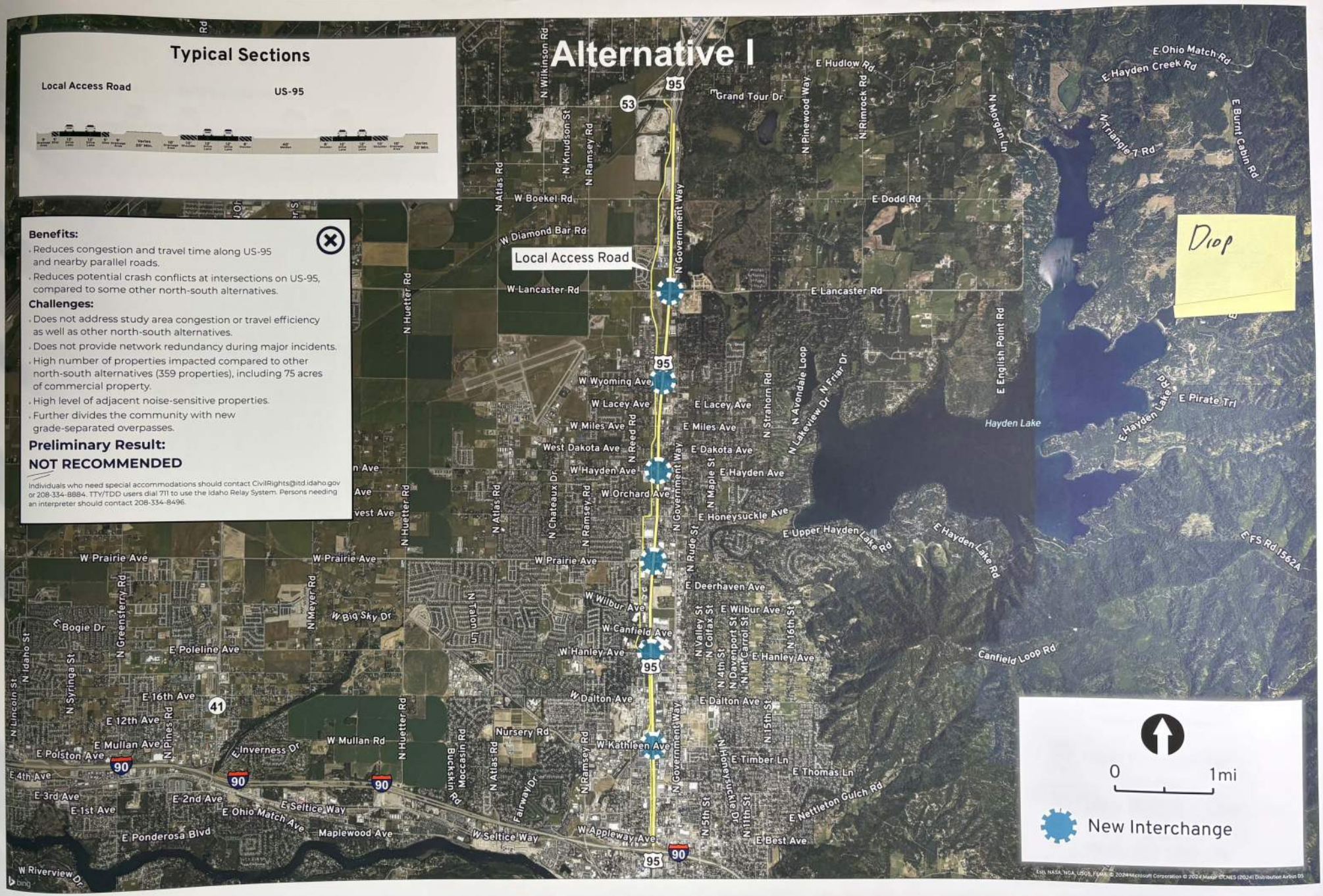
New Interchange

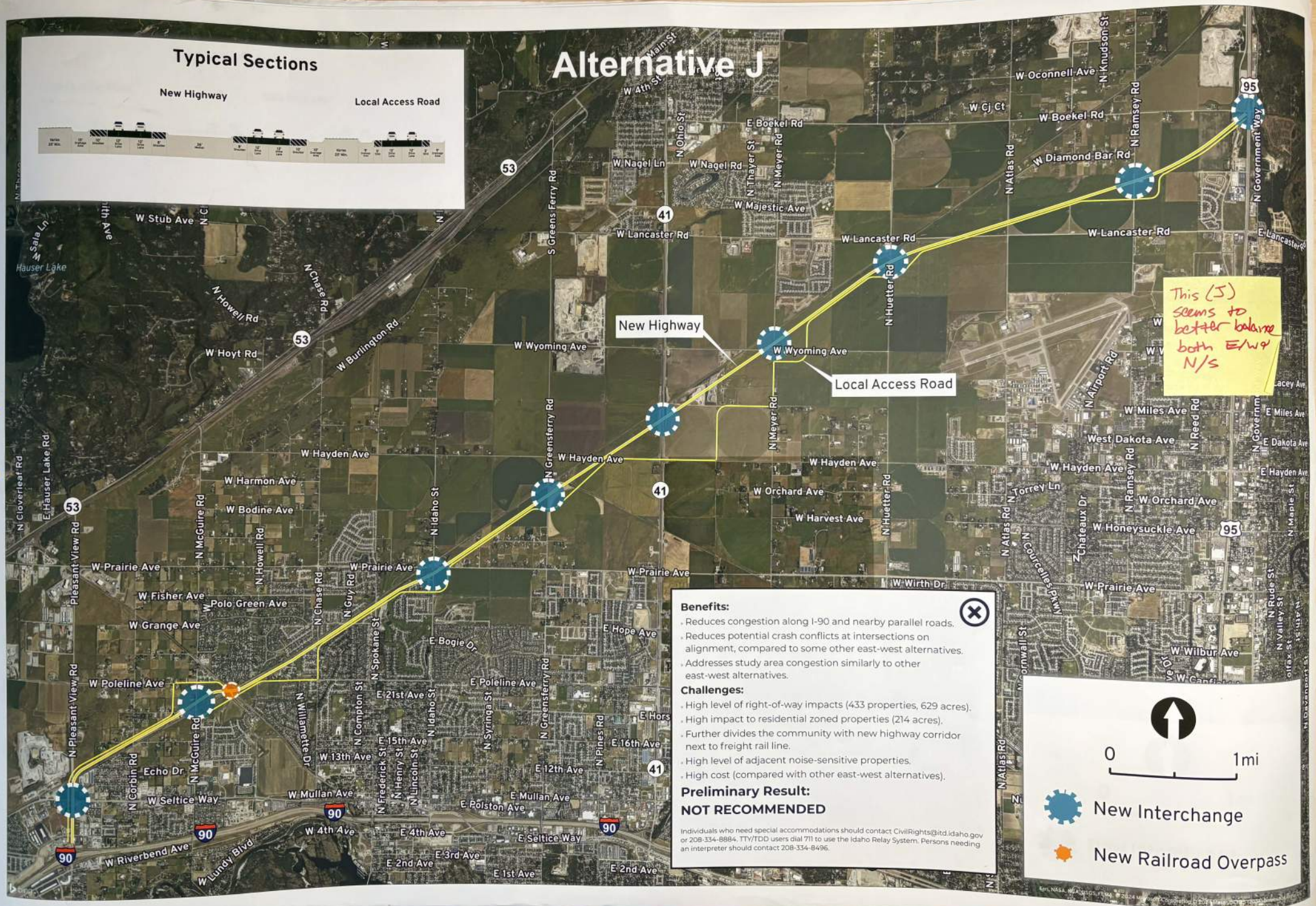
New Railroad Overpass

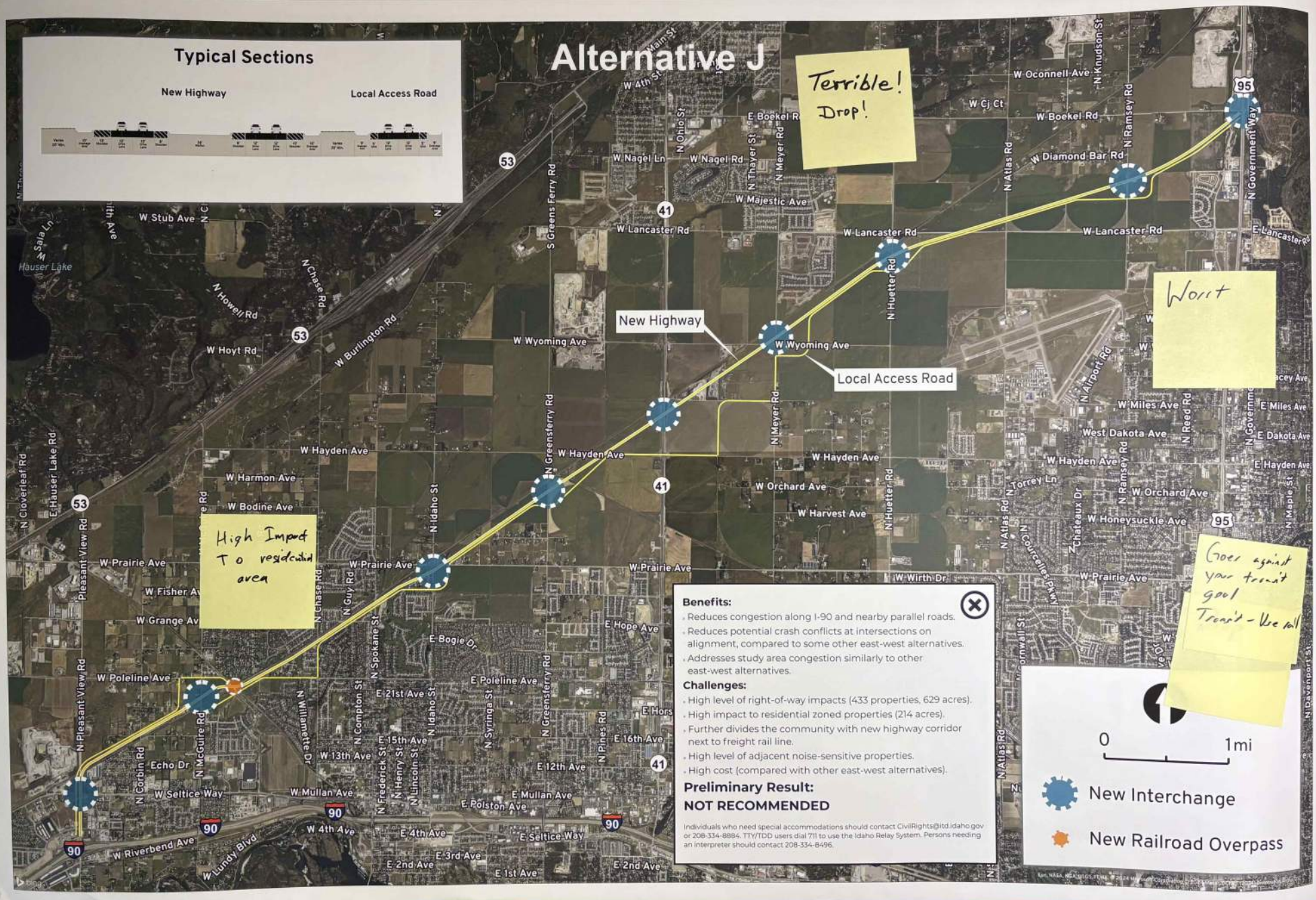

Alternative F
Typical Sections
Local Access Road
New Highway 1
Local Access Road
New Highway 2
Local Access Road
Benefits:
Adds a new bypass north of Rathdrum moving SH-53 traffic out of congested areas.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.
Challenges:
Doesn't address study area congestion, travel time, travel efficiency, or network redundancy as well as other north-south alternatives.
Does not benefit SH-41 congestion and travel time as much as Alternatives D and H.
High level of right-of-way impacts compared to other north-south alternatives (325 properties, 422 acres), including 278 acres of residential zoned property.
High level of impacts to historic sites (26 sites) and floodplains (12 acres).
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
Highest cost of north-south alternatives.
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
New Highway 2 Local Access Road
New Highway 1 Local Access Road
Greensferry Interchange or Drop
16th interchange Hope interchange
0
1mi
New Interchange
New Railroad Overpass
W Ohio Match Rd
E Ohio Match Rd
W Diagonal Rd
E Sturgeon Rd
N Powerline Rd
N Ella Rd
W Dolan Rd
N Old Highway 95
