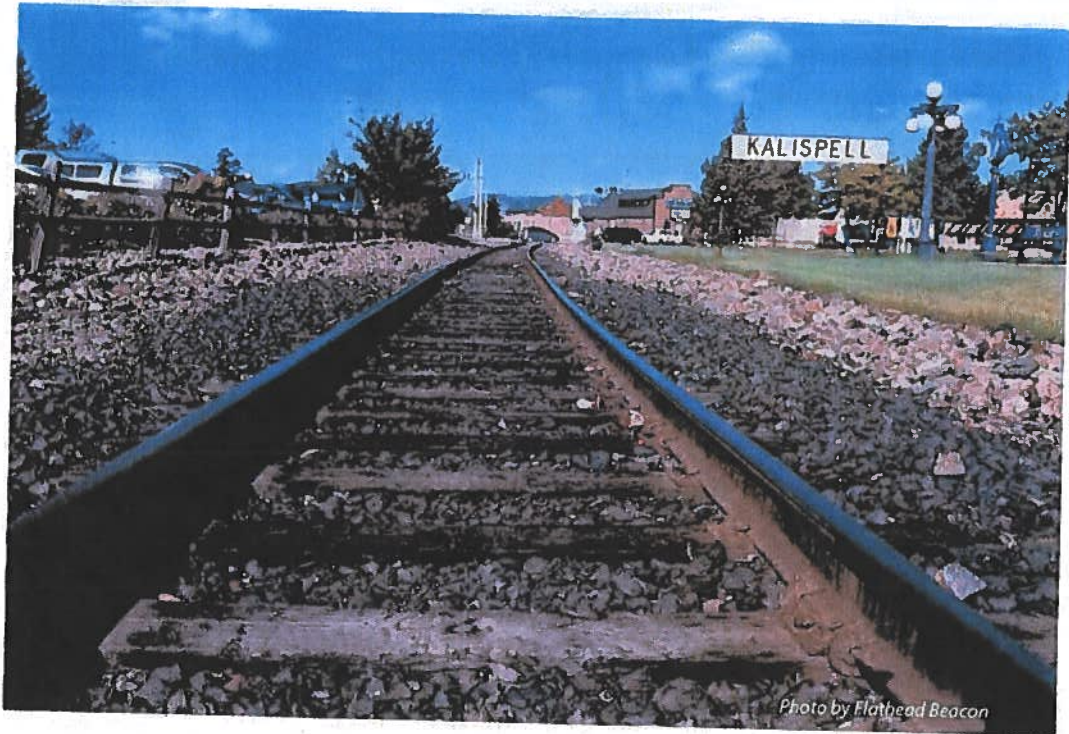


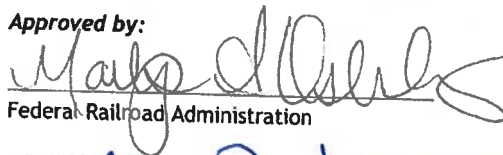
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT


FOR THE
GLACIER RAIL PARK/ KALISPELL CORE AREA DEVELOPMENT AND TRAIL PROJECT
KALISPELL, FLATHEAD COUNTY, MONTANA
*Prepared Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (42 USC § 4332),
49 USC § 303, and 64 FR 28545*

October 2019



Approved by:

 10/16/2019
Federal Railroad Administration


City of Kalispell



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

This Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) was prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration, the City of Kalispell, and KLJ.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is a supplement to the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Glacier Rail Park/Kalispell Core Area Development and Trail Project (Project), prepared by the City of Kalispell (City) and approved by the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in May 2017 (hereafter referred to as the 2017 EA). FRA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Project on July 18, 2017. The Project is located in the City of Kalispell, Flathead County, Montana, and is receiving grant funding under the USDOT's Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant Program. FRA is administering the TIGER grant. The City is implementing the Project in two phases:

- ◆ Phase I – Construction and operation of a rail-served industrial park (Rail Park) and associated construction of roadway and traffic control improvements and installation and extension of utilities to serve the Rail Park.
- ◆ Phase II – Removal of 1.6 miles of existing railroad track; construction of a 12- to 16-foot-wide, paved, public-use trail on former railroad right-of-way (ROW) (i.e., Kalispell Trail); and construction of at least one new north-south street connection (i.e., complete street) to improve connectivity in downtown Kalispell, also known as the Core Area.

Construction of the Rail Park (Phase I) is substantially complete as of January 2019. Removal of the railroad track and construction of the Kalispell Trail and complete street(s) (Phase II) is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2020.

Based on input received during subsequent public and agency involvement conducted by the City for the Project since the 2017 EA and FONSI, three complete street options previously identified by the City early on in project planning, but not evaluated in detail in the 2017 EA (i.e., 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN) are being considered in this Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA). These three complete street options are located in the Core Area, north of the Kalispell Center Mall (Mall). These three roadways are generally included in the Project Area assessed in the 2017 EA, which was defined as the area that would be directly impacted by the construction of the Rail Park, Kalispell Trail, and associated improvements (e.g., complete street connections, new traffic control devices and utilities, and roadway improvements).

In addition, two modifications are being considered in this SEA: (1) a potential realignment of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail (approximately 345 feet) between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN (Kalispell Trail realignment) and (2) a potential connection of the northeast trailhead (approximately 300 feet) to adjacent public ROW at the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection (northeast trailhead connection). These potential modifications to Phase II of the Project are a result of the City's public outreach efforts and continuation of the Project planning process; they are located within the 2017 EA Study Area and Project Area, but were not analyzed in the EA.

Currently, north-south traffic movements in the Core Area are restricted because there are only six at-grade railroad crossings across the nearly two-mile width of the City. With the removal of the railroad tracks to accommodate the Kalispell Trail, there is an opportunity to provide connectivity in the Core Area. Constructing 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and/or Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN), as identified in the 2017 EA, and/or at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN, as identified in this Supplemental EA, would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area. The benefits of these additional streets include an increase in accessibility and connectivity to the development in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93



area, as well as the underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. This would improve circulation in the Core Area, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. It would also provide opportunity for development of additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area.

At least one complete street would be constructed as part of Phase II of the Project, which was analyzed in the 2017 EA. All of the streets considered for extension in both the 2017 EA and this SEA are owned and maintained by the City. The City has a 60-foot-wide ROW on each existing potential complete street roadway. Associated complete street improvements for existing roadways, including sidewalk and curb/gutter installation, urban tree plantings, and utility extensions, would be located within the City's existing 60-foot-wide ROW and Project Area limits.

Completed street connections would meet the City of Kalispell local street standards and complete street policy (per the Standards for Design and Construction dated April 2, 2019) providing two 14-foot-wide driving lanes, a minimum 9-foot-wide boulevard separating the roadway from a 5-foot-wide sidewalk, tree plantings, and sewer and water extensions, as needed. In addition, warning or stop signs would be installed at road crossings, and curb bump outs would be installed to reduce the distance pedestrians must cross.

The 2017 EA is incorporated by reference into this SEA, and the three complete street options assessed in the 2017 EA (i.e., 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]) remain viable. Therefore, the scope of this SEA focuses on only those resource areas that might be affected by the proposed modifications to the Build Alternative (i.e., construction and operation of the 4th, 3rd, and/or 1st Avenue WN complete street; the Kalispell Trail realignment; and the northeast trailhead connection), or that have experienced substantial changes from what was described in the 2017 EA. As a result, the following resource areas were evaluated in full detail in this SEA, because of (1) the potential that the Build Alternative could create a different impact than what was described in the 2017 EA, or (2) the affected environment has changed since the 2017 EA.

- ◆ **Air Quality** – Construction and ground-disturbing activities would result in temporary emissions of criteria pollutants and fugitive dust. However, emissions are not anticipated to increase the frequency or severity of any National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) violations or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS, and would be consistent with conformity regulations. Upon completion of construction, vehicle idling due to limited access, poor traffic circulation, and lack of street connections would decrease, further reducing emissions. In addition, adding sidewalks and pedestrian pathways through the area would increase the efficiency and public appeal for alternative and non-motorized modes of transportation within the City, such as walking, biking, and rollerblading, which could further reduce emissions. It is anticipated that air quality conditions within the Core Area would improve with the Build Alternative. The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and best management practices (BMPs) included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate.
- ◆ **Noise and Vibration** – Construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and the northeast trailhead connection would result in temporary increases in noise above baseline levels. Noise generated by construction activities would vary depending on the type of equipment used, the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source. Upon completion of construction, the business owners and residents along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN, north of the out-of-



service railroad corridor would experience a slight increase in traffic noise once a connection street is constructed; however, this noise is expected to be offset by removal of the railroad tracks and associated noise from trains and train horns. In addition, any noise generated as a result of increased traffic would be consistent with the existing noise in the surrounding area. The Kalispell Trail realignment and northeast trailhead connection would not have any additional operational noise impacts. The mitigation measures included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate.

- ◆ **Land Use** – No impacts on land use from construction and operation of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, or the northeast trailhead connection are expected, as the zoning would not change from the existing designations of B-3 (a business district that provides areas for development of congregated community shopping areas to serve neighborhoods) and B-2 (a business district that provides for those retail sales and service functions and operations that are typically characterized by outdoor display, storage, and/or sale of merchandise, by major repair of motor vehicles, and by outdoor commercial amusement and recreational activities). There would be increased access to the area immediately adjacent to US Highway 2 and US Highway 93 and undeveloped and underdeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. A complete street would also provide opportunity for developers to construct additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area. The Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections.
- ◆ **Ecological Systems** – There is no substantial change in the affected environment for wildlife, fish, and vegetation species or habitat, and potential impacts and mitigation measures described in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA. Therefore, potential impacts on general wildlife, fish, and vegetation species and habitat are not re-assessed in this SEA. However, an additional species (i.e., wolverine [*Gulo gulo luscus*]) was identified during reevaluation of the Project Area. The wolverine is proposed for federal listing as a threatened species under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Due to the urban nature and location of the Project and lack of suitable habitat within the Project Area, the Build Alternative is anticipated to have *no effect* on the wolverine. The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and BMPs included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate.
- ◆ **Traffic and Transportation** – There would be temporary increases in traffic and congestion in the vicinity of the construction sites due to additional construction vehicles, equipment, and machinery. Residents, business owners, and retail patrons in the vicinity could experience temporary delays and detours during construction. Beneficial impacts would be expected upon completion of construction. Operation of at least one complete street would increase the number of north-south connections, improve circulation in the Core Area, and increase accessibility and connectivity to the businesses in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. Completion of at least one street connection with improvements, including sidewalks, would also provide connectivity for pedestrians in areas previously void of those facilities (i.e., north of the railroad corridor). Adverse impacts could be expected on existing residents and business owners along US Highway 2 and the complete street(s), as there would be a slight increase in annual average daily traffic (AADT) as patrons travel to and from the retail uses, and as businesses and residences are potentially developed north of the railroad corridor. Traffic on US Highway 2 is estimated to increase by approximately 140



vehicles during the evening peak hours (i.e., 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) with construction of at least one complete street. This slight increase in traffic would not exceed the capacity of the current roads.

In addition, there would be a loss of parking spaces from implementation of the complete streets analyzed in this SEA: the 1st Avenue WN complete street would result in a loss of approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall; the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would result in a loss of approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business; and the 4th Avenue WN complete street would result in a loss of approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall. However, the Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections.

Approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at these businesses.

The Kalispell Trail realignment would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation, as it would cross 5th Avenue WN in the same location as analyzed in the 2017 EA. The northeast trailhead connection would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation; beneficial impacts would be expected from increased pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

The minimization and mitigation measures included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate. In addition, an agreement would be established between the City and Mall owners to address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s).

- ◆ **Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice** – There may be temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences north of the railroad corridor during construction of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN and the Kalispell Trail realignment. There may also be temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences west and east of the railroad corridor, respectively, near the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection during construction of the northeast trailhead connection. Impacts could include noise above ambient levels, visibility of construction equipment, fugitive dust emissions, and temporary pedestrian and traffic delays and congestion.

Construction of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would improve the general appeal of the area and spur development along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. Underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would become more attractive to developers, visibility of existing businesses north of the railroad corridor would increase, and connectivity in the community would be improved. Long-term, beneficial impacts on the local economy would be expected, as there could be increases in the purchase of goods and services in the local area and subsequent induced development. This could provide overall economic benefits to the area through the creation of jobs and increased payroll taxes and sales receipts. Traffic circulation and



connectivity would also be improved, and additional transportation options (e.g., walking and biking) would be created, connecting people and neighborhoods with jobs, services, and goods. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on environmental justice populations, as no such populations are present within the Study Area. The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and BMPs included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate.

- ◆ **Relocations** – Construction of at least one complete street on 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would be completed within either current Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) or City ROW. For 1st and 3rd Avenue WN, approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and for 4th Avenue WN, approximately 3,300 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed during construction. During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party’s responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street. The agreement would include language to ensure public access by motorized and non-motorized routes to 5th Avenue NW, West Center Street, and Main Street or US Hwy 93. The Kalispell Trail realignment would be located on Mall property; however, the construction of parking spaces to serve Mall patrons would be located on the railbanked land between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN. The amount of property temporarily disturbed is yet to be determined and is dependent on the Mall’s parking design. Because the northeast trailhead connection would be constructed on vacant land, no construction impacts are anticipated.

There would be a permanent loss of parking spaces due to implementation of the complete streets: the 1st Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall; the 3rd Avenue WN complete street complete street would result in the loss of approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business; and the 4th Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall. Approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at these businesses.

For the Kalispell Trail realignment, parking could be constructed by the Mall on the railbanked area, which could potentially offset the loss of parking caused by the implementation of one or more of the complete street options. The northeast trailhead connection would be located on vacant land owned by Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and would not displace or require MDT to relocate its facilities or operations.

The mitigation measures included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate. In addition, an agreement would be established between the City and Mall owners to address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s). The northeast trailhead connection would require an agreement between the City and MDT.



- ◆ **Hazardous Waste** – Considering the design and planned construction activities for the complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or hazardous wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to the general public or natural resources. Ground-clearing activities would be shallow and would not reach the groundwater. In addition, since groundwater flow at the City Service Valcon leaking underground storage tank (LUST)/underground storage tank (UST) site is toward the south-southwest, away from the Project Area, no impacts on, or from, this site are anticipated from the Build Alternative. Construction activities may require the use of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., cleaning agents, lubricants, fuels, solvents, fertilizers) and may result in the generation of hazardous waste. Considering the purpose, design, and operation activities of the Project, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to public health or the environment. The minimization and mitigation measures included in the 2017 FONSI would be followed, as appropriate.



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**Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the for the Glacier Rail Park/
Kalispell Core Area Development and Trail Project, May 2017 and July 2017**



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AADT	annual average daily traffic	NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
APE	Area of Potential Effect	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
BMP	best management practice		
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe	NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	O ₃	ozone
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	Pb	lead
CO	carbon monoxide	PM	particulate matter
dBA	A-weighted decibels	ROW	right-of-way
EA	Environmental Assessment	SEA	Supplemental Environmental Assessment
EO	Executive Order		
ESA	Endangered Species Act	SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	SPCC	Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure
FR	Federal Register	STIP	State Transportation Improvement Plan
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration		
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
FY	Fiscal Year		
GNRR	Great Northern Railroad	TIGER	Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
H ₂ S	hydrogen sulfide		
IPaC	Information for Planning and Conservation	USC	United States Code
		USDA	US Department of Agriculture
KPWD	Kalispell Public Works Department	USDOT	US Department of Transportation
		USEPA	US Environmental Protection Agency
LUST	leaking underground storage tank		
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
		UST	underground storage tank
MDT	Montana Department of Transportation	WATCO	Mission Mountain Railroad
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement		
MPDES	Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System		
MTDEQ	Montana Department of Environmental Quality		
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards		
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act		



CHAPTER 1 PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROJECT

1.1 Introduction

This Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been prepared in accordance with the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 *Federal Register* 28545, May 26, 1999 as updated in 78 *Federal Register* 2713, January 14, 2013), which are FRA's procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) NEPA implementing regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508).

This document is a supplement to the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Glacier Rail Park/Kalispell Core Area Development and Trail Project (Project), which was prepared by the City of Kalispell (City) and approved by FRA in May 2017 (hereafter referred to as the 2017 EA). The 2017 EA included analysis of the potential impacts on the human and natural environment from construction and operation of at least one new north-south street connection (i.e., complete street). Three complete street options (8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]) were analyzed in detail in the 2017 EA; four complete street options (4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN) were identified early on in Project planning by the City, but were not analyzed in detail in the 2017 EA. Three of those four complete street options (4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN) are evaluated in this SEA as a result of public outreach conducted by the City for the Project after FRA's issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on July 18, 2017.

In addition, two modifications to the Kalispell Trail have been proposed by the City since the 2017 EA and are evaluated in this SEA: (1) a potential realignment of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail (approximately 345 feet) between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN (Kalispell Trail realignment) and (2) a potential connection of the northeast trailhead (approximately 300 feet) to adjacent public right-of-way (ROW) at the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection (northeast trailhead connection). These potential modifications to the Kalispell Trail are also result of the City's public outreach efforts and continuation of the Project planning process.

The Project is being partially funded through the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) 2015 Fiscal Year (FY) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant Program.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 2017 EA

The 2017 EA evaluated potential impacts on the human and natural environment from the two-phase Project, described as follows:

- ◆ Phase I – Construction and operation of a rail-served industrial park (Rail Park) and associated construction of roadway and traffic control improvements and installation and extension of utilities to serve the Rail Park. This phase of the Project is substantially complete as of January 2019.

The **two-phase Project** is the result of a major community planning effort known as the Kalispell Core Area Plan. Additional details regarding the plan are provided in the 2017 EA.



- ◆ Phase II – Removal of 1.6 miles of existing railroad track; construction of a 12- to 16-foot-wide, paved, public-use trail on former railroad right-of-way (ROW) (i.e., Kalispell Trail); and construction of at least one new north-south street connection (i.e., complete street) to improve connectivity in downtown Kalispell, also known as the Core Area. The City anticipates starting this phase of the Project in the spring of 2020.

The **City of Kalispell, Montana**, served as the lead local agency and worked in coordination with the FRA, Flathead County Economic Development Authority, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, MDT, and Mission Mountain Railroad Companies.

Additional details regarding the Project are provided in the 2017 EA.

The following is a summary of the three complete street options analyzed in detail in the 2017 EA (i.e., 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]); additional details are provided in the 2017 EA.

- ◆ 8th Avenue WN – This street connection would be from 8th Avenue WN to West Center Street. The existing road consists of an approximate 35-foot-wide, asphalt-paved roadway that lacks sidewalks and curb and gutter within 60 feet of ROW. This connection would improve connectivity for the local north-south street system and reduce traffic at the 5th Avenue WN and Meridian Road crossings. Potential relocations and property acquisitions of several privately owned, commercial businesses would be required to complete this street connection. These relocations and acquisitions were quantified and assessed in the 2017 EA.
- ◆ 6th Avenue WN – This street connection would be from 6th Avenue WN to West Center Street. North of the existing rail line, the road consists of an approximate 40-foot-wide, asphalt-paved roadway within 60 feet of ROW. It contains a sidewalk and landscaped boulevard on the west side of the roadway and has curb and gutter. South of the existing rail line, the road consists of an approximate 33-foot-wide, asphalt-paved roadway within 60 feet of ROW. It lacks a sidewalk and curb and gutter. This connection would improve connectivity for the local north-south street system and reduce traffic at the 5th Avenue WN and Meridian Road crossings. Potential relocations and property acquisitions of several privately owned, commercial and industrial businesses would be required to complete this street connection. These relocations and acquisitions were quantified and assessed in the 2017 EA.
- ◆ Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) – This street connection would be from Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) to Woodland Avenue. Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) is north of the existing rail line and consists of an approximate 24-foot-wide, asphalt-paved roadway within 60 feet of ROW. The road is dead-ended by the existing railroad tracks and lacks pedestrian facilities and curb and gutter. Woodland Avenue is south of the existing rail line and consists of an approximate 48-foot-wide, asphalt-paved roadway that runs adjacent to Woodland Park within 60 feet of ROW. A public-use path runs along the eastern side of Woodland Avenue and is separated from the roadway by a boulevard. This connection would primarily reduce traffic on the existing 4th Avenue East crossing. Potential relocations and property acquisitions of several privately owned, commercial and industrial businesses would be required to complete this street connection. These relocations and acquisitions were quantified and assessed in the 2017 EA.



1.2.2 Previous Public and Agency Involvement

This section provides a brief summary of the public and agency involvement efforts previously conducted for the Kalispell Core Area Plan and 2017 EA.

Development of, and community outreach for, the Kalispell Core Area Plan took place for more than two and a half years, ending in 2012. One hundred and thirty-nine (139) individual property owners were interviewed by the City of Kalispell; newsletters were mailed; and there were several open houses, public meetings, and presentations throughout 2011 and 2012. In addition, in 2012, a Kalispell Chamber of Commerce presentation, televised planning board hearings, and televised city council hearings were held and repeated on public access television for one month.

Since the City Council adopted the Kalispell Core Area Plan in December 2012, construction and operation of the Rail Park and Kalispell Trail has been the focus of numerous public presentations to local organizations. In 2014 and 2015, the City Council solicited support for the Rail Park and Kalispell Trail from Montana’s Senators and Congressmen. The solicitations were followed up by televised public meetings and council presentations.

Public and agency coordination efforts for the 2017 EA began in the early stages of Project planning and continue through Project design and construction. Scoping packages were sent to federal, state, and local agencies and other interested parties in 2013 and 2015. Consultation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act began in 2016. After approval of the Draft EA by FRA on May 18, 2017, the document was made available to the public for a 30-day review and comment period from May 19 through June 17, 2017. FRA approved a FONSI for the Project on July 18, 2017.

Between FRA’s issuance of the FONSI and City’s Deep Dive design event in June 2018, the Project has been the focus of 14 presentations by City staff to organizations, such as area chamber of commerce groups, Kalispell Rotary, Northwest Montana Association of Realtors, Montana Downtown Conference attendees, and Leadership Flathead members. Additionally, City personnel staffed a Northwest Montana Fair booth for three days in August 2017 to provide information and receive public comments on the Project. City staff and Project partners (i.e., Flathead County Economic Development Authority, Burlington Northern Santa Fe [BNSF], Mission Mountain Railroad [WATCO], and Montana Department of Transportation [MDT]) also hosted a Glacier Rail Park Groundbreaking event in late August 2017 to celebrate the commencement of the Project. Tours of the Project area were provided to Montana Governor Steve Bullock and members of the Community Builders organization.

The **Deep Dive** design event was held from June 4 to 8, 2018, to gather feedback from the community on the preferred trail design concepts and three complete street options proposed in the 2017 EA. It encompassed multiple events, stakeholder meetings, and consultation with the public. More than 600 people attended the series of events.

The Kalispell City Council traveled to Washington, DC once a year over the course of five years (2014 to 2018) to provide a Project update to Montana’s Senators and Congressman, as well as a number of federal agencies, such as the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Surface Transportation Board, US Economic Development Administration, and FRA. Each trip was followed up with a presentation at the City Council meeting, which were open to the public and televised.

During the post-2017 FONSI period, the City reached out to landowners that would be affected by a potential 8th or 6th Avenue WN complete street connection. 6th Avenue WN received little support, with members of the public stating that the complete street would be too close to 5th Avenue WN to be of significant value. 8th



Avenue WN and Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) received substantial public support, but little support from the potentially affected property owners. Both options scored highly with regard to overall north-south connectivity and the value to the transportation network as a whole. 8th Avenue WN scored highest in its perceived value to improve economic activity in the Core Area, whereas Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) was perceived as a greater value to non-motorized connectivity and access to destinations.

The City also sent out approximately 120 newsletters in July 2018 to the Woodland Avenue residents informing them of the general popular support for connecting their street to 7th Avenue EN and inviting them to provide written, email, or telephone comment. The City also advertised a 30-day comment period and scheduled an open house. A total of 30 members of the public attended the open house and 60 public comments were received. Of the 60 comments received, 58 were against Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) as a complete street option, stating that it would be a detriment to neighborhood safety and livability due to increased traffic and noise. As a result, the Trail Crew concurred that Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) should be removed from consideration as a complete street option.

The **Trail Crew** is an advisory committee to the City made up of the following organizations: Flathead County Economic Development Authority/Montana West Economic Development, Flathead County Library System, Kalispell Business Improvement District/Downtown Association, Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, Kalispell Convention and Visitor Bureau, Kalispell Center Mall, Northwest Montana Association of Realtors, Rails to Trails of NW Montana, Glacier Bank, Kalispell Architectural Review Committee, Kalispell Urban Renewal Agency Board, Kalispell Parks & Recreation Department, Kalispell Public Works, Kalispell City Clerk, MDT, Museum at Central School, Kalispell Regional Healthcare, Kalispell Public Schools, Flathead Industries, Kalispell Revolving Loan Fund Committee, Agency on Aging, Planning Board Member, and Bike Walk Montana.

Throughout the outreach period, the overall sentiment from the general public, property owners within the Core Area, and majority of those potentially directly affected by a proposed street connection was consistently positive toward the Project as a whole and the construction of the Kalispell Trail specifically.

Other options for complete street routes were suggested by the public during the City's additional outreach period. One route suggested by a member of the public was determined by the City to impact more property owners than the three options analyzed in the 2017 EA and the three options currently under consideration in this SEA, and therefore, require more land acquisition. The need for the City to acquire more land could place the Project at greater risk of exceeding budgeted funds available and extending the Project schedule. One public comment submitted since the 2017 EA requested the upgrade of utilities within the Core Area, but outside the construction limits of the Project as defined in the 2017 EA. While there may be a general need for improved utility infrastructure in downtown Kalispell, improving transportation efficiency and safety is the specific focus of this TIGER-funded Project.

The City continues to maintain open communications with the affected property owners and will continue to do so throughout the life of the Project. The City has historically been and remains reluctant to take any property through the eminent domain process, and since the 2017 EA has had difficulties conducting property appraisals and purchasing property through the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (Uniform Relocation Act) that are necessary to implement the 6th and 8th Avenue WN options. To ensure the Project can be completed within the current budget and schedule, the City chose to explore other options for the locations of the complete street connection(s), which are a required scope element of the FY 2015 USDOT TIGER Discretionary Grant Agreement.

The City is developing this SEA to analyze three street connections that are within the Study Area used for the 2017 EA, but were not analyzed in detail in the EA (i.e., 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN). In addition, a potential



realignment of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN and a potential connection of the northeast trailhead to adjacent public ROW at the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection being considered in this SEA. These potential modifications to Phase II of the Project are a result of the City's public outreach efforts and a continuation of the Project planning process; they are located 2017 EA Study Area and Project Area, but were not analyzed in the 2017 EA.

1.3 Project Location

The Project is located in the City of Kalispell, Flathead County, Montana. 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN are located in downtown Kalispell (i.e., the Core Area), north of the Kalispell Center Mall (Mall). The three street connections, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection are included in the Project Area assessed in the 2017 EA. This Project Area was defined as the area that would be directly impacted by the construction of the Rail Park, Kalispell Trail, and associated improvements (e.g., complete street connections, new traffic control devices and utilities, and roadway improvements). Additional details pertaining to the Core Area are provided in the 2017 EA.

The **Core Area** is the traditional industrial hub adjacent to downtown located along the rail corridor within City limits. It is bounded to the north by Washington Street, east and west by City limits, and south by 1st Street.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the Kalispell Core Area, and **Figure 2** provides an overview of the Project Area with the locations of all proposed complete street connections (analyzed in the 2017 EA and this SEA) and the northeast trailhead.

1.4 Purpose and Need

As discussed in the 2017 EA, the Project is needed to address several issues associated with the current layout of the Kalispell Core Area (e.g., restricted/limited traffic movement, lack of adequate and safe pedestrian facilities). The existing railroad line to be removed and ROW to be converted to the Kalispell Trail runs directly through the Core Area, splitting and isolating Kalispell into northern and southern portions. Adjacent to the existing railroad tracks are small city lots, incompatible uses, several acres of underdeveloped and undeveloped properties, and dead-end streets.

Currently, north-south traffic movement is restricted in the Core Area, because there are only six at-grade railroad crossings across the nearly two-mile width of the City, which diverts traffic to US Highway 93 and impacts access and circulation within the Core Area. With the removal of the railroad tracks to accommodate the Kalispell Trail, there is an opportunity to provide needed connectivity in the Core Area. Constructing 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and/or Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN), as identified in the 2017 EA, and/or at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN, as identified in this SEA, would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area. The benefits of these additional streets include an increase in accessibility and connectivity to the development in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area, as well as the underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. This would improve circulation in the Core Area, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. It would also provide opportunity for development of additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area.