W Garwood Rd
E Garwood Rd
N Reservoir Rd
N Fowler Rd
N Lolo Dr
N Atlas Rd
N Wilkinson Rd
N Ramsey Rd
N Circle Trl
E Hudlow Rd
Grand Tour Dr
N Pinewood Way
Main St
Wright St
N Meyer Rd
N Knudson St
W Hidden Valley Rd
W Boekel Rd
E Dodd Rd
N Ohio St
W Nagel Rd
N Thayer St
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Winch Ave
W Burlington Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Lancaster Rd
N Government Way
E Lancaster Rd
S Greens Ferry Rd
N Huetter Rd
W Wyoming Ave
N Idaho St
W Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
N Reed Rd
West Dakota Ave
N Chase Rd
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
N Chateaux Dr
W Harvest Ave
W Honeysuckle Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
E Hayden Lake Rd
E Lookout Dr
N High Prairie Rd
W Prairie Ave
N Howell
N Greensferry Rd
W Grange Ave
N McGuire Rd
N Pleasant View Rd
E Bogie Dr
W Big Sky Dr
N Atlas Rd
N Huetter Rd
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
N Corbin Rd
N Compton St
N Spokane St
N Idaho St
N Syringa St
N Pines Rd
E 16th Ave
E 12th Ave
Echo Dr
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
W Seltice Way
W Mullan Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Poston Ave
E Inverness Dr
W Mullan Rd
W 4th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
E Thomas Ln
53
41
95
90
290