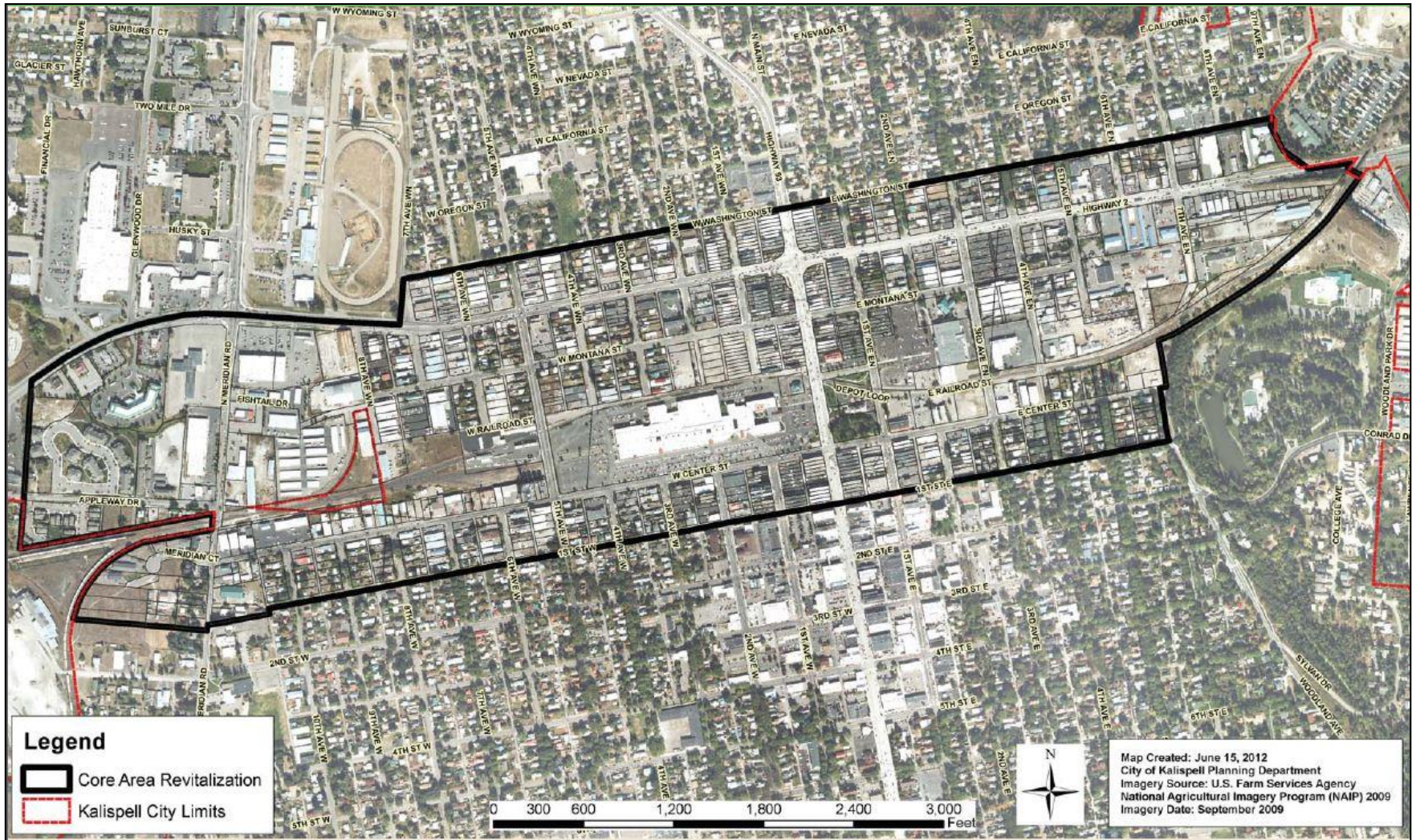


Figure 1, Kalispell Core Area



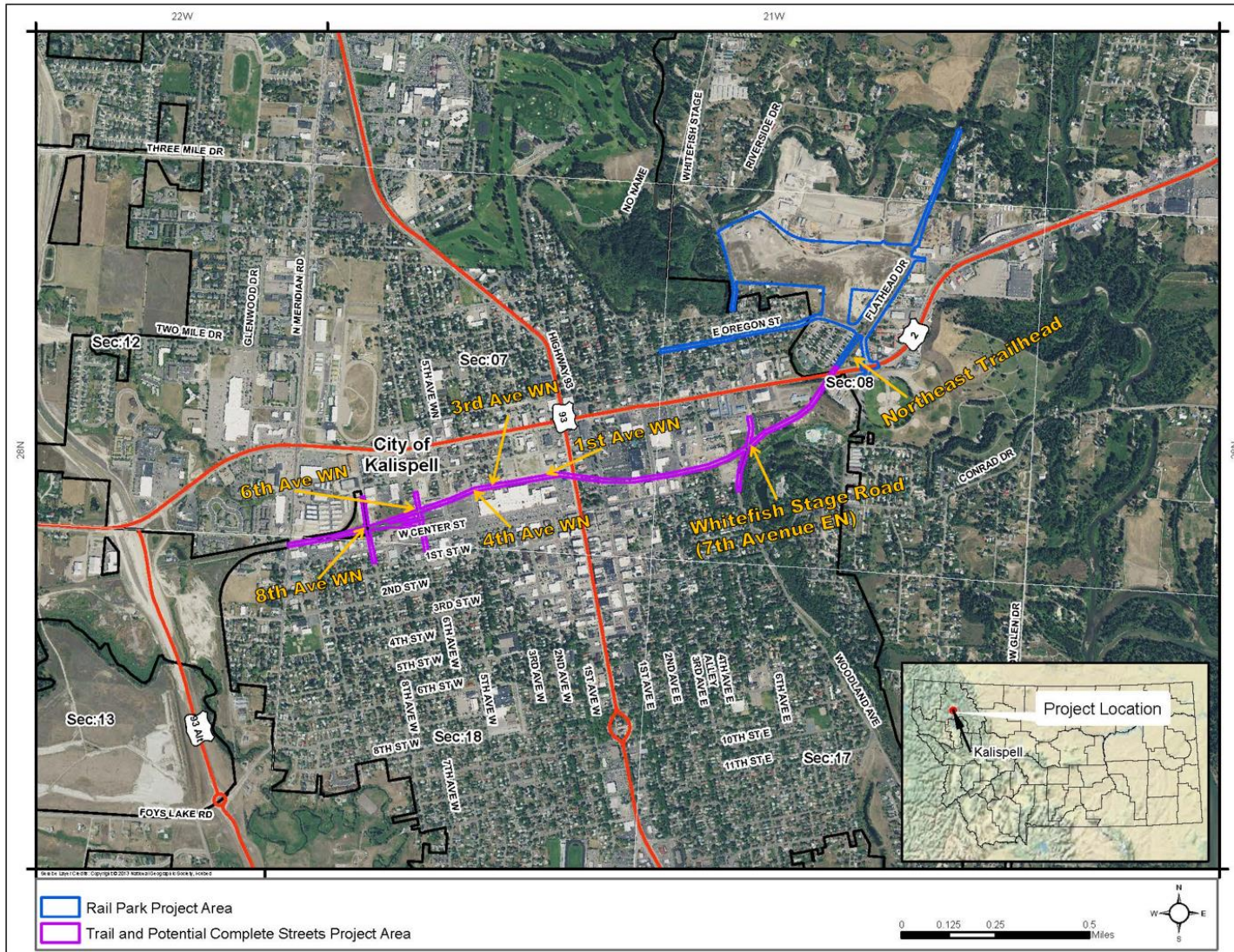


Figure 2, Project Area Assessed in 2017 EA and this SEA



CHAPTER 2 ALTERNATIVES

This chapter provides details on the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative analyzed in this SEA. Where necessary, information from the 2017 EA is summarized briefly.

2.1 No-Build Alternative

CEQ regulations require consideration of the No Action Alternative (No-Build). The No-Build Alternative serves as a baseline against which the potential impacts from the Build Alternative can be evaluated. Under the No-Build Alternative, the City would not implement Phase II of the Project. There would be no construction of the Kalispell Trail or complete street connections, nor any of the proposed modifications described in this SEA. The number of north-south connections in the Core Area and accessibility and connectivity to the existing retail areas and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would not be increased or improved. Traffic circulation in the Core Area (specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93) and the general appeal of the area would not be improved. The No-Build Alternative does not meet the Project's purpose and need.

2.2 Build Alternative

As previously discussed in **Section 1.2.1**, the 2017 EA analyzed construction and operation of at least one north-south complete street. Based on information known at the time and public input received for the Project, only three complete street options (i.e., 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]) were evaluated in detail in the 2017 EA. Four potential connections (i.e., 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN) were not analyzed in detail in the 2017 EA, because of the comparatively stronger positive public input received for the 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) options. Subsequently, these three complete street options (8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]) were included in the 2017 FONSI for the Project. However, in response to public input after issuance of the FONSI (see **Section 1.2.2**), three of the four complete street options (i.e., 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN) that were not analyzed in detail in the 2017 EA are being considered in this SEA as part of the Build Alternative for Phase II of the Project. In addition, the City's public outreach and Project planning process resulted in two proposed modifications to the Kalispell Trail that are also analyzed as part of the Build Alternative in this SEA: (1) a potential realignment of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN (Kalispell Trail realignment) and (2) a potential connection of the northeast trailhead to adjacent public ROW at the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection (northeast trailhead connection).

The potential complete street options would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area and provide connectivity and increase accessibility to the retail areas and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. This would meet the Project's purpose and need in terms of improving circulation in the Core Area, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. It would also provide opportunity for developers to construct additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area.



A desktop study of traffic for the three complete street options was conducted by KLJ in February 2019 and documented in the Memorandum for the Kalispell Trail and Complete Streets Traffic (May 2019) (**Appendix C**). The memorandum informed the analysis in this SEA.

At least one complete street would be constructed as part of Phase II of the Project, which the City anticipates beginning in the spring of 2020. All of the streets considered for connection are owned and maintained by the City. The City has a 60-foot-wide ROW on each roadway. Roadway improvements for existing roadways (including sidewalk and curb and gutter installation, urban tree plantings, and sewer and water extensions) would be located within the existing 60-foot-wide ROW and the Project Area limits.

Completed street connections would meet the City of Kalispell local street standards and complete street policy (per the Standards for Design and Construction dated April 2, 2019), providing two 14-foot-wide driving lanes, a minimum 9-foot-wide boulevard separating the roadway from a 5-foot-wide sidewalk, tree plantings, and sewer and water extensions, as needed for this Project (KPWD 2019) (see **Figure 3**). In addition, warning or stop signs would be installed at road crossings, and curb bump outs would be installed to reduce the distance pedestrians must cross.

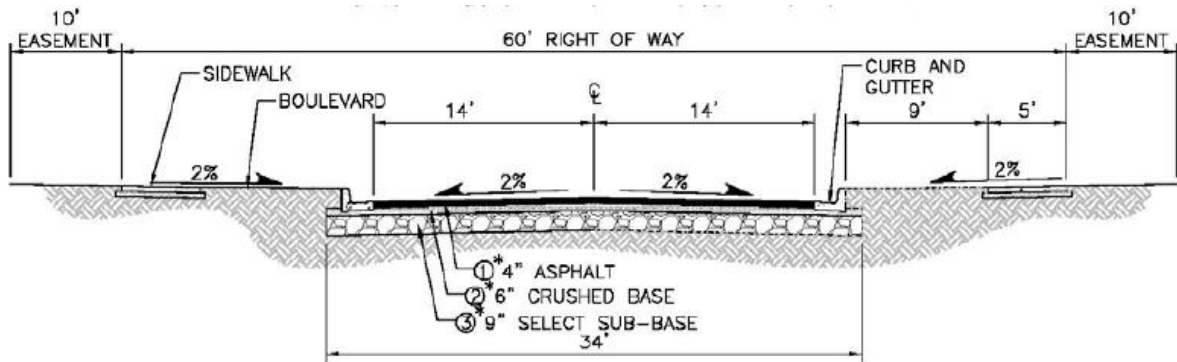


Figure 3, Local Street Cross Section

The following includes additional details on construction of the complete street options, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and the northeast trailhead connection which collectively are the Build Alternative analyzed in this SEA.



2.2.1 Complete Street Options

2.2.1.1 4th Avenue WN

Please refer to **Figure 4** for a depiction of the 4th Avenue WN connection. To connect 4th Avenue WN from north of the existing railroad corridor to the Mall, the Mall parking lot would require reconfiguration to address the offset between 4th Avenue WN and the major aisle in the parking lot. Unless the diagonal parking configuration is modified, traffic entering the Mall would be required to turn right to access the Mall parking lots. Approximately 3,300 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and approximately eight parking spaces at the Mall would be lost. During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party's responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street. The agreement would also address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall.

The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 4th Avenue WN (not shown in **Figure 4**) might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at this business. An agreement would be established between the City and business owner to address any net loss of parking spaces.

Due to safety reasons, Railroad Street West, which is not improved or a public facility and does not provide any private access, would also need to be blocked permanently at 4th Avenue WN.

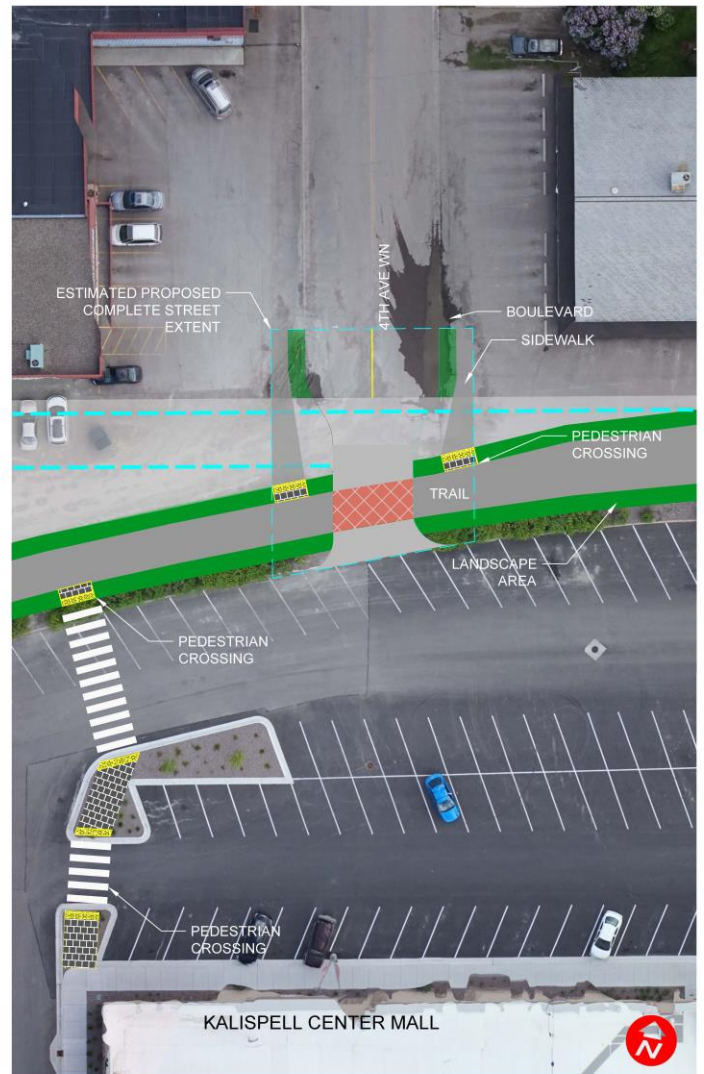


Figure 4, 4th Avenue WN Connection

2.2.1.2 3rd Avenue WN

Please refer to **Figure 5** for a depiction of the 3rd Avenue WN connection. Approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed. Approximately two to four parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business immediately north of the proposed Kalispell Trail on the east side of 3rd Avenue WN, would be lost. During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party's responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street.

The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 3rd Avenue WN (not shown in **Figure 5**) might require relocation or reconfiguration, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at this business. An agreement would be established between the City and business owner to address any net loss of parking spaces.

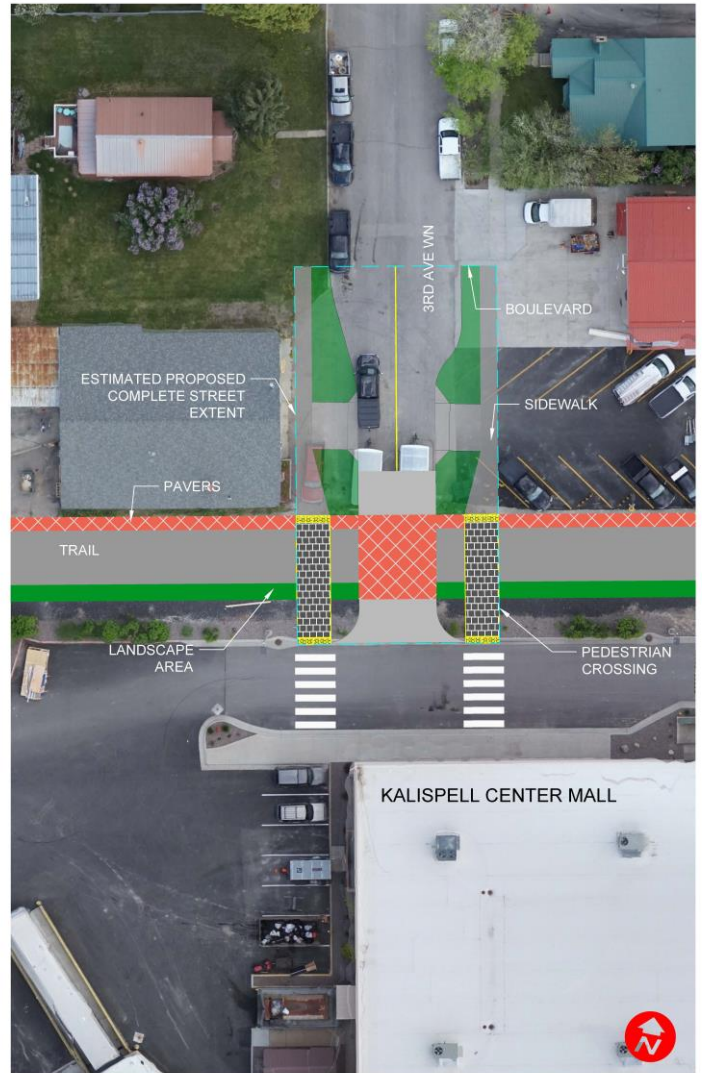


Figure 5, 3rd Avenue WN Connection

2.2.1.3 1st Avenue WN

Please refer to **Figure 6** for a depiction of the 1st Avenue WN connection. To connect 1st Avenue WN from north of the existing railroad corridor to the Mall, the Mall parking lot would require reconfiguration to address the offset between 1st Avenue WN and the major aisle in the parking lot. Unless the diagonal parking configuration is modified, traffic entering the Mall would be required to turn right to access the Mall parking lots. Approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall would be lost. During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party's responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street. The agreement would also address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall.

The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 1st Avenue WN (not shown in **Figure 6**) might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at this business. An agreement would be established between the City and business owner to address any net loss of parking spaces.

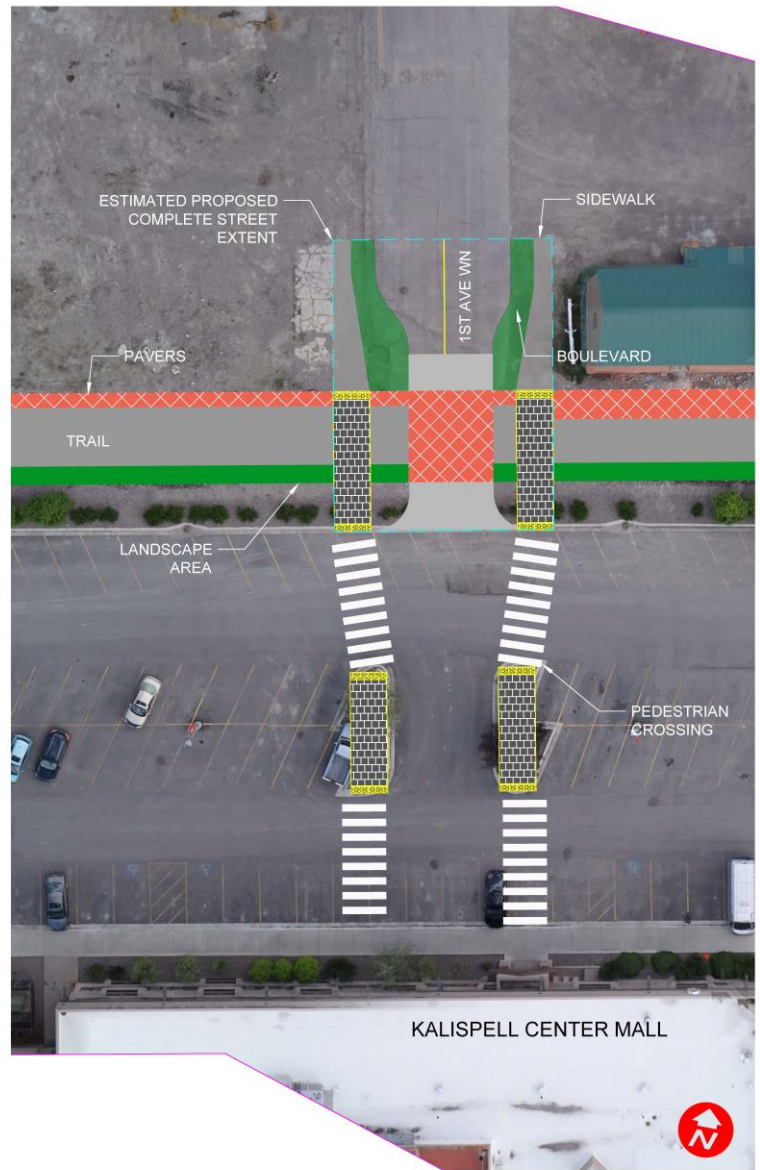


Figure 6, 1st Avenue WN Connection



2.2.2 Kalispell Trail Realignment

Please refer to **Figure 7** for a depiction of the potential realignment of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN. As part of the public outreach and design efforts for Phase II of the Project, the Mall expressed to the City an interest in re-routing the proposed Kalispell Trail slightly north of the existing railbed to follow the north property boundary of the northwest corner of the Mall. Realignment of the Kalispell Trail slightly to the north could allow the Mall owners to construct more parking spaces contiguous to the existing Mall parking by utilizing a small portion of railbanked land. Under this scenario, the Kalispell Trail would be routed onto Mall property off the railbanked corridor from near 4th Avenue WN to 5th Avenue WN, a distance of approximately 345 feet, and would cross 5th Avenue WN in the same location as analyzed in the 2017 EA.

Should the modification to the Kalispell Trail alignment be implemented, the City and the Mall owners would first enter into an agreement outlining roles, responsibilities, liability, and financial contributions. Within the agreement, the Mall owners would be required to pay for the cost of constructing the parking, plus any additional design and construction cost of the Kalispell Trail, beyond what it would cost to design and construct within the originally proposed railbanked corridor. In addition, the Mall owners would be required to adhere to the relevant terms and conditions of the railbanking agreement, particularly potential removal of parking or other infrastructure should the ROW revert back to railroad use in the future.

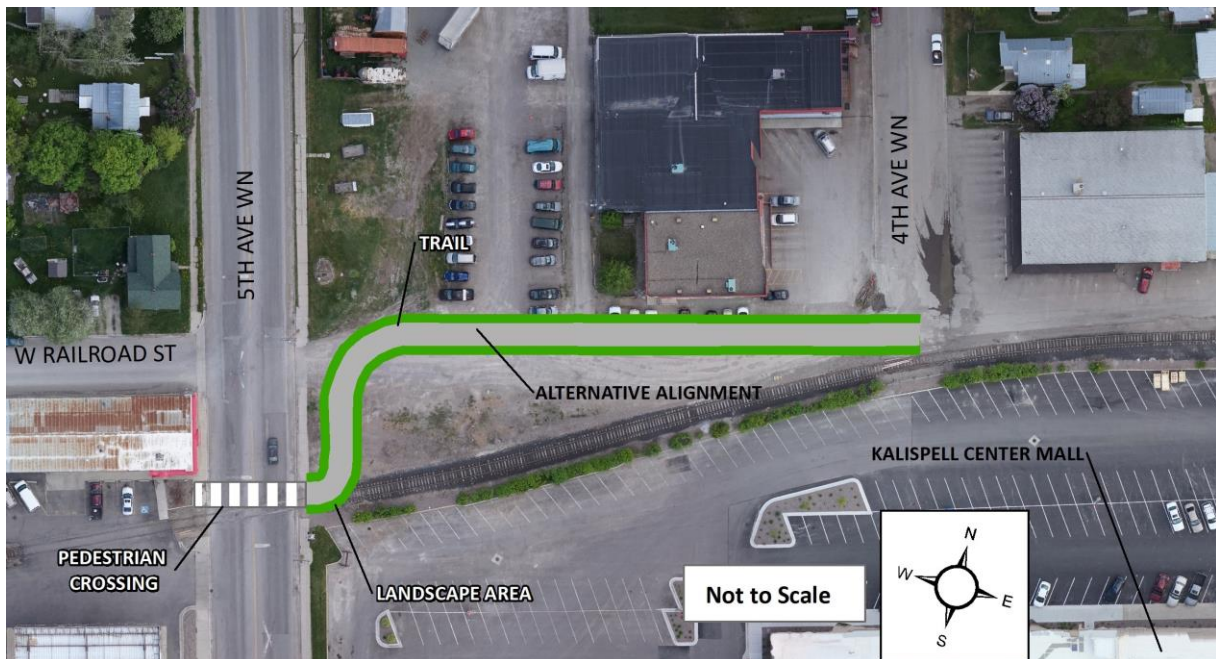


Figure 7, Kalispell Trail Realignment

2.2.3 Northeast Trailhead Connection

Please refer to **Figure 8** for a depiction of the potential connection of the northeast trailhead to adjacent public ROW at the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection. During the City's planning efforts for Phase II of the Project, several options were identified regarding connection of the Kalispell Trail at its northeast end to existing public ROW. However, no option had been developed in detail prior to the award of the FY 2015 TIGER grant or the 2017 EA. Since the 2017 EA, the City and MDT have discussed constructing the trailhead portion of the Kalispell Trail through vacant MDT property to access Flathead Drive and the intersection at US Highway 2, a distance of approximately 300 feet. This intersection was signalized and improved as part of Phase I of the Project to provide vehicular access to the new Rail Park. This potential pedestrian/bicycle connection would transition down from the Kalispell Trail, just after the existing railroad bridge over US Highway 2 and just before the bump post at the end of the railbanked land. The proposed connection would be required to meet the same design standards as the rest of the Kalispell Trail and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, including width, materials, and grade/elevation. The new connection would access the existing pedestrian features of the recently improved Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection. As of the date of this SEA, the City is investigating the specific type of agreement that would be needed with MDT to allow the construction and long-term use of the Kalispell Trail on MDT property.

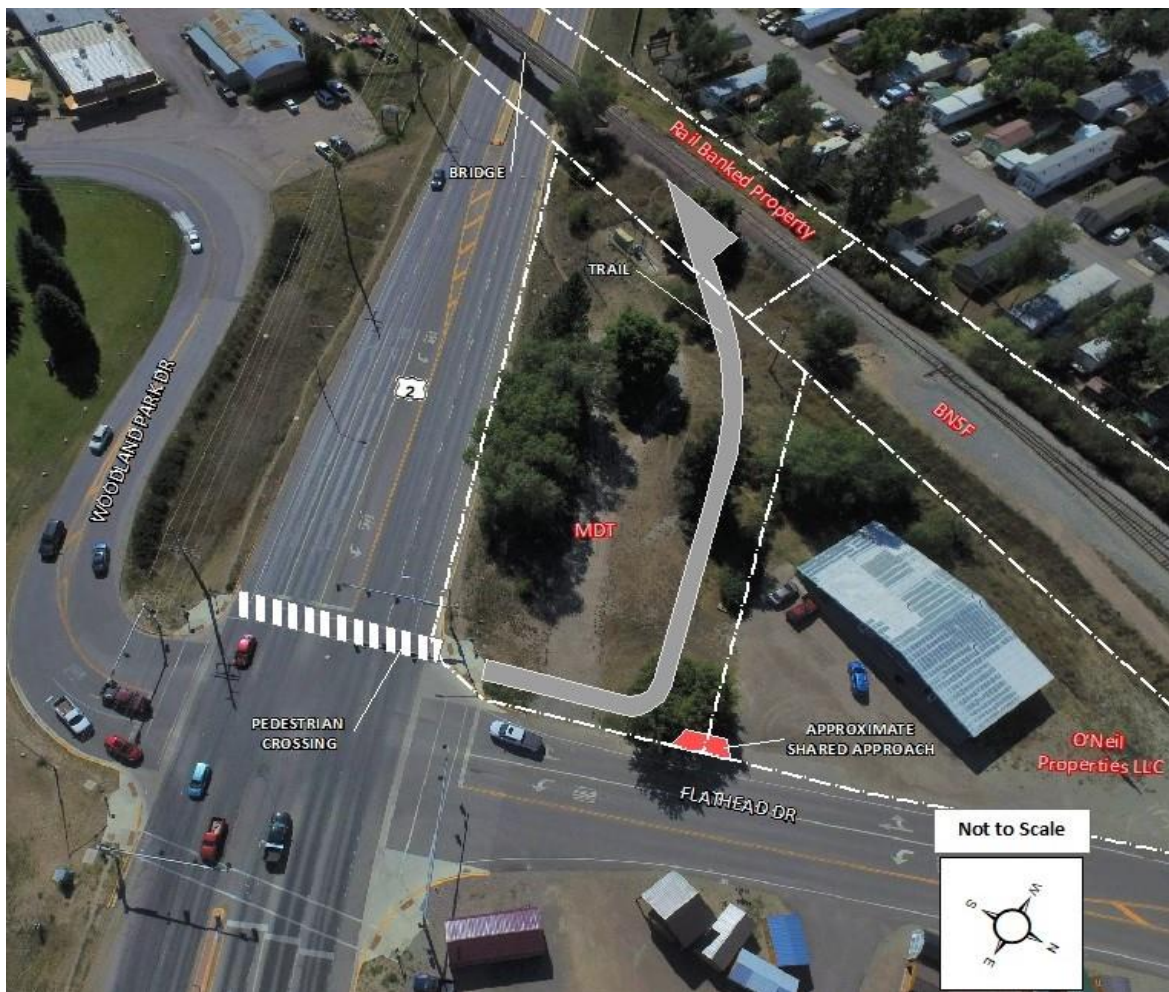


Figure 8, Northeast Trailhead Connection



CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the existing environment (i.e., baseline conditions) within the Project and Study Areas (defined below) that could be affected by the alternatives, as well as the potential impacts from the alternatives. This chapter also summarizes best management practices (BMPs) and mitigation, minimization, and avoidance methods that would be implemented as part of the Build Alternative.

- ◆ **Project Area** – The Project Area refers to the construction footprint or the area that could be directly impacted during construction and operation of the Project.
- ◆ **Study Area** – The Study Area includes the Project Area, as well as a larger area, that could be impacted directly and/or indirectly during construction and operation of the Project. The size of the Study Area varies depending on the resource being analyzed. For certain resources (e.g., traffic and transportation), the Study Area includes the traffic and roadways within the Core Area. For other resources (e.g., socioeconomics and environmental justice), the Study Area includes City of Kalispell and entire State of Montana.

3.2 Scope of Analysis

3.2.1 Resource Areas Omitted

The following environmental resource categories that are typically analyzed in NEPA documents are not included in this SEA, for the reasons explained below:

- ◆ **Floodplains** – The Project Area is outside of a designated 100-year floodplain per Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Plain Panel # 30029C 1810J (effective date of November 4, 2015).
- ◆ **Prime and Unique Farmlands** – The Project Area does not contain any soils classified by the US Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Service as prime or unique farmland or farmland of statewide or local importance.
- ◆ **Wild and Scenic Rivers** – There are no rivers in the Project Area that are designated as Wild and Scenic under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (Public Law 90-542; 16 United States Code [USC] 1271 et seq.).
- ◆ **Coastal Barriers and Coastal Zone** – The Project Area is not located in a coastal barrier or coastal zone area.
- ◆ **Section 6(f)** – A search of the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Recreation Grants Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Website identified two Section 6(f) resources in the vicinity of the Project Area: Woodland Park and Conrad Complex (Montana State Parks 2008). However, the Build Alternative does not require conversions of these properties; therefore, a Section 6(f) evaluation is not required.



The 2017 EA is incorporated by reference; therefore, the scope of this SEA focuses on only those resource areas that might be affected by the proposed modifications to the Build Alternative (i.e., construction and operation of the 4th, 3rd, and/or 1st Avenue WN complete street; the Kalispell Trail realignment; and the northeast trailhead connection) and No-Build Alternative or that have experienced substantial changes from what was described in the 2017 EA. The following resource areas are not analyzed in full detail, because the affected environment, potential impacts, and mitigation/minimization measures or BMPs described for these resources in the 2017 EA would not substantially change for the Build Alternative analyzed in this SEA.

- ◆ **Water Quality and Water Resources** – Construction of the complete street(s) would increase the acreage of impervious surface area north of the existing railroad corridor, which would limit the ability of water to penetrate and restore groundwater sources and produce more surface runoff. The Kalispell Trail realignment would have little or no impact to the impervious surface calculated as part of the 2017 EA/FONSI, and the northeast trailhead connection could slightly increase the acreage of impervious surface area at the northeast corner of the limits of the Kalispell Trail. Any provision of new parking spaces/lot to offset the loss of any existing parking that may only be necessary for certain complete street options could create additional impervious surface if the number of new spaces exceeds existing spaces. As identified in the 2017 FONSI, a Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MTDEQ) would be required and regular street sweeping, leaf collection, and storm drainage system inspection and cleaning would be implemented for any selected complete street option(s) as well as the Kalispell Trail.
- ◆ **Energy Use** – Electricity and energy resource demand would increase slightly during construction of the complete street(s), Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection; however, any increase in electricity and energy resource demand would be temporary and is not anticipated to exceed existing capacity. The complete street would reduce fuel consumption by increasing traffic efficiency.
- ◆ **Visual Resources** – The appeal of the area north of the existing railroad corridor would be improved with construction of at least one complete street, which would include sidewalk and curb and gutter installation, urban tree plantings, and utility extensions. This would improve the visual appeal and fit with the current visual setting of the streets within the Core Area. This conclusion also applies to the Kalispell Trail realignment and northeast trailhead connection.
- ◆ **Public Health and Safety** – Construction of the complete street(s), Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection would result in temporary increases in fugitive dust and emissions. Public access to work zones would be restricted by fencing and standard safety features. In addition, there would be signed detours, and contractors would follow MDT Work Zone Safety and Mobility Goals and Objectives, Guidelines, Procedures, and Processes (MDT 2015).
- ◆ **Cultural Resources and Historic Properties** – The Area of Potential Effect (APE) established as part of Section 106 consultation and assessed in the 2017 EA encompasses the locations of the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA. Of the potential historic properties identified and assessed within the APE in the 2017 EA, only one is in the vicinity of the three complete street options: the Continental Oil Company Warehouse and Garage. This property, which is located at 51 1st Avenue West North, was determined to be *Not Eligible* for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) during FRA’s Section 106 consultation for the Project in 2016-2017.



- ◆ **Section 4(f)** – The complete street(s), Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection would be constructed following the removal of the railroad infrastructure. The NRHP-eligible Great Northern Railroad (GNRR) is a Section 4(f) property. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) executed in the 2017 for the Project pursuant to Section 106 includes mitigation to resolve adverse effects on the GNRR. The mitigation included in the MOA represents all possible planning to minimize harm to the Section 4(f))-protected resource.

3.2.2 Resource Areas Analyzed in Detail

The following resource areas were evaluated in detail in this SEA, because of (1) the potential that the Build Alternative could create a different impact than what was described in the 2017 EA, or (2) the affected environment has changed since the 2017 EA.

A **Glossary of Terminology and Definitions**, including laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, is provided in **Appendix A**.

- ◆ Air Quality (**Section 3.3**)
- ◆ Noise and Vibration (**Section 3.4**)
- ◆ Land Use (**Section 3.5**)
- ◆ Ecological Systems (**Section 3.6**)
- ◆ Traffic and Transportation (**Section 3.7**)
- ◆ Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice (**Section 3.8**)
- ◆ Relocations (**Section 3.9**)
- ◆ Hazardous Waste (**Section 3.10**)

3.2.3 Summary

Potential impacts from the Build Alternative and No-Build Alternative, as well as mitigation/minimization measures and BMPs for air quality, noise and vibration, land use, ecological systems, traffic and transportation, socioeconomics and environmental justice, relocations, hazardous waste, and cumulative impacts are summarized in **Table 1**.