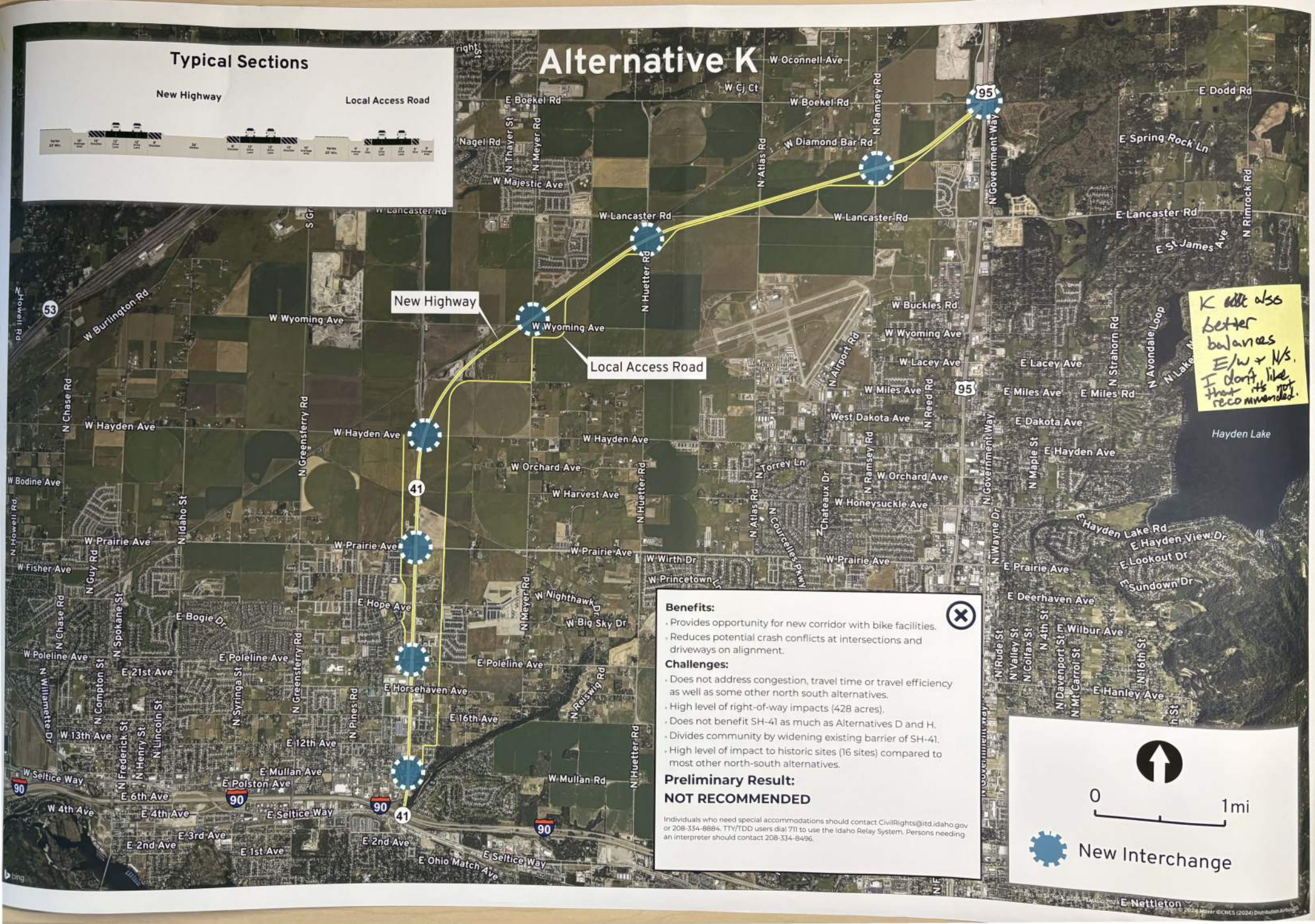

Alternative H
Typical Sections
Local Access Road
New Highway
Benefits:
Reduces congestion and travel time well along US-95, SH-41, and parallel roads compared to other north-south alternatives.
Addresses study area congestion and network redundancy well compared to other north-south alternatives.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to Alternative D.
Maintains existing arterial access points along Huetter Road.
Adds new I-90 interchange access.
Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
Included in local and regional planning documents.
Challenges:
Greater right-of-way impacts than Alternative D (111 properties, 304 acres).
Greater impacts to residential zoned properties than most other north-south alternatives (82 acres).
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Bicycle or path in section? Connection b/w 1 to Prairie & centennial trails
Interchange St Here
A connection to the airport might be a good idea.
Local Access Road
New Highway
0
1mi
New Interchange
W Oconnell Ave
W Cj Ct
E Boekel Rd
W Boekel Rd
E Dodd Rd
Nagel Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Lancaster Rd
E St James Ave
W Buckles Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
E Miles Rd
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
Hayden Lake
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Honeysuckle Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
E Hayden Lake Rd
E Upper Hayden Lake Rd
W Prairie Ave
E Prairie Ave
E Lookout Dr
Sundown Dr
W Wirth Dr
W Princetown Ln
E Deerhaven Ave
W Fisher Ave
E Hope Ave
E Bogie Dr
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
W Wilbur Ave
E Wilbur Ave
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
W Canfield Ave
E 21st Ave
W Hanley Ave
E Hanley Ave
E Horsehaven Ave
E 16th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
W Dalton Ave
E Mullan Ave
Nursery Rd
W Seltice Way
E Polston Ave
W Mullan Rd
W Kathleen Ave
E 6th Ave
W 4th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
E Nettleton
N Howell Rd
N Guy
N Chase Rd
N Spokane St
N Compton St
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N Syringa St
N Greensferry Rd
N Pines Rd
N Reisenweg Dr
N Meyer Rd
N Thayer St
N Huetter Rd
N Atlas Rd
N Ramsey Rd
N Government Way
N Airport Rd
N Reed Rd
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Chateaux Dr
N Wayne Dr
N Maple St
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Friar Dr
N Lakeview Dr
N Rimrock Rd
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N 4th St
N Davenport St
N Mt Carroll St
N 16th St
N Cornwall St
N Talon Ln
N Pinegrove Dr
N Player Dr
N Fruitland Ln