Table 1, Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation/Minimization Measures/BMPs

RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
Air Quality	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> Construction and ground-disturbing activities would result in temporary emissions of criteria pollutants and fugitive dust. Emissions are not anticipated to increase the frequency or severity of NAAQS violations or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS, and would be consistent with conformity regulations.</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Vehicle idling would decrease, further reducing emissions. In addition, adding sidewalks and pedestrian pathways would increase the efficiency and public appeal for alternative and non-motorized modes of transportation, which could further reduce emissions. It is anticipated that air quality conditions within the Core Area would improve.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> Spraying water to control fugitive dust, using vehicular emission control equipment, and limiting construction equipment idle time would be implemented. All construction equipment would comply with USEPA emission standards for nonroad engines.</p>	<p>No changes to current air quality; however, traffic conditions would remain the same and automobiles would continue to idle due to limited access, poor traffic circulation, and lack of street connections, further contributing emissions.</p>
Noise and Vibration	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> Construction activities would result in temporary increases in noise above baseline levels. Noise generated by construction activities would vary depending on the type of equipment used, the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source.</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Business owners and residents along 4th, 3rd, and/or 1st Avenue WN north of the out-of-service railroad corridor would experience a slight increase in vehicular traffic noise once a complete street connection is constructed; however, this noise is expected to be offset by removal of the railroad tracks and associated noise from trains and train horns. In addition, any noise generated as a result of increased vehicular traffic on the new complete street(s) would be consistent with the existing noise in the surrounding area. The Kalispell</p>	<p>No changes or impacts on current noise levels within the noise and vibration Study Area.</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>Trail realignment and northeast trailhead connection would not have any additional operational noise impacts.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> Construction would not take place from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. when sensitivity to noise is more pronounced due to lower levels of background noise. Additionally, construction activities would be restricted to weekdays. Construction would not occur on weekends, unless special permission is granted by the Kalispell Public Works Department or MDT.</p>	
Land Use	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> There would be no impacts on land use from construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, or the northeast trailhead connection, as the zoning would not change from its current designation of B-3 (business district that provides areas for development of congregated community shopping areas to serve neighborhoods) and B-2 (business district that provides for those retail sales and service functions and operations that are typically characterized by outdoor display, storage, and/or sale of merchandise, by major repair of motor vehicles, and by outdoor commercial amusement and recreational activities).</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Construction of at least one complete street would provide increased access to the area immediately adjacent to US Highway 2 and US Highway 93 and undeveloped and underdeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. It would also provide opportunity for developers to construct additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area. The Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections. The northeast trailhead connection would not have any impact on land use.</p>	No land use changes or impacts, and all current land uses would remain as they exist today.



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs</u>: No significant adverse impacts to land use are anticipated as a result of the Build Alternative, and therefore no mitigation is proposed.</p>	
<p>Ecological Systems (Threatened and Endangered Species)</p>	<p><u>Construction/Operation Impacts</u>: Due to the urban nature and location of the Project and lack of suitable habitat within the Project Area, the Build Alternative is anticipated to have <i>no effect</i> on protected species.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs</u>: Measures to minimize impacts on wildlife (including threatened and endangered species) would include the appropriate BMPs, such as silt fencing and reseeding disturbed areas, to control soil erosion and minimize the potential for runoff to affect adjacent waterbodies. Any storage bins containing liquids would be sealed to prevent wildlife from accessing them, and proper speed limits and restrictions would be followed on roadways to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions. To minimize the effects of overhead utility lines on birds in flight, any overhead lines impacted or installed would be marked with bird diverters, and new placements or extensions of utilities would be installed underground.</p> <p>Should eagle nests be discovered during construction of the complete street(s), Kalispell Trail realignment, or northeast trailhead connection, to avoid disturbing nesting bald eagles, the USFWS recommends (1) keeping a distance between the activity and the nest (i.e., 330 to 660 feet distance buffers depending on visuals from the nest); (2) maintaining forested or natural areas between the activity and around nest trees; and (3) avoiding certain activities, such as tree removal, during the breeding season (USFWS 2007).</p> <p>In compliance with Flathead County Weed Control District Revegetation Policy, disturbed areas would be reseeded and reclaimed as soon as possible after construction with a Flathead County Weed Control District-approved seed mix, and shall occur after completion of the complete street(s), either between April 15 and June 15 or October 1 and November 15.</p>	<p>No impacts to protected species.</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
<p>Traffic and Transportation</p>	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> Construction equipment and machinery may temporarily add more traffic and congestion to the roadways in the immediate vicinity of the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection; though final routes for equipment have not yet been determined. Major arterials, such as US Highway 2 and US Highway 93, are anticipated to be used by heavy equipment mobilizing to the construction sites and staging areas. Residents and commercial business owners along the complete street(s) could experience temporary delays and detours. In addition, there could be potential delays and detours along US Highway 2, Flathead Drive, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93 and in the Mall parking lot.</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Operation of at least one complete street would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area improving circulation (specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93), and reducing traffic congestion. Patrons traveling to the retail areas would be able to use 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN for more direct access. Access and connectivity to the businesses in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would also be increased. Completion of at least one street connection with improvements, including sidewalks, would provide connectivity for pedestrians in areas previously void of those facilities (i.e., north of the railroad corridor).</p> <p>Adverse impacts could be expected on existing residents and business owners along US Highway 2 and the complete street(s), as there would be a slight increase in AADT as patrons travel to and from the retail uses. With the increase in accessibility and connectivity to the underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor, the general appeal of the area would be improved, and additional businesses and residences could be developed along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. This would add to the overall increase AADT in the immediate vicinity. Traffic on US Highway 2 is estimated to increase by approximately 140 vehicles during the evening peak hours</p>	<p>There would be no alternative means of non-motorized transportation (e.g., walking, biking) or complete street connections in the Core Area. Bicyclists and pedestrians would not benefit from the added efficiency and safety of a connected trail network or improved street connections. North-south traffic in the Core Area would remain restricted by the limited number of north-south connections, and traffic circulation would not be improved. Patrons traveling to the retail areas via 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would still need to travel around using 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. Accessibility and connectivity to the businesses in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would not be increased.</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>(i.e., 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) with construction of at least one complete street. This slight increase in traffic would not exceed the capacity of the current roads.</p> <p>In addition, there would be a loss of parking spaces: the 1st Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall; the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business; and the 4th Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall. However, the Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections. Approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-section. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at these businesses.</p> <p>The Kalispell Trail realignment would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation, as it would cross 5th Avenue WN in the same location as analyzed in the 2017 EA. The northeast trailhead connection would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation; beneficial impacts would be expected from increased pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> Temporary delays and detours would not occur at every street, intersection, retail driveway, or Mall driveway simultaneously; rather, construction would be staggered. Access to all businesses and residences would be maintained throughout construction. Detours would be signed and marked clearly for travelers, and a Work Zone Safety and Mobility Transportation Management Plan and Maintenance of Traffic Plan following MDT guidelines would be developed and adhered to by the City's contractor. The public would be notified in</p>	



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>advance of closures or detours through means of local news stations, newspapers, and radio announcements.</p> <p>To determine if roadway signalization and/or turn lanes would be warranted at the completed street connections, future traffic signal warrant studies on the street connections would be completed by the City after construction of Phase II of the Project. If the traffic signal warrant studies indicate a need for roadway signalization and/or turn lanes, traffic signals and appropriate lane configurations would be installed in the future by the City, separate from the Project.</p> <p>An agreement would be established between the City and Mall owners to address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s).</p> <p>The Kalispell Trail realignment would have the same mitigation measures as outlined for the Kalispell Trail in the 2017 FONSI. In addition, this realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking, which could provide potential mitigation for the loss of parking associated with implementation of one or more of the complete street options. The northeast trailhead connection would require an agreement between the City and MDT, the owner of the vacant property the trailhead connection would traverse.</p>	
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> Temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences north of the railroad corridor during construction of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN and the Kalispell Trail realignment. Temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences west and east of the railroad corridor, respectively, near the Flathead</p>	<p>No significant impacts on demographics, economics, community cohesion, or businesses within the community. However, neither Kalispell nor the region of northwest Montana would capitalize on the added economic and trade value of creating jobs and attracting new developers/development to the Kalispell Trail areas and along</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>Drive/US Highway 2 intersection during construction of the northeast trailhead connection. Impacts could include noise above ambient levels, visibility of construction equipment and activities, fugitive dust emissions, and temporary pedestrian and traffic delays and congestion. Fugitive dust from ground-disturbing activities would be greatest during initial site-preparation and would vary from day to day, depending on the construction phase, level of activity, and prevailing weather conditions. Persons within the viewshed of temporary construction activities would see construction workers, equipment, lighting, materials, debris, signing, and activities typically associated with construction. Noise generated by construction activities would vary depending on the type of equipment used, the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source.</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Increased connectivity within and access to the Core Area as a result of the removal of the railroad infrastructure and implementation of one or more complete street connections is anticipated to result in socioeconomic benefits. Operation of at least one complete street would improve the general appeal of the area and spur development along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. Underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would become more attractive to developers, visibility of existing businesses north of the Mall would increase, and connectivity in the community would be improved. Long-term, beneficial impacts on the local economy would be expected, as there could be increases in the purchase of goods and services in the local area and subsequent induced development. This could provide overall economic benefits to the area through the creation of jobs and increased payroll taxes and sales receipts. Traffic circulation and connectivity would also be improved, and alternative transportation options (e.g., walking and biking) would be created, connecting people and neighborhoods with jobs, services, and goods. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on environmental justice populations because there are no environmental justice populations within the Study Area.</p>	<p>4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. The general appeal of the area would not be improved, the lack of connectivity in the community and visibility of existing businesses north of the Mall would continue, social benefits to the community would not be realized, and disconnection in the community would continue. There would be no direct or indirect impacts on environmental justice populations.</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> Signed detours and alternative access routes to residences and businesses would be provided during construction, and BMPs, such as watering methods and limiting idle times, to control dust and emissions would be implemented. Warning or stop signs would be installed at the road crossings, and curb bump outs are proposed to reduce the distance that pedestrians must cross roads. A Traffic and Pedestrian Control Plan would be submitted by the contractor and approved by the City’s Public Works Department for all work within the public ROW. The latest edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices would be followed to create the plan.</p>	
<p>Relocations</p>	<p><u>Construction Impacts:</u> For 1st and 3rd Avenue WN, approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and for 4th Avenue WN, approximately 3,300 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed. The Kalispell Trail realignment would be located on Mall property; however, the construction of parking spaces to serve Mall patrons would be located on the railbanked land between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN. The amount of property temporarily disturbed is yet to be determined and is dependent on the Mall’s parking design. Because the northeast trailhead connection would be constructed on vacant land, no construction impacts are anticipated.</p> <p><u>Operation Impacts:</u> Construction of at least one complete street on 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would be completed within either BNSF or City ROW. There would be a loss of parking spaces: the 1st Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall; the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business; and the 4th Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall. In addition, approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-sections. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at these businesses. For the Kalispell Trail</p>	<p>No relocations or buy-outs.</p>



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>realignment, parking could be constructed by the Mall on the railbanked area, which could potentially offset the loss of parking caused by the implementation of one or more of the complete street options. The northeast trailhead connection would be located on vacant land owned by MDT and would not displace or require MDT to relocate its facilities or operations.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> FRA requires the Project Sponsor (the City) to comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), Montana state law, and the City’s own adopted policies and procedures to protect the interests of current landowners or landowners’ leases. The City would provide compensation and assistance in relocations consistently and equitably in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and procedures. Eligible individuals, businesses, or organizations may receive relocation benefits to minimize hardship and provide the assistance necessary to accomplish this consistently.</p> <p>During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party’s responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street. The agreement would also address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s). The potential Kalispell Trail realignment would allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, which could provide mitigation for potential loss of parking due to implementation of one or more of the complete street options. The northeast trailhead connection would require an agreement between the City and MDT.</p>	



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
Hazardous Waste	<p><u>Construction/Operation Impacts:</u> Considering the design and planned construction activities associated with the potential complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or hazardous wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to the general public or natural resources. Ground-clearing activities would be shallow and would not reach the groundwater. In addition, since groundwater flow at the City Service Valcon LUST/UST site is toward the south-southwest, away from the Project Area, no impacts on, or from, this site are anticipated from the Build Alternative. Construction activities may require the use or removal of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., cleaning agents, lubricants, fuels, solvents, fertilizers, asphalt, ballast) and may result in the generation of hazardous waste (e.g., oily rags, used chemical containers, chemical waste, used oil). Considering the purpose, design, and operation activities for the complete streets, Kalispell Trail, and northeast trailhead connection, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to public health or the environment.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> In the event that previously unknown contaminants are discovered during construction or a spill occurs during construction, work would cease until the National Response Center (1-800-424-8002) has been notified by the contractor. If contamination is encountered, the MTDEQ would also be notified. Any contaminated soil that is encountered would be temporarily stockpiled and sampled to determine disposal requirements. Contractors would obtain a MPDES permit and implement and follow a SWPPP and SPCC Plan. All hazardous wastes generated would be handled in accordance with the RCRA Subtitle C waste management program and the requirements and regulations of the MTDEQ.</p>	No impacts.
Cumulative and Indirect Impacts	Temporary, negligible, cumulative effects on air quality, noise and vibration, and traffic and transportation would be expected from construction activities. Indirect impacts on land use, traffic and transportation, socioeconomics and environmental	No cumulative or indirect impacts.



RESOURCE AREA	BUILD ALTERNATIVE - THREE ADDITIONAL COMPLETE STREET CONNECTIONS, KALISPELL TRAIL REALIGNMENT, AND NORTHEAST TRAILHEAD CONNECTION	NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE
	<p>justice, and relocations could be expected from potential induced growth throughout the Core Area. Beneficial, cumulative impacts on traffic and transportation could be expected from improvements onto the overall transportation system and increase in accessibility in the region, and beneficial, cumulative impacts on socioeconomics and environmental justice could be expected from additional jobs, increased community cohesion, and increased safety.</p> <p><u>Mitigation/Minimization/BMPs:</u> None.</p>	

Key: NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standards; BMPs = best management practices; USEPA = US Environmental Protection Agency; AADT = annual average daily traffic; MDT = Montana Department of Transportation; ROW = right-of-way; BNSF = Burlington Northern Santa Fe; UST = underground storage tank; LUST = leaking underground storage tank; MTDEQ = Montana Department of Environmental Quality; MPDES = Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System; SWPPP = Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan; SPCC = Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure; RCRA = Resource Conservation and Recovery Act



3.3 Air Quality

3.3.1 Affected Environment

Criteria pollutants tracked under the USEPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) include sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter (PM), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), lead (Pb), and carbon monoxide (CO). Montana has adopted the NAAQS and has set additional air quality standards for hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), fluoride in forage, and settleable PM, as well as visibility standards.

The USEPA utilizes the following classifications for each of the six criteria pollutants: attainment, nonattainment, maintenance, and unclassifiable. As of March 31, 2019, the USEPA has determined that Kalispell is in nonattainment for PM₁₀. Kalispell and Flathead County are in attainment for all other NAAQS (USEPA 2019).

The USEPA originally designated Kalispell as a nonattainment area for PM₁₀ in 1987. Five sources were identified as contributing to the PM₁₀ pollution levels in Kalispell, including vehicle exhaust, road dust, prescribed burning, residential wood burning, and industry. Measures were developed to address each source in the USEPA-approved State Implementation Plan (*Federal Register* Vol. 61, No. 54, 19 March 1996). Since then, Kalispell has shown a continued reduction in annual tons of PM₁₀, as well as a decline in measured 24-hour ambient air concentrations of PM₁₀ (MTDEQ 2018a).

The MTDEQ has developed local air quality programs to regulate residential wood burning and road dust (the primary sources of particulate air pollution in Montana), as well as other minor sources of air pollution. In addition, the MTDEQ has implemented a permitting program for smaller sources of pollution, and in some cases, certain emission controls to ensure that such sources of air pollution are equipped with the best emission-control technology available (MTDEQ Undated).

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

3.3.2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would result in no changes to current air quality within the region; however, traffic conditions would remain the same, and automobiles would continue to idle due to limited access, poor traffic circulation, and lack of street connections, further contributing emissions.

3.3.2.2 Build Alternative

The Build Alternative would not cause or contribute to a violation of any NAAQS, increase the frequency or severity of NAAQS violations, delay timely attainment of the NAAQS, or expose sensitive receptors to substantially increased PM concentrations.

Construction Impacts

Construction and ground-disturbing activities would result in temporary emissions of criteria pollutants and fugitive dust. Fugitive dust emissions from construction activities would be the greatest during initial site preparation and would vary from day to day, depending on the construction phase, level of activity, and prevailing weather conditions. All emissions from construction activities would be temporary in nature.

Trucks and heavy construction equipment would temporarily generate minor amounts of emissions of PM, SO₂, NO₂, CO, and volatile organic compounds. Emissions would be limited to the immediate Project Area and are



not anticipated to increase the frequency or severity of NAAQS violations or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS, and would be consistent with conformity regulations.

Operational Impacts

Vehicle idling due to limited access, poor traffic circulation, and lack of street connections would decrease, further reducing emissions. In addition, adding sidewalks and pedestrian pathways through the area would increase the efficiency and public appeal for alternative and non-motorized modes of transportation within the City, such as walking, biking, and rollerblading, which could further reduce emissions. It is anticipated that air quality conditions within the Core Area would improve with the Build Alternative.

There would be no long-term, significant, adverse impacts on air quality from construction or operation of the Build Alternative.

3.3.3 Mitigation

The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and BMPs are the same as those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ BMPs to control fugitive dust, such as water spraying, would be implemented as needed.
- ◆ BMPs, such as using vehicular emission control equipment (e.g., catalytic converters) and limiting construction equipment idle time, would be followed as feasible to minimize impacts.
- ◆ All construction equipment must satisfy USEPA emission standards for nonroad engines.¹

3.4 Noise and Vibration

Environmental noise is characterized by A-weighted decibels (dBA), which best replicate how sound is received by the human ear. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has outlined noise-sensitive land uses, including the following (FTA 2006):

- ◆ Category 1 – parks and recreation areas. Tracts of land where quiet is an essential element in their intended purpose. This category includes lands set aside for serenity and quiet, such as outdoor amphitheaters and concert pavilions, National Historic Landmarks with significant outdoor use, recording studios, and concert halls.
- ◆ Category 2 – residences and buildings where people normally sleep. This category includes homes (e.g., single-family, multi-family, and mobile homes), hospitals, and hotels where a nighttime sensitivity to noise is assumed to be of utmost importance.
- ◆ Category 3 – institutional land uses with primarily daytime and evening use. This category includes schools, libraries, theaters, and churches where it is important to avoid interference with activities, such as speech, meditation, and concentration on reading material. Places for meditation or study associated with cemeteries, monuments, museums, campgrounds, and recreational facilities and certain historical sites and parks are also included in this category.

¹ For emissions standards for nonroad engines and vehicles, such as large spark-ignition engines, compression-ignition engines, and locomotives, refer to the USEPA Emission Standards for Nonroad Vehicles at <https://www.epa.gov/emission-standards-reference-guide/epa-emission-standards-nonroad-engines-and-vehicles>.



3.4.1 Affected Environment

As discussed in the 2017 EA, Big Sky Acoustics, LLC completed a Detailed Noise Analysis and General Vibration Assessment in 2017 that considered noise receivers of interest within 1,000 feet of the Project Area. Category 2 and Category 3 noise-sensitive land uses were identified in the noise Study Area considered in the 2017 noise analysis; no Category 1 noise-sensitive land uses were identified. Since the Project Area assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA, additional noise and vibration analyses were not conducted for this SEA.

3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

3.4.2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not result in changes or impacts on current noise levels within the noise and vibration Study Area.

3.4.2.2 Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

Construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and the northeast trailhead connection would result in temporary increases in noise above baseline levels. Noise generated by construction activities would vary depending on the type of equipment used (e.g., bulldozers, front-end loaders, excavators, dump trucks, scrapers, and compactors), the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source.

Although noise level would temporarily be above baseline levels throughout construction during the daytime hours, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Operational Impacts

Upon completion of construction, the business owners and residents along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN, north of the existing rail corridor would experience a slight increase in vehicular traffic noise once a connection street is constructed; however, this noise is expected to be offset by removal of the railroad tracks and associated noise from trains and train horns. In addition, any noise generated as a result of increased vehicular traffic on one or more complete streets would be consistent with the existing noise in the surrounding area. The Kalispell Trail realignment and northeast trailhead connection would not have any additional operational noise impacts. The relocation of freight rail operations as a result of Phase I and Phase II of the Project is anticipated to result in an overall decrease in noise impacts in the Core Area.

3.4.3 Mitigation

As stated in the 2017 EA, the 2017 noise analysis did not predict any severe, long-term impacts resulting from noise or vibration requiring mitigation to sensitive noise receptors. However, the same mitigation measure that were included in the 2017 FONSI apply to this SEA: Construction would not take place from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. when sensitivity to noise is more pronounced due to lower levels of background noise. Additionally, construction activities would be restricted to weekdays, and would not occur on weekends, unless special permission is granted by the Kalispell Public Works Department or MDT.



3.5 Land Use

The Study Area assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA; therefore, land use and zoning evaluated and discussed in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA.

3.5.1 Affected Environment

The three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection are located in the Flathead Valley of Montana, in the heart of the Northern Rocky Mountains Resource Region, just west of the Continental Divide. The valley contains glacial lakes and is flanked by forested, rugged, high elevation mountains with considerable climatic diversity. The three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection are located in the urban setting of downtown Kalispell (NRCS 2006).

The three complete street options and the Kalispell Trail realignment are located in an area zoned as B-3. This area is defined as a business district that provides areas for development of congregated community shopping areas to serve neighborhoods. Some of the permitted uses of this area include: accessory apartments; automobile parking, service stations, and washing and waxing facilities; medical/dental clinics; day care centers; offices; restaurants; retail stores; shopping malls; and parks and publicly owned recreational facilities. Some of the conditional uses of this area include: duplex, multi-family, and mixed-use dwellings; health clubs; hotels/motels; taverns; and bowling alleys (Flathead County 2019a, Flathead County 2019b).

The northeast trailhead connection is located in an area zoned as B-2. This area is defined as a business district that provides for those retail sales and service functions and operations that are typically characterized by outdoor display, storage, and/or sale of merchandise, by major repair of motor vehicles, and by outdoor commercial amusement and recreational activities. This district also serves the general needs of the tourist and traveler. Some of the permitted uses include accessory apartments, automobile (new and used) and accessory sales, bus station, day care center, food stores, hotels/motels, duplex and multi-family dwelling, parks and publicly owned recreational facilities, public transportation shelter stations, retail sales, and restaurants. The area is also under the EEO EVERGREEN ENTERPRISE OVERLAY district. This is a zoning district to diversify allowable businesses along the Evergreen commercial corridor while maintaining existing zoning by overlaying B-2 General Business or B-3 Community Business zoning districts with one additional permitted use. The one additional permitted use is light assembly and manufacturing, fabrication and processing, repairing, packing, storage facilities, warehousing, and distribution of products and equipment provided that such uses do not produce objectionable impacts beyond the lot lines and do not involve materials that are explosive, hazardous, or toxic (Flathead County 2019a, Flathead County 2019b).

The natural land use surrounding the Study Area is dominated by developed lands, with croplands and agricultural areas to the north, west, and northeast. Agricultural land consists primarily of grasslands, utilized as sheep, horse, and/or cow pastures throughout the past 60 years. The riparian areas of the Flathead and Stillwater rivers exist to the north and east of the Study Area (USDA 2019).

Details regarding the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA are provided below:

- ◆ 4th Avenue WN – The existing road consists of an approximate 40-foot-wide, asphalt-paved, 2-lane roadway that lacks sidewalks and gutters within 60 feet of ROW. Along this street, from West Montana Street south to the dead end, there are commercial buildings, an automobile repair shop, and residential



properties. Railroad Street West runs west to east, adjacent to the north of the railroad corridor, until it turns to run north between 3rd and 4th Avenue WN.

- ◆ 3rd Avenue WN – The existing road consists of an approximate 40-foot-wide, asphalt-paved, 2-lane roadway that lacks sidewalks and gutters within 60 feet of ROW. Along this roadway, from West Montana Street south to the dead end, there are commercial buildings, a warehouse, and residential properties.
- ◆ 1st Avenue WN – The existing road consists of an approximate 40-foot-wide, asphalt-paved, 2-lane roadway that lacks sidewalks and curb and gutter within 60 feet of ROW. Along this roadway, from West Montana Street south to the dead end, there is a vacant, gravel lot; commercial buildings; and a warehouse.
- ◆ Kalispell Trail Realignment – This slight modification to the Kalispell Trail alignment would occur at the northwest corner of the Mall, between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN, a distance of approximately 345 feet. The Kalispell Trail would cross 5th Avenue WN at the same location as originally planned in the 2017 EA. This modification would allow for additional parking at the Mall, require the Mall’s use of the railbanked land, and require the placement of a small segment of the Kalispell Trail on Mall property. All property is currently vacant with gravel or has railroad infrastructure (e.g., tracks).
- ◆ Northeast Trailhead Connection – The northeast trailhead connection would occur at the northeastern portion of the limits of Phase II of the Project, and would consist of connecting the Kalispell Trail with the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 signalized intersection, a distance of approximately 300 feet. This connection would be through vacant land owned by MDT.

3.5.2 Environmental Consequences

3.5.2.1 No-Build Alternative

There would be no land use changes or impacts associated with the No-Build Alternative, and all current land uses would remain as they exist today.

3.5.2.2 Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

No impacts on land use from construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, or the northeast trailhead connection would be expected, as the zoning would not change from the current designations of B-3 and B-2.

Operational Impacts

Construction of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would provide increased access to the retail areas and undeveloped and underdeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. It would also provide opportunity for developers to construct additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2 and improve the general appeal of the area. The Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections. The northeast trailhead connection would not have any impact on land use.



3.5.3 Mitigation

No significant, adverse impacts on land use are anticipated due to the construction or operation of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, or the northeast trailhead connection; therefore, no mitigation is proposed.

3.6 Ecological Systems

The Study Area for potential impacts on ecological systems assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA. There is no substantial change in the affected environment for general wildlife, fish, and vegetation species, and potential impacts and mitigation measures described in the 2017 EA for general wildlife, fish, and vegetation species would be similar for this SEA. Therefore, potential impacts on general wildlife, fish, and vegetation species are not re-assessed in this SEA.

The affected environment, potential impacts, and mitigation measures for threatened and endangered species described in the 2017 EA are also similar for this SEA; however, an additional species was identified during reevaluation of the Project Area. According to an inquiry through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Environmental Conservation Online Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system (USFWS 2019) and the USFWS Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, and Candidate Species List for Flathead County, Montana (USFWS 2018), the wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*) has the potential to occur within Flathead County. The wolverine is proposed for federal listing as a threatened species; therefore, potential effects to this species must be considered in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Therefore, this section only describes the existing conditions, potential impacts, and mitigation measures for the wolverine. All other information regarding ecological systems within the Project Area can be found in the 2017 EA.

3.6.1 Affected Environment

In the contiguous United States, wolverine habitat is restricted to high-elevation areas in the west. Wolverines inhabit habitats with near-arctic conditions wherever they occur. Wolverines select habitat areas that are cold and receive enough winter precipitation to reliably maintain deep persistent snow late into the warm season. In the southern portion of the species' range, where ambient temperatures are warmest, wolverine distribution is restricted to high elevations, while at more northern latitudes, wolverines are present at lower elevations. Wolverines have large spatial requirements. The availability of food is likely the primary factor in determining wolverine movements and home range. Wolverines are opportunistic feeders, consuming a variety of foods depending on availability. They primarily scavenge carrion, but also prey on small animals and birds and eat fruits, berries, and insects. The primary threat to the wolverine is from habitat and range loss due to climate warming (USFWS Undated).

3.6.2 Environmental Consequences

3.6.2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would not impact the wolverine because Phase II of the Project would not be implemented, and therefore, there would be no change in existing conditions.



3.6.2.2 Build Alternative

Due to the urban nature and location of the Project and lack of suitable habitat within the Project Area, the Build Alternative is anticipated to have *no effect* on the wolverine.

3.6.3 Mitigation

The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and BMPs are the same as those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ Measures to minimize impacts on wildlife (including threatened and endangered species) would include the appropriate BMPs, such as silt fencing and reseeding disturbed areas, to control soil erosion and minimize the potential for runoff to affect adjacent waterbodies.
- ◆ Any storage bins containing liquids would be sealed to prevent wildlife from accessing them, and proper speed limits and restrictions would be followed on roadways to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions.
- ◆ To minimize the effects of overhead utility lines on birds in flight, any overhead lines impacted or installed would be marked with bird diverters, and new placements or extensions of utilities would be installed underground.
- ◆ Should eagle nests be discovered during construction of the complete street(s), Kalispell Trail realignment, or northeast trailhead connection, to avoid disturbing nesting bald eagles, the USFWS recommends (1) keeping a distance between the activity and the nest (i.e., 330 to 660 feet distance buffers depending on visuals from the nest);² (2) maintaining forested or natural areas between the activity and around nest trees; and (3) avoiding certain activities, such as tree removal, during the breeding season (USFWS 2007).
- ◆ Per Flathead County Weed Control District Revegetation Policy, disturbed areas would be reseeded and reclaimed as soon as possible after construction with a Flathead County Weed Control District-approved seed mix³ and shall occur after completion of the complete street(s), either between April 15 and June 15 or October 1 and November 15.

3.7 Traffic and Transportation

Information pertaining to rail and bus traffic and transportation; traffic volumes, transportation issues, and safety concerns on major roadways and minor collector roadways; and bicycle and pedestrian traffic within the Study Area are provided in the 2017 EA.

² Appropriate buffers are based on topography, ecological characteristics of surrounding area, visibility of activities from the nest, and the nature of the proposed activity.

³ Certified weed seed-free blend absent of legumes and broadleaves (so as not to attract deer) that contains a mixture of 34 percent Potomac orchard grass, 33 percent smooth brome grass, and 33 percent fawn tall fescue must be used. Grass seed percentages should not exceed + or – 2 percent variance. Orchard grass shall be of minimum 85 percent germination, smooth brome shall be a minimum of 95 percent germination, and tall fescue shall be a minimum of 95 percent germination (Flathead County 2017).



3.7.1 Affected Environment

A desktop study of traffic for the three complete street options was conducted by KLJ in February 2019 and documented in the Memorandum for the Kalispell Trail and Complete Streets Traffic (May 2019) (see **Appendix C**). The memorandum is summarized in this section.

The most current year of traffic data available from the MDT Interactive Traffic Map is from 2017. Current traffic volumes on all of the potential complete street options are low (i.e., approximately 500 to 1,000 annual average daily traffic [AADT]). **Table 2** provides a summary of the AADT volumes on existing roadways in the immediate vicinity of the three complete street options analyzed in this SEA. These volumes will change over time, and it is assumed the increase in volumes in the Core Area would generally reflect the historic background growth of traffic in downtown Kalispell. Traffic has historically increased through the downtown area at a rate of approximately 1.8 percent per year.

Table 2, 2017 MDT Annual Average Daily Traffic

TRAFFIC COUNT LOCATION	AADT 2017	NUMBER OF LANES
West Center Street		
Southwest of the Mall	7,150	2
South of the Mall	10,230	4
US Highway 2		
West of 8th Avenue WN	19,975	4
West of 4th Avenue WN	19,000	4
North of 1st Avenue WN	20,110	4
East of US Highway 93/Main Street	27,050	4
5th Avenue WN		
Northwest of the Mall	8,575	2
West of the Mall	7,450	2
US Highway 93/Main Street		
Northeast of the Mall	24,460	5
East of the Mall	26,000	5
1st Avenue East		
Northeast of the Mall	5,150	3

Source: MDT Interactive Traffic Map 2017

Key: AADT = annual average daily traffic

Currently, there is restricted north-south traffic circulation in the Core Area due to only six at-grade railroad crossings across the nearly two-mile width of the City. Patrons traveling to the retail areas north of the railroad corridor and Mall are forced to travel around the Mall using 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93, as 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN are dead-ended where the Kalispell Trail will be constructed on the existing railroad corridor.



3.7.2 Environmental Consequences

3.7.2.1 No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Kalispell Trail would not be constructed, and there would be no alternative means of non-motorized transportation (e.g., walking, biking) or complete street connections in the Core Area. Bicyclists and pedestrians would not benefit from the added efficiency and safety of a connected trail network or improved street connections. North-south traffic in the Core Area would remain restricted by the limited number of connections, and traffic circulation would not be improved. Patrons traveling to the Mall and other retail areas north of the Mall would still need to travel around the Mall using 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. Accessibility and connectivity to the Mall and other retail areas and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would not be increased.

3.7.2.2 Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

Construction equipment and machinery may temporarily add more traffic and congestion to the roadways in the immediate vicinity of the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection; though final routes for equipment and the maintenance of traffic plans have not been yet determined by the City. Major arterials, such as US Highway 2 and US Highway 93, are anticipated to be used by heavy equipment mobilizing to the construction sites and staging areas.

Residents and commercial business owners could experience temporary delays and detours during construction activities. In addition, there could be potential delays and detours along US Highway 2, Flathead Drive, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93 and in the Mall parking lot during construction.