Buckskin Rd
Moccasin Rd
N Sherwood Dr
Fairway Dr
41
90
95


Typical Sections
Local Access Road
New Highway
Alternative H
Benefits:
• Reduces congestion and travel time well along US-95, SH-41, and parallel roads compared to other north-south alternatives.
• Addresses study area congestion and network redundancy well compared to other north-south alternatives.
• Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to Alternative D.
• Maintains existing arterial access points along Huetter Road.
• Adds new I-90 interchange access.
• Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
• Included in local and regional planning documents.
Challenges:
• Greater right-of-way impacts than Alternative D (111 properties, 304 acres).
• Greater impacts to residential zoned properties than most other north-south alternatives (82 acres).
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Local Access Road
New Highway
Drop
Good idea!
Mullan Interchange Must
Keeper! Start with this!
This helps Sandpoint not Post Falls
Mullan 16th Hamilton Huge interchange
NO! Huetter does NOT need 2 as Thoroughfare!
41 is not a freeway. This is a good idea.
This is my favorite Good North-South performance from Post Falls
Drop
N Huetter Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Hayden Ave
W Prairie Ave
W Princetown Dr
W Mullan Rd
W Lancaster Rd
W Oconnell Ave
W Boekel Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Buckles Rd
W Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
West Dakota Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
W Wilbur Ave
W Canfield Ave
W Hanley Ave
W Dalton Ave
Nursery Rd
W Kathleen Ave
E Dodd Rd
E Spring
E Lacey Ave
E Miles Ave
E Dakota Ave
E Hayden Ave
E Honeysuckle Ave
E Prairie Ave
E Deerhaven Ave
E Wilbur Ave
E Hanley Ave
E Lookout Dr
E Sundown
E St James Ave
N Government Way
N Ramsey Rd
N Atlas Rd
N Meyer Rd
N Reed Rd
N Maple St
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Wayne Dr
N Chateaux Dr
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Torrey Ln
N Cornwall St
N Rudie St
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N 4th St
N Davenport St
N Mt Carroll St
N 16th St
N Airport Rd
N Howell Rd
W Fisher Ave
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
E Bogie Dr
E Hope Ave
E 21st Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Polston Ave
W Seltice Way
E 6th Ave
E 4th Ave
W 4th Ave
E 2nd Ave
E Seltice Way
E Ohio Match Ave
N Chase Rd
N Spokane St
N Compton St
N Williamette Dr
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N Syringa St
N Greenstem Rd
N Renwick Rd
N Fruitland Ln
N Sherwood Dr
Buckskin Rd
Moccasin Rd
Fairway Dr
N Player Dr
Nettleton
0
Interchange
bing