Operational Impacts

Beneficial impacts would be expected, as operation of at least one complete street would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area and improve circulation (specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93). Patrons traveling to the Mall and surrounding retail uses would be able to use 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN for more direct access. Access and connectivity to the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would also be increased. Completion of at least one street connection with improvements, including sidewalks, would provide connectivity for pedestrians in areas previously void of those facilities (i.e., north of the existing railroad corridor).

Adverse impacts could be expected on existing residents and business owners along US Highway 2 and the complete street(s), as there would be a slight increase in AADT. With the increase in accessibility and connectivity to the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area and underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor, the general appeal of the area would be improved and additional businesses and residences could be developed along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. This would add to the overall increase AADT in the immediate vicinity. Traffic on any one of the complete street options is estimated to increase by approximately 140 vehicles during the evening peak hours (i.e., 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.), should that complete street facility be implemented. The following is a breakdown of the estimated additional 140 vehicles at the intersection of US Highway 2 and the complete street options considered in this SEA. This slight increase in traffic would not exceed the capacity of the existing roads.



- ◆ 4th Avenue WN/US Highway 2 Intersection
 - > Eastbound, turning right onto 4th Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 42 vehicles per hour
 - > Westbound, turning left onto 4th Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 42 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning left onto US Highway 2 off of 4th Avenue WN – 28 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning right onto US Highway 2 off of 4th Avenue WN – 28 vehicles per hour
- ◆ 3rd Avenue WN/US Highway 2 Intersection
 - > Eastbound, turning right onto 3rd Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 42 vehicles per hour
 - > Westbound, turning left onto 3rd Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 42 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning left onto US Highway 2 off of 3rd Avenue WN – 28 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning right onto US Highway 2 off of 3rd Avenue WN – 28 vehicles per hour
- ◆ 1st Avenue WN/US Highway 2 Intersection
 - > Eastbound, turning right onto 1st Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 25 vehicles per hour
 - > Westbound, turning left onto 1st Avenue WN off of US Highway 2 – 59 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning left onto US Highway 2 off of 1st Avenue WN – 17 vehicles per hour
 - > Northbound, turning right onto US Highway 2 off of 1st Avenue WN – 39 vehicles per hour

There would also be a loss of parking spaces, depending on which complete street option(s) is selected and implemented by the City: the 1st Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall; the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business; and the 4th Avenue WN complete street would result in the loss of approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall. However, the Kalispell Trail realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking spaces, to offset the loss of any parking caused by implementation of certain complete street connections.

Approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost depending on the ROW and complete street cross-sections. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spaces at these businesses.

The Kalispell Trail realignment would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation, as it would cross 5th Avenue WN in the same location as analyzed in the 2017 EA. The northeast trailhead connection would have no adverse impacts on traffic and transportation; beneficial impacts would be expected from increased pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

3.7.3 Mitigation

The minimization and mitigation measures are similar to those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ Temporary delays and detours would not occur at every street, intersection, retail driveway, or Mall driveway simultaneously; construction would be staggered.
- ◆ Access to all businesses and residences would be maintained throughout construction.
- ◆ Detours would be signed and marked clearly for travelers, and a Work Zone Safety and Mobility Transportation Management Plan and Maintenance of Traffic Plan following MDT guidelines (MDT 2015) would be developed and adhered to by the City's contractor.



- ◆ The public would be notified in advance of closures or detours through means of local news stations, newspapers, and radio announcements.
- ◆ To determine if signalization and/or turn lanes would be warranted at the completed street connections, future traffic signal warrant studies on the street connections would be completed by the City after construction. If the traffic signal warrant studies indicated a need for signalization and/or turn lanes, traffic signals and appropriate lane configurations would be installed in the future by the City, separate from this Project.

An agreement would be established between the City and Mall owners to address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s).

The Kalispell Trail realignment would have the same mitigation measures as outlined for the Kalispell Trail in the 2017 FONSI. In addition, this realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking, which could provide potential mitigation for the loss of parking associated with implementation of one or more of the complete street options.

The northeast trailhead connection would require an agreement between the City and MDT, the owner of the vacant property the trailhead connection would traverse.

3.8 Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

The Study Area assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA; therefore, socioeconomic and environmental justice conditions evaluated and discussed in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA.

3.8.1 Affected Environment

Estimated demographic and housing, employment and income, and race data for the City of Kalispell and State of Montana were derived from the US Census Bureau and are summarized in **Tables 3, 4, and 5**, respectively.

Table 3, Demographic and Housing Data

LOCATION	2010 POPULATION	2017 POPULATION	POPULATION INCREASE	INDIVIDUALS 65 YEARS AND OLDER (2017)	VACANT HOUSING UNITS (2017)
City of Kalispell	19,927	21,992	10.4%	3,458	599
State of Montana	989,415	1,029,862	4.1%	176,138	81,124

Sources: US Census Bureau 2010, US Census Bureau 2017



Table 4, Employment and Income Data

LOCATION	PER CAPITA INCOME (2017)	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2017)	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (2017)	PERCENT BELOW POVERTY LEVEL (2017)	PREDOMINANT INDUSTRY (2017)
City of Kalispell	\$23,485	\$44,800	2.6%	9.7%	Office and Administrative Support Occupations (20.3%)
State of Montana	\$28,706	\$50,801	3.0%	9.1%	Management, Business, and Financial Occupations (15.4%)

Sources: US Census Bureau 2010, US Census Bureau 2017

Table 5, Race Data

LOCATION	PREDOMINANT MAJORITY (2010)	PREDOMINANT MINORITY (2010)	PREDOMINANT MAJORITY (2017)	PREDOMINANT MINORITY (2017)
City of Kalispell	White (94.2%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (1.3%)	White (94.8%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (1.1%)
State of Montana	White (89.4%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (6.3%)	White (89.0%)	American Indian and Alaska Native (6.5%)

Sources: US Census Bureau 2010, US Census Bureau 2017

From 2010 to 2017, the population of Kalispell grew by an estimated 10.4 percent, which is 6.3 percentage points higher than the entire State of Montana. Median household and per capita incomes in Kalispell are lower than the statewide averages, and the percent below the poverty level is slightly higher than the statewide average; however, the unemployment rate in Kalispell is slightly lower than the statewide average. In accordance with the definition of environmental justice population (see **Appendix A**), the minority population in the City of Kalispell is not meaningfully greater, or at least 10 percentage points higher, than for the entire State of Montana. Therefore, there are no environmental justice populations within the Study Area.

Along 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN, from West Montana Street south to the dead ends at the existing railroad corridor, there are existing commercial and residential properties, and the Mall is located adjacent to the south or the corridor. Immediately north of the Mall, there are approximately 4.0 acres of undeveloped lots and 3.9 acres of underdeveloped lots suited for redevelopment. Currently, potential users and businesses avoid locating to lots north of the Mall, because of restricted access and general appeal of the area. None of the at-grade crossings provide adequate pedestrian facilities or safety features, such as crossing gates across the sidewalks. The Kalispell Trail realignment is within the same area, between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN. The northeast trailhead connection would be within a vacant lot, adjacent to the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 signalized intersection, which has pedestrian features.

3.8.2 Environmental Consequences

3.8.2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would have no significant impacts on demographics, economics, community cohesion, or businesses within the community. However, neither Kalispell nor the region of northwest Montana would capitalize on the added economic and trade value of creating jobs and attracting new developers/development



to the Kalispell Trail areas and along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. The general appeal of the area would not be improved, the lack of connectivity in the community and visibility of existing businesses north of the Mall would continue, social benefits to the community would not be realized, and disconnection in the community would continue.

There would be no direct or indirect impacts on environmental justice populations, because there are no environmental justice populations within the Study Area.

3.8.2.2 Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

There may be temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences north of the railroad corridor during construction of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN and the Kalispell Trail realignment. There may also be temporary, localized impacts on commercial businesses and residences west and east of the railroad corridor, respectively, near the Flathead Drive/US Highway 2 intersection during construction of the northeast trailhead connection.

Impacts could include noise above ambient levels, visibility of construction equipment and activities, fugitive dust emissions, and temporary pedestrian and traffic delays and congestion. Fugitive dust from ground-disturbing activities would be greatest during initial site-preparation and would vary from day to day, depending on the construction phase, level of activity, and prevailing weather conditions. Individuals within the viewshed of temporary construction activities would see construction workers, equipment, lighting, materials, debris, signing, and activities typically associated with construction. Noise generated by construction activities would vary depending on the type of equipment used, the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source.

Operational Impacts

Increased connectivity within and access to the Core Area as a result of the removal of the railroad infrastructure and implementation of one or more complete street connections is anticipated to result in socioeconomic benefits. Operation of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would improve the general appeal of the area and spur development along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN; W Montana Street; and US Highway 2. Underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor would become more attractive to developers, visibility of existing businesses north of the railroad corridor would increase, and connectivity in the community would be improved. Long-term, beneficial impacts on the local economy would be expected, as there could be increases in the purchase of goods and services in the local area and subsequent induced development. This could provide overall economic benefits to the area through the creation of jobs and increased payroll taxes and sales receipts.

Traffic circulation and connectivity would also be improved with construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection. In addition, transportation options (e.g., walking and biking) would be created, connecting people and neighborhoods with jobs, services, and goods.

There would be no direct or indirect impacts on environmental justice populations, because there are no environmental justice populations within the Study Area.



3.8.3 Mitigation

The minimization measures, mitigation measures, and BMPs are similar to those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ To minimize temporary delays due to construction activities, signed detours and alternative access routes to residences and businesses would be provided.
- ◆ BMPs, such as watering methods and limiting idle times, to control dust and emissions would be implemented during construction.
- ◆ To address pedestrian and bicyclist safety, warning or stop signs would be installed at the road crossings, and curb bump outs are proposed to reduce the distance that they must cross roads.
- ◆ A Traffic and Pedestrian Control Plan would be submitted by the contractor and approved by the Public Works Department for all work within the public ROW. The latest edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices would be followed to create the plan.

3.9 Relocations

3.9.1 Affected Environment

As discussed in the 2017 EA, BNSF owns or has rights along 1.6-miles of track through the Core Area. Through the rail banking process, the City would purchase the necessary BNSF property and easements to construct the Kalispell Trail, completely within the acquired BNSF ROW. The City would also enter into agreements with adjacent property owners, including but not limited to the Mall and MDT to implement the complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection.

3.9.2 Environmental Consequences

3.9.2.1 No-Build Alternative

There would be no relocations or buy-outs associated with the No-Build Alternative, because Phase II of the Project would not be implemented.

3.9.2.2 Build Alternative

Construction Impacts

For 1st and 3rd Avenue WN, approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and for 4th Avenue WN, approximately 3,300 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed. The Kalispell Trail realignment would be located on Mall property; however, the construction of parking spaces to serve Mall patrons would be located on the railbanked land between 4th Avenue WN and 5th Avenue WN. The amount of property temporarily disturbed is yet to be determined and is dependent on the Mall's parking design. Because the northeast trailhead connection would be constructed on vacant land, no construction impacts are anticipated.

Operational Impacts

Construction of at least one complete street on 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would be completed within either BNSF or City ROW. There would be a loss of parking spaces: approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall would be lost from the 1st Avenue WN complete street; approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces, which are currently located in the public ROW and being used for a private business would be lost from the 3rd Avenue WN complete



street; and approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall would be lost from the 4th Avenue WN complete street. In addition, approaches to the business parking lots at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN might require relocation, and parking spaces could be lost, depending on the ROW and complete street cross-sections. However, it is not possible at this time to determine if there would be a net loss of parking spots at these business parking lots.

For the Kalispell Trail realignment, parking could be constructed by the Mall on the railbanked area, which could potentially offset the loss of parking caused by the implementation of one or more of the complete street options. The northeast trailhead connection would be located on vacant land owned by MDT and would not displace or require MDT to relocate its facilities or operations.

3.9.3 Mitigation

The mitigation measures are similar to those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ FRA requires the Project sponsor to comply with the Uniform Act, state law, and the City's own adopted policies and procedures to protect the interests of current landowners or landowners' leases.
- ◆ The City would provide compensation and assistance in relocations consistently and equitably in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and procedures.
- ◆ Eligible individuals, businesses, or organizations may receive relocation benefits to minimize hardship and provide the assistance necessary to accomplish this consistently.

During final design, the City and Mall owners would enter into an agreement that outlines each party's responsibilities for the construction and long-term maintenance of a complete street. The agreement would also address the Kalispell Trail realignment and any net loss of parking spaces at the Mall as a result of the 1st and 4th Avenue WN complete streets. The two to four parking spaces that would be lost at the private business as a result of the 3rd Avenue WN complete street would not require mitigation, as they are currently located in public ROW. An agreement would be established between the City and business owners at the intersections of US Highway 2 and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Avenue WN to address any net loss of parking spaces as a result of the approach relocation(s).

The Kalispell Trail realignment would have the same mitigation measures as outlined for the Kalispell Trail in the 2017 FONSI. In addition, this realignment could allow the Mall to construct additional parking, which could provide potential mitigation for the loss of parking associated with implementation of one or more of the complete street options.

The northeast trailhead connection would require an agreement between the City and MDT, the owner of the vacant property the trailhead connection would traverse.

3.10 Hazardous Waste

This section addresses the potential for hazardous materials and wastes and previously contaminated sites to occur in the Project Area associated with the three potential complete street options. It also addresses the potential for the Build Alternative to generate hazardous wastes.

The Study Area for analysis of potential impacts due to hazardous wastes corresponds to the Project Area. This is because the Project Area corresponds to ground disturbance work and the potential to encounter hazardous materials during construction activities. The Study Area assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three



complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA; therefore, hazardous materials and wastes and previously contaminated sites evaluated and discussed in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA.

3.10.1 Affected Environment

As discussed in the 2017 EA, there are no recorded previous spills or hazardous waste sites within the Study Area associated with the Kalispell Trail. A review of the MTDEQ underground storage tank (UST) and leaking underground storage tank (LUST) databases revealed that there is one LUST/UST site adjacent to the west of the Kalispell Trail realignment (MTDEQ 2018b, MTDEQ 2019).

The site, City Service Valcon LLC (Facility ID 15-01680), is located at 52 5th Avenue WN in the southwest quadrant of the 5th Avenue WN/Railroad Street W intersection, immediately north of the railroad corridor (see **Figure 9**). City Service Valcon LLC is a service provider of fuel (wholesale and bulk), lubricants, and propane. The site is listed on the LUST database for a reported release that occurred on December 9, 1998 (Release ID 3612). According to the MTDEQ database, the release has not yet been resolved. The site is also listed on the UST database as having five active USTs and six inactive USTs (MTDEQ 2018b, MTDEQ 2019).

A report for this site was obtained from the MTDEQ: *Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report for Valcon Distributing* (2019). Review of the report revealed that there was a release of petroleum into the groundwater at this site (quantity unknown). Groundwater flow at the site is toward the south-southwest. Currently, there are six groundwater monitoring wells at the site, which are completed to a depth of approximately 15 to 20 feet below ground surface. Groundwater samples collected in 2018 revealed that natural attenuation is occurring, and the dissolved petroleum hydrocarbon plume is shrinking.

There are no other LUST or UST sites within immediate vicinity of the complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, or northeast trailhead connection.





Figure 9, City Service Valcon Site

3.10.2 Environmental Consequences

3.10.2.1 No-Build Alternative

No impacts would be expected, as Phase II of the Project would not be constructed.

3.10.2.1 Build Alternative

Ground-clearing activities run the risk of encountering contaminated soils during construction. The release of such materials to the environment via air, water, and soil could adversely affect natural resources and human health and safety. Considering the design and planned construction activities for the complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or hazardous wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to the general public or natural resources. Ground-clearing activities would be shallow and would not reach the groundwater. In addition, since groundwater flow at the City Service Valcon site is toward the south-southwest, away from the Project Area, no impacts on, or from, this site are anticipated from the Build Alternative.

Construction of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and the northeast trailhead connection may require the removal and/or use of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., cleaning agents, lubricants, fuels, solvents, fertilizers, asphalt, ballast) and may result in the generation of hazardous waste (e.g., oily rags, used chemical containers, chemical waste, used oil).

Considering the purpose, design, and operation activities of the complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection, it is not anticipated that hazardous materials or wastes would be present in amounts or locations that would pose an unacceptable risk to public health or the environment. No

significant, adverse impacts from the use of hazardous materials or generation of hazardous wastes are anticipated.