Alternative I
Typical Sections
Local Access Road
US-95
Benefits:
Reduces congestion and travel time along US-95 and nearby parallel roads.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on US-95, compared to some other north-south alternatives.
Challenges:
Does not address study area congestion or travel efficiency as well as other north-south alternatives.
Does not provide network redundancy during major incidents.
High number of properties impacted compared to other north-south alternatives (359 properties), including 75 acres of commercial property.
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
Further divides the community with new grade-separated overpasses.
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
Local Access Road
Diop
Hayden Lake
0
1mi
New Interchange


Typical Sections
New Highway
Local Access Road
Alternative J
New Highway
Local Access Road
This (J) seems to better balance both E/W & N/S
Benefits:
Reduces congestion along I-90 and nearby parallel roads.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on alignment, compared to some other east-west alternatives.
Addresses study area congestion similarly to other east-west alternatives.
Challenges:
High level of right-of-way impacts (433 properties, 629 acres).
High impact to residential zoned properties (214 acres).
Further divides the community with new highway corridor next to freight rail line.
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
High cost (compared with other east-west alternatives).
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
0
1mi
New Interchange
New Railroad Overpass


Typical Sections
New Highway
Local Access Road
Alternative J
Terrible! Drop!
Worst
New Highway
Local Access Road
High Impact To residential area
Goes against your transit goal
Transit - like rail
Benefits:
Reduces congestion along I-90 and nearby parallel roads.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections on alignment, compared to some other east-west alternatives.
Addresses study area congestion similarly to other east-west alternatives.
Challenges:
High level of right-of-way impacts (433 properties, 629 acres).
High impact to residential zoned properties (214 acres).
Further divides the community with new highway corridor next to freight rail line.
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
High cost (compared with other east-west alternatives).
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
0
1mi
New Interchange
New Railroad Overpass
W 4th St
W Oconnell Ave
W Cj Ct
W Boekel Rd
E Boekel Rd
W Nagel Ln
W Nagel Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Lancaster Rd
E Lancaster Rd
W Stub Ave
Hauser Lake
N Howell Rd
W Hoyt Rd
W Burlington Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Harmon Ave
W Bodine Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Honeysuckle Ave
W Prairie Ave
W Fisher Ave
W Grange Ave
W Wirth Dr
E Hope Ave
E Bogie Dr
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
E 21st Ave
E 15th Ave
E 16th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
Echo Dr
W Seltice Way
W Mullan Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Poiston Ave
W 4th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
W Riverbend Ave
W Lundy Blvd
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
N Ramsey Rd
N Knudson St
N Government Way
N Atlas Rd
N Meyer Rd
N Thayer St
N Ohio St
S Greens Ferry Rd
N Huetter Rd
N Airport Rd
N Reed Rd
N Torrey Ln
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Cloverleaf Rd
E Hauser Lake Rd
N Pleasant View Rd
N Chase Rd
N Guy Rd
N Idaho St
N Greensferry Rd
N Spokane St
N Compton St
N Willamette Dr
N Syringa St
N Pines Rd
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N McGuire Rd
N Corbin Rd
N Maple St
N Davenport St
53
41
95
90


Typical Sections
New Highway
Local Access Road
Alternative K
New Highway
Local Access Road
W Oconnell Ave
W Cj Ct
E Boekel Rd
W Boekel Rd
Nagel Rd
N Thayer St
N Meyer Rd
N Ramsey Rd
N Atlas Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Majestic Ave
E Dodd Rd
E Spring Rock Ln
N Government Way
N Rimrock Rd
E Lancaster Rd
E St James Ave
W Lancaster Rd
N Huetter Rd
W Burlington Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Buckles Rd
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
N Airport Rd
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
E Miles Rd
N Reed Rd
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
Hayden Lake
N Chase Rd
W Hayden Ave
N Greensferry Rd
E Hayden Ave
W Orchard Ave
N Torrey Ln
N Maple St
W Bodine Ave
W Harvest Ave
N Chateaux Dr
W Honeysuckle Ave
N Idaho St
N Howell Rd
E Hayden Lake Rd
E Hayden View Dr
E Lookout Dr
W Prairie Ave
N Guy Rd
W Fisher Ave
W Wirth Dr
W Princetown Ln
E Prairie Ave
E Sundown Dr
E Deerhaven Ave
E Hope Ave
E Bogie Dr
N Spokane St
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
E Wilbur Ave
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
E 21st Ave
N Compton St
N Syringa St
E Horsehaven Ave
N Pines Rd
N Reiswig Rd
E Hanley Ave
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
E 16th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 12th Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Polston Ave
W Mullan Rd
W Seltice Way
E 6th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
W 4th Ave
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
E Nettleton
Benefits:
Provides opportunity for new corridor with bike facilities.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.
Challenges:
Does not address congestion, travel time or travel efficiency as well as some other north south alternatives.
High level of right-of-way impacts (428 acres).
Does not benefit SH-41 as much as Alternatives D and H.
Divides community by widening existing barrier of SH-41.
High level of impact to historic sites (16 sites) compared to most other north-south alternatives.
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
K still also better balances E/W + N/S. I don't like that it's not recommended.
0
1mi
New Interchange

Alternative K
Typical Sections
New Highway
Local Access Road
New Highway
Local Access Road
Benefits:
Provides opportunity for new corridor with bike facilities.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment.
Challenges:
Does not address congestion, travel time or travel efficiency as well as some other north south alternatives.
High level of right-of-way impacts (428 acres).
Does not benefit SH-41 as much as Alternatives D and H.
Divides community by widening existing barrier of SH-41.
High level of impact to historic sites (16 sites) compared to most other north-south alternatives.
Preliminary Result:
NOT RECOMMENDED
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
0
1mi
New Interchange
BEST IDEA OF ALL!
Drop Goes against Transit Goals
No diagonal
16th interchange
Hope interchange
W Lancaster Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Hayden Ave
W Prairie Ave
E Hope Ave
E Poleline Ave
E Horsehaven Ave
E 16th Ave
E 12th Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Polston Ave
E Seltice Way
E 4th Ave
E 2nd Ave
E 1st Ave
E Ohio Match Ave
W Boekel Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Nighthawk Dr
W Big Sky Dr
W Princetown Ln
W Wirth Dr
W Honeysuckle Ave
W Buckles Rd
W Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
West Dakota Ave
E Lacey Ave
E Miles Ave
E Dakota Ave
E Hayden Ave
E Prairie Ave
E Deerhaven Ave
E Wilbur Ave
E Hanley Ave
E Hayden Lake Rd
E Hayden View Dr
E Lookout Dr
E Sundown Dr
Hayden Lake
E Nettleton
N Ramsey Rd
N Atlas Rd
N Government Way
N Huetter Rd
N Meyer Rd
N Thayer St
N Greensferry Rd
N Chase Rd
N Idaho St
N Spokane St
N Compton St
N Syringa St
N Pines Rd
N Reiswig Rd
N Howell Rd
W Burlington Rd
W Fisher Ave
W Bodine Ave
W Seltice Way
W 4th Ave
W 13th Ave
E 21st Ave
E 6th Ave
E 3rd Ave
E 2nd Ave
N Guy Rd
N Frederick St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N Williamette Dr
N Airport Rd
N Reed Rd
N Torrey Ln
N Chateaux Dr
N Courcelles Pkwy
N Wayne Dr
N Maple St
N Strahorn Rd
N Avondale Loop
N Friar Dr
N Lakeview Dr
N Rude St
N Valley St
N Colfax St
N 4th St
N Davenport St
N Mt Carroll St
N 16th St
E Dodd Rd
E Rock Ln
E Lancaster Rd
E St Joe
53
90
95
41

Alternative L

Typical Sections

Local Access Road | SH-53

New Highway 1 | Local Access Road

Local Access Road | New Highway 2 | Local Access Road

Meyer Road Bypass

Meyer Road Bypass

New Highway 1 Local Access Road

New Highway 2 Local Access Roads

Benefits:

- Addresses congestion and travel time at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives M and N.
- Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
- Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.

Challenges:

- Greatest number of total properties impacted for east-west alternatives (478 properties).
- High residential zoned property impacts (107 acres).
- Higher commercial zoned property impacts (30 acres) than Alternatives M and N.
- High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres) and wetlands (4.3 acres).
- Greatest number of historic sites impacted for east-west alternatives (21 sites).
- High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
- High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).

Preliminary Result:

NOT RECOMMENDED

Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.

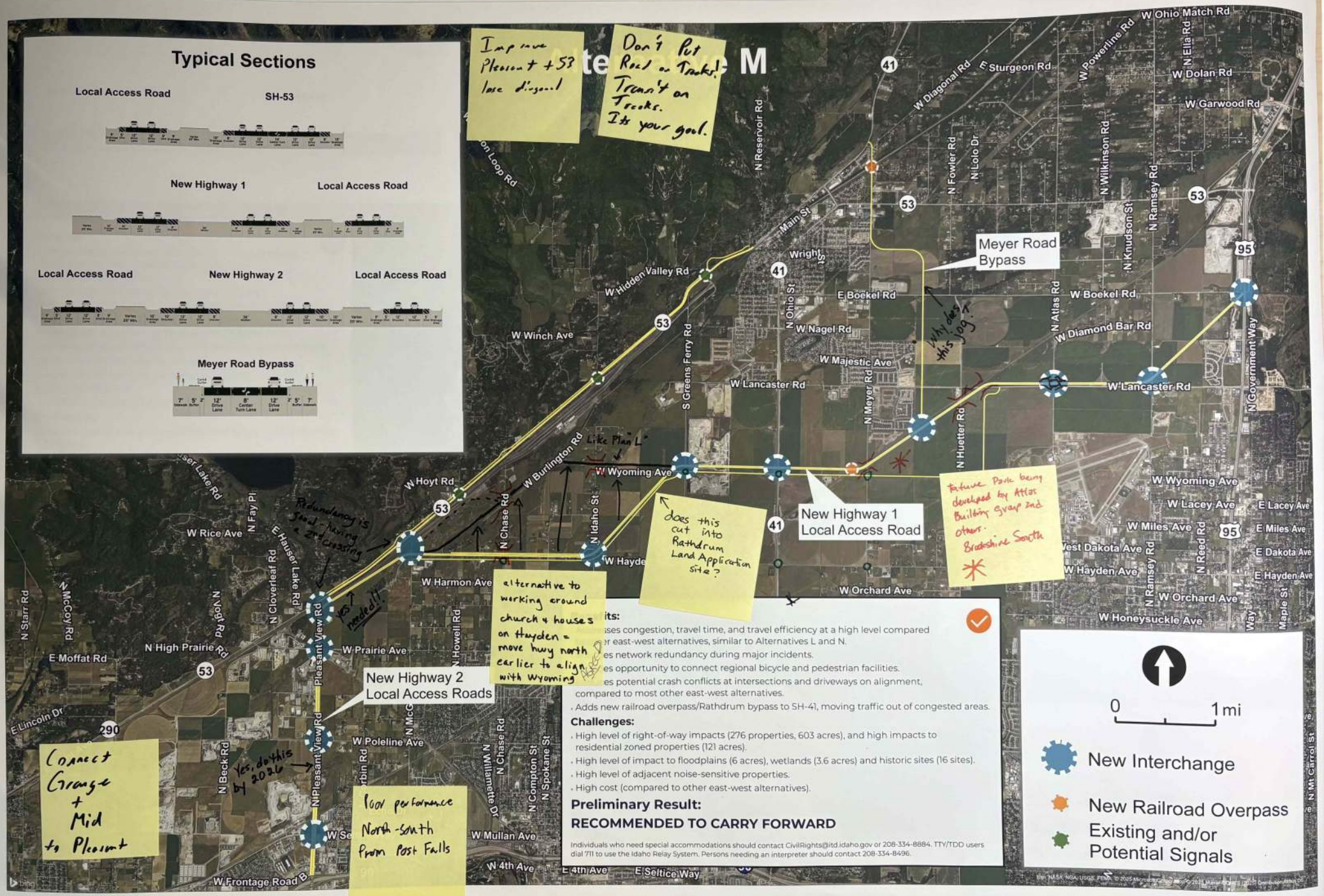
Drop

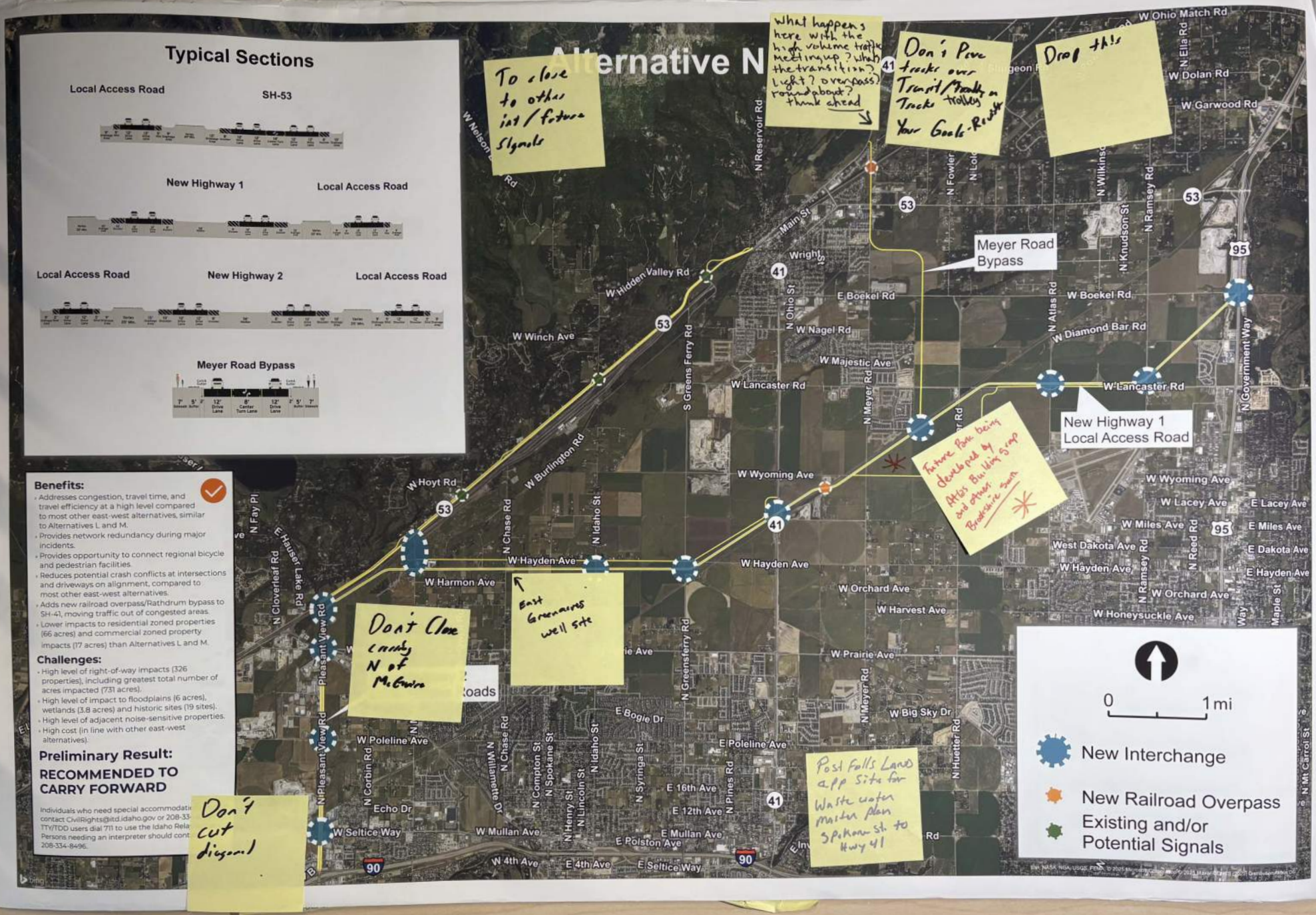
0 1 mi

New Interchange

New Railroad Overpass

Existing and/or Potential Signals


Typical Sections
Local Access Road
SH-53
New Highway 1
Local Access Road
Local Access Road
New Highway 2
Local Access Road
Meyer Road Bypass
Improve Pleasant + 53 lose diagonal
Don't Put Road on Tracks! Transit on Tracks. It's your goal.
Meyer Road Bypass
Why does this jog?
New Highway 1
Local Access Road
Like Plan L
does this cut into Rathdrum Land Application site?
Future Park being developed by Atlas Building Group and others. Brookshire South
Redundancy is good - having a 2nd crossing
Yes needed!!
alternative to working around church + houses on Hayden - move hwy north earlier to align with Wyoming
New Highway 2
Local Access Roads
Connect Grange + Mid to Pleasant
Yes, do this by 2026
Poor performance North-South From Post Falls
Benefits:
reduces congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and N.
provides network redundancy during major incidents.
provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.
Challenges:
High level of right-of-way impacts (276 properties, 603 acres), and high impacts to residential zoned properties (121 acres).
High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.6 acres) and historic sites (16 sites).
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
High cost (compared to other east-west alternatives).
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
Individuals who need special accommodations should contact CivilRights@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8884. TTY/TDD users dial 711 to use the Idaho Relay System. Persons needing an interpreter should contact 208-334-8496.
0
1 mi
New Interchange
New Railroad Overpass
Existing and/or Potential Signals
W Ohio Match Rd
W Diagonal Rd
E Sturgeon Rd
W Powerline Rd
N Ella Rd
W Dolan Rd
W Garwood Rd
N Reservoir Rd
N Fowler Rd
N Lolo Dr
N Wilkinson Rd
N Knudson St
N Ramsey Rd
Main St
Wright St
W Hidden Valley Rd
E Boekel Rd
W Boekel Rd
N Ohio St
N Atlas Rd
W Nagel Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
W Winch Ave
S Greens Ferry Rd
W Majestic Ave
N Meyer Rd
W Lancaster Rd
N Government Way
N Hueter Rd
W Burlington Rd
W Wyoming Ave
W Hoyt Rd
N Chase Rd
N Idaho St
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
W Rice Ave
N Fay Pl
E Hauser Lake Rd
N Cloverleaf Rd
N Reed Rd
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
W Harmon Ave
N Howell Rd
W Orchard Ave
N Starr Rd
N Mac Coy Rd
N Vogel Rd
N High Prairie Rd
W Honeysuckle Ave
E Moffat Rd
W Prairie Ave
Pleasant View Rd
E Lincoln Dr
N Beck Rd
W Poleline Ave
N McGuire Rd
N Chase Rd
N Compton St
N Spokane St
N Williamette Dr
W Mullan Ave
W 4th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
W Frontage Road B
N Mt Carroll St
Maple St
53
41
95
290


Typical Sections
Local Access Road
SH-53
New Highway 1
Local Access Road
Local Access Road
New Highway 2
Local Access Road
Meyer Road Bypass
Alternative N
To close to other int / future Signals
What happens here with the high volume traffic meeting up? what the transition? Light? overpass? roundabout? think ahead
Don't Pave tracks over Transit/Trolley on Tracks trolley Your Goals Result
Drop this
Meyer Road Bypass
New Highway 1
Local Access Road
Future Park being developed by Atlas Building Supp and other Bradshaw Sons
Don't Close county N of McGuire
East Greenacres well site
Post Falls Land app Site for Waste water master plan Spokane St. to Hwy 41
Don't cut diagonal
Benefits:
Addresses congestion, travel time, and travel efficiency at a high level compared to most other east-west alternatives, similar to Alternatives L and M.
Provides network redundancy during major incidents.
Provides opportunity to connect regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
Reduces potential crash conflicts at intersections and driveways on alignment, compared to most other east-west alternatives.
Adds new railroad overpass/Rathdrum bypass to SH-41, moving traffic out of congested areas.
Lower impacts to residential zoned properties (66 acres) and commercial zoned property impacts (17 acres) than Alternatives L and M.
Challenges:
High level of right-of-way impacts (326 properties), including greatest total number of acres impacted (731 acres).
High level of impact to floodplains (6 acres), wetlands (3.8 acres) and historic sites (19 sites).
High level of adjacent noise-sensitive properties.
High cost (in line with other east-west alternatives).
Preliminary Result:
RECOMMENDED TO CARRY FORWARD
0
1 mi
New Interchange
New Railroad Overpass
Existing and/or Potential Signals
W Ohio Match Rd
W Dolan Rd
W Garwood Rd
N Ella Rd
N Reservoir Rd
N Fowler
N Ramsey Rd
N Knudson St
N Wilkins
Main St
Wright St
W Hidden Valley Rd
W Boekel Rd
E Boekel Rd
N Ohio St
W Nagel Rd
W Winch Ave
S Greens Ferry Rd
W Majestic Ave
W Lancaster Rd
N Meyer Rd
N Atlas Rd
W Diamond Bar Rd
N Government Way
W Burlington Rd
W Hoyt Rd
N Chase Rd
N Idaho St
W Wyoming Ave
W Lacey Ave
E Lacey Ave
W Miles Ave
E Miles Ave
West Dakota Ave
E Dakota Ave
W Hayden Ave
E Hayden Ave
N Reed Rd
N Ramsey Rd
W Harmon Ave
W Orchard Ave
W Harvest Ave
W Honeysuckle Ave
N Maple St
N Fay Pl
E Hauser Lake Rd
N Cloverleaf Rd
N Pleasant View Rd
W Prairie Ave
N Greensferry Rd
E Bogie Dr
W Big Sky Dr
W Poleline Ave
E Poleline Ave
N Huetter Rd
N Corbin Rd
N Whitetail Dr
N Compton St
N Spokane St
N Henry St
N Lincoln St
N Syringa St
E 16th Ave
E 12th Ave
N Pines Rd
Echo Dr
W Seltice Way
W Mullan Ave
E Mullan Ave
E Poiston Ave
W 4th Ave
E 4th Ave
E Seltice Way
N Mt Carroll St
53
41
95
90