3.10.3 Mitigation

The minimization and mitigation measures, and BMPs are the same as those included in the 2017 FONSI and are summarized as follows:

- ◆ In the event that previously unknown contaminants are discovered during construction or a spill occurs during construction, work would cease until the National Response Center (1-800-424-8002) has been notified by the contractor.
- ◆ If contamination is encountered, the MTDEQ would also be notified.
- ◆ Any contaminated soil that is encountered would be temporarily stockpiled and sampled to determine disposal requirements.
- ◆ Contractors would obtain a Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permit and implement and follow a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan.
- ◆ All hazardous wastes generated would be handled in accordance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle C waste management program and the requirements and regulations of the MTDEQ.

3.11 Cumulative and Indirect Impacts

The Study Area for cumulative impacts assessed in the 2017 EA encompassed the three complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection analyzed in this SEA. For all of the resource areas (except air quality, noise and vibration, land use, ecological systems, traffic and transportation, socioeconomics and environmental justice, relocations, and hazardous waste) there is no substantial change in the existing conditions, and potential cumulative impacts and mitigation measures described in the 2017 EA would be similar for this SEA. Consistent with CEQ guidance (CEQ 1981), FRA and the City did not consider cumulative impacts on resources that were not adversely or permanently affected by the Build Alternative. Therefore, this cumulative impacts assessment only discusses potential cumulative and indirect impacts on air quality, noise and vibration, land use, traffic and transportation, socioeconomics and environmental justice, and relocations.

3.11.1 Affected Environment

The affected environment for cumulative impacts includes past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects and actions planned within the vicinity of the complete street options, Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection. Individually, these projects and actions can result in direct and/or indirect impacts; when combined, they can result in cumulative impacts.

MDT, in coordination with state and federal agencies, local and Tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, public agencies, citizens, and other interested parties, developed the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP is developed in accordance with the requirements of 23 USC § 135 and lists transportation projects and needs for the State of Montana.

According to the 2016-2020 STIP (MDT 2016) and 2018-2022 STIP (MDT 2018), the following past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects and actions (with a budget over \$1 million) are located within 50 miles



of the Project Area, in Flathead County.⁴ None of these projects are within a 0.5-mile radius of the potential complete streets, Kalispell Trail realignment, or northeast trailhead connection.

- ◆ **UPN-7884 SF 119-Slope Flatten S-206** – Location: S-206; Slope Flattening; FY 2016.
- ◆ **UPN-6848 Swan River-5M Big Fork** – Location: S-209; Bridge Replacement; FY 2016.
- ◆ **UPN-8626 SF 139-Dern Spring Reconstruct** – Location: US-2; Int Improvements; FY 2017.
- ◆ **UPN-7884 SF 119-Slope Flatten S-206** – Location: S-206; Slope Flattening; FY 2017.
- ◆ **MT Flathead 917(2)-Blacktail Road Surface Improvement Phase 2** – Location: Blacktail Road; Surface and Drainage Improvements, Slope Stabilization, and Fish Passage; FY 2018.
- ◆ **MT NPS CLAC 2018(1)-Lake McDonald Lodge BAER Project** – FY 2018.
- ◆ **MT PRA CLAC 10(42)-GTSR Final Phase** – FY 2018.
- ◆ **MT PRA GLAC 10(30)-West Entrance to Avalanche – Phase 10** – FY 2018.
- ◆ **MT PRA GLAC 10(44)-Lake McDonald Utility Relocation** – FY 2018.
- ◆ **UPN-8134 Old Reserve – NW of Kalispell** – Location: S-548; Reconstruction; FY 2020.
- ◆ **UPN-6850 Flathead River 3M NW Big Fork** – Location: MT-82; Bridge Replacement; FY 2020.
- ◆ **UPN-8083 S FK Flathead – Hungry Horse** – Location: US-2; Bridge Replacement; FY 2020.
- ◆ **UPN-8886 Steel Br Rehab – Corrosion 1** – Location: I-90, MT-200, US-93; Bridge Rehab; FY 2020.
- ◆ **UPN-8887 6 Groom/Hall CR-1M W Swan Lake** – Location: MT-83; Bridge Replacement; FY 2020.
- ◆ **UPN-8626 SF 139-Dern Spring Reconstruct** – Location: US-2; Intersection Improvements; FY 2020.
- ◆ **MT NPS GLAC 11(3)-Camas Road Slump** – FY 2021.
- ◆ **MT NPS GLAC 1041(2)-Apgar Loop Reconstruction** – FY 2021.
- ◆ **SF 169 Conrad & 2nd Intx - Kalispell; UPN 9372000** – FY 2021.
- ◆ **UPN-2017 002 NH 5-3(104)130** – Location: Mountainside to MP 133; Reconstruct; FY 2022.
- ◆ **UPN-2038 004 Kalispell Bypass, Foy's Lake Section** – Location: Airport and Foy's Lake Interchange; Reconstruct; FY 2022.

3.11.2 Cumulative and Indirect Impacts Assessment

3.11.2.1 Air Quality

Temporary, minimal impacts on air quality would be associated with the Project and other projects and actions due to construction activities and emissions of criteria pollutants and fugitive dust. Impacts from each project would be localized and temporary in nature, and therefore, would result in a negligible, cumulative effect on this resource.

3.11.2.2 Noise and Vibration

Temporary, minimal impacts would be expected from increased construction-related noise associated with the Project and other projects and actions. Impacts from each project would be temporary in nature and vary depending on the type of equipment used (e.g., bulldozers, front end loaders, excavators, dump trucks, scrapers, and compactors) the area that the action would occur in, and the distance from the noise source. Therefore, a negligible, cumulative effect would be expected.

3.11.2.3 Land Use

Indirect impacts could be expected from the Project, as construction and operation of at least one complete street along 4th, 3rd, or 1st Avenue WN would provide increased access to the undeveloped and underdeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor and the Mall, and improve the general appeal of the area.

⁴ Does not include typical maintenance projects (e.g., mill and fill, restriping, pavement resurfacing/preservation).



This could spur development of new businesses and residences throughout the Core Area. The Kalispell Trail realignment and northeast trailhead connection would not have indirect impacts on land use.

3.11.2.4 *Traffic and Transportation*

Temporary, localized, cumulative impacts would be expected during construction activities associated with the Project and other projects and actions, due to reduced speed limits, detours, and traffic delays near the construction sites. However, potential cumulative impacts would vary depending on the type of construction, size of the project, construction phase, and project location.

The Build Alternative, when combined with other projects and actions, would result in improvements on the overall transportation system and increase in accessibility in the region. Therefore, beneficial, cumulative impacts on traffic flow, safety, and accessibility are anticipated for travelers, including residents, buses, pedestrians/bicyclists, and businesses.

Indirect impacts could be expected from induced development in the region associated with the Build Alternative and other projects and actions. With the improved transportation system and increased accessibility, the general appeal of the region would be improved, and additional residences and businesses could be developed. This could result in an overall increase in AADT and need for vehicle parking in the region. It is anticipated that, as traffic volume in the region rises, there would be continued, ongoing transportation improvement projects implemented to reduce congestion and maintain safe travel. Therefore, no significant, cumulative or indirect impacts are anticipated.

3.11.2.5 *Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice*

The Project and other projects and actions are anticipated to help foster future economic growth and add employment to the local community. It is not anticipated that the future growth from other reasonably foreseeable projects, in combination with the Project, would result in negative, cumulative impacts on the Study Area. Construction and operation of at least one complete street, the Kalispell Trail realignment, and northeast trailhead connection are expected to increase community cohesion and safety for residents within the Study Area, as are the reasonably foreseeable projects. The jobs created, increased community cohesion, and increased safety resulting from the Project and other projects are anticipated to have a beneficial, cumulative effect.

Indirectly, the Project may spur community growth and development due to increasing accessibility to the undeveloped and underdeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor. The Project would improve the general appeal of the area, which could attract developers to establish new businesses and residences. This would increase jobs and economic opportunity within the community. This intensification of future development could result in ancillary effects, such as additional lighting, grading/soils disturbance, and increased impervious surfaces. Anticipated growth impacts resulting from the Project would be consistent with applicable land use planning documents and zoning and are anticipated to be minimal.

3.11.2.6 *Relocations*

The Build Alternative, when combined with other projects and actions, would result in improvements on the overall transportation system and increase in accessibility in the region. With the increased accessibility, the general appeal of the region would be improved and additional residences and businesses could be developed, resulting in an increased need in vehicle parking options. It is anticipated that, as residences and businesses are developed and traffic volume in the region rises, there would be continued, ongoing transportation



improvement projects (i.e., additional parking lot(s) constructed). Therefore, no significant, cumulative or indirect impacts are anticipated.

3.12 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of natural resources, manpower, material, and fiscal resources as described in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA.

3.13 Permits

The permits, jurisdictional entities, and responsible parties as described in the 2017 EA are similar for this SEA.



CHAPTER 4 COORDINATION AND COMMENTS

4.1 Public Outreach

The City's extensive public outreach activities since the 2017 EA/FONSI are described in **Section 1.2.2** of this SEA.

This SEA is being made available for a 30-day public review and comment period to satisfy the public involvement requirements of NEPA. The SEA will be posted on the City and FRA Websites, as well as made available in hard copy format at City Hall (201 First Avenue East, Kalispell) and the Imagine Library (247 First Avenue East, Kalispell). Notice of the document's availability will be posted via the City of Kalispell Website, Facebook, RSS newsfeed, and Twitter and in the local newspaper, *The Daily Inter Lake*, and other readily available public outlets.

Any substantive comments received during the 30-day public review and comment period, particularly those that warrant additional analyses in order to determine the effects of the Build Alternative on the human and natural environment, will be addressed in FRA's final NEPA decision document. Please see **Appendix B** for public outreach documentation associated with this SEA.



CHAPTER 5 LIST OF PREPARERS

Table 6 identifies the names and qualifications of the principal contributors to this SEA. In accordance with Part 1502.6 of the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA, the efforts of an interdisciplinary team comprising technicians and experts in various fields were required to accomplish this study.

Table 6, Preparers

AFFILIATION	NAME	TITLE	PROJECT ROLE
Federal Railroad Administration	Valarie Kniss	Northwest Regional Manager	Lead Federal Agency; Document Review
	Laura Shick	Supervisory Environmental Protection Specialist	Lead Federal Agency; Document Review
Planning Innovations, Inc.	Mark Hardgrove	President	Lead Federal Agency MTAC; Document Review
City of Kalispell	Katharine King	Assistant Director for Community and Economic Development	Senior Review
	Tom Jentz	Planning & Building Director	Senior Review
KLJ	Becky Baker	Environmental Planner	Senior Internal Review
	Oz Khan	Transportation Planner, EIT	Traffic Memorandum, Primary Author
	Jeff Price	GIS Analyst	Digital Mapping; Exhibit Creation
	Elizabeth Ricciardi	Environmental Lead	Impact Assessment, Primary Author
	Mark Rohweder	Municipal Engineer, PE	Project Manager



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* "Maps throughout this document were created using ArcGIS® software by Esri. ArcGIS® and ArcMap™ are the intellectual property of Esri and are used herein under license. Copyright © Esri. All rights reserved. For more information about Esri® software, please visit www.esri.com."





Appendix A

Glossary of Terminology and Definitions

Appendix A Glossary of Terminology and Definitions

Attainment – indicates that the air quality within an area meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Class I Areas – The Clean Air Act affords additional air quality protection near Class I areas. Class I areas include national parks greater than 6,000 acres in size, national monuments, national seashores, and federally designated wilderness areas larger than 5,000 acres designated prior to 1977.

Clean Air Act – requires the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish air quality standards for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment by setting limits on emission levels of various types of air pollutants.

Cumulative Impact – The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulation for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) defines cumulative impacts as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonable foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.7).

Endangered Species Act – In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, 50 CFR Part 402, as amended, each federal agency is required to ensure the following two criteria: (1) any action funded or carried out by such agency must not be likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any federally listed endangered or threatened species or species proposed to be listed and (2) no such action can result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat of such species that is determined to be critical by the Secretary.

Endangered Species – a species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Threatened Species – a species that is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.

Candidate Species – a plant or animal for which the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has sufficient information on its biological status and threats to propose it as endangered or threatened under the ESA, but for which development of a proposed listing regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities. While candidate species are not legally protected under the ESA, it is within the spirit of the ESA to consider these species as having significant value and worth protecting.

Proposed Species – those candidate species that were found to warrant listing as either threatened or endangered after completion of a status review and consideration of other protective conservation measures.

Environmental Assessment (EA) – an informational document intended for use by decision-makers and the public.

Environmental Justice Population – should be identified where either: (1) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent or (2) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or

other appropriate unit of geographic analysis. For purposes of this Supplemental EA, minority population percentages that are ‘meaningfully greater’ are at least 10 percentage points higher than for the entire State of Montana. An environmental justice population also exists if there is more than one minority group present and the minority percentage, as calculated by aggregating all minority persons, meets one of the previously stated thresholds.

EO 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations requires that federal agencies’ actions substantially affecting human health or the environment do not exclude persons, deny persons’ benefits, or subject persons to discrimination because of their income, race, color, or national origin.

Indirect Impact – CEQ defines indirect effects as those “which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable.” Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density, or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

Low-income Individual – a person whose median income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. Low-income population means any readily identifiable group of low-income individuals who live in geographic proximity and, if circumstances warrant, geographically dispersed/transient persons who would be similarly affected by a project. CEQ guidance does not provide specific criteria for determining low-income populations as it does for minority populations. Therefore, for purposes of this Supplemental EA, the criteria for minority populations, which are defined in this appendix, will be used as the criteria for low-income populations. Low-income percentages that are ‘meaningfully greater’ are at least 10 percentage points higher than the entire State of Montana.

Maintenance (in reference to air quality) – indicates that an area was previously designated nonattainment, but is now in attainment.

Minority Population – as defined by CEQ guidance under NEPA (40 CFR § 1500–1508) includes individuals in the following population groups: American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino (of any race), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.

Noise – is unwanted sound that can be intermittent or continuous, steady or impulsive, and stationary or transient. Noise levels heard by humans and animals are dependent on several variables, including distance and ground cover between the source and receiver and atmospheric conditions. Noise is a subjective term, because sound levels can be perceived differently by different people. Perception of noise is affected by intensity, frequency, pitch, and duration.

Nonattainment – indicates that one or more criteria pollutant ambient concentrations are greater than NAAQS.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) – regulate hazardous materials and wastes and environmentally contaminated sites. Past and present activities on RCRA and CERCLA facilities typically result in the release of hazardous waste and constituents into the soil, groundwater,

surface water, sediments, and air, requiring initial investigation and cleanup or remediation of these hazardous releases.

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act – requires that the conversion of lands or facilities acquired with Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) be coordinated with the Department of Interior. When such a conversion occurs, replacement in-kind is typically required.

Sound – is vibrational disturbance capable of being detected by the ear. Sound can be intermittent or continuous, steady or impulsive, and can involve any number of sources and frequencies. Human response to sound varies according to the source type, characteristics of the sound source, distance between source and receptor, receptor sensitivity, and time of day.

Unclassifiable (in reference to air quality) – indicates that there is not enough information to appropriately classify an area, so the area is considered as being in attainment.

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) and amendments – provide important protections and assistance for people affected by federally funded projects, which though designed to benefit the public as a whole, may result in acquisition of private property and displacement of people from their homes, businesses, or farms.



Appendix B

Summary of Public Outreach

GLACIER RAIL PARK/ KALISPELL CORE AREA DEVELOPMENT AND TRAIL PROJECT – PHASE II

Public Comments Summary

The majority of public comments regarding the complete street options were gathered during the City's week-long Deep Dive event. The City sought public input on the following three options: 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Woodland Avenue. The 6th Avenue WN option received little public support, with the event participants reasoning that it was too close to 5th Avenue WN to be of significant value for improving vehicular flow or improving access to businesses based on current or expected development in the Core Area. The 8th Avenue WN and Woodland Avenue options both received substantial support, with 8th Avenue WN leading in the participants' perceived value to improve economic activity in the Core Area. Woodland Avenue was noted as having greater potential value to non-motorized connectivity, and access to destinations including the Conrad Mansion Museum, Woodland Park, and the Kalispell Trail itself, but was also thought to result in a greater negative impact to existing neighborhood private property such as marked increases in vehicular traffic such that it might become a de facto bypass to the detriment of the quiet, historic neighborhood and safety of residents. Both complete street options scored highly with regard to overall north-south connectivity and the value to the transportation network as a whole.

Although Woodland Avenue ranked very high community-wide as a preferred location for a complete street connection, City staff, based on experience from previous public involvement activities, anticipated that the same sentiment may not be shared by property owners along Woodland Avenue. Therefore, the City sent out approximately 120 letters to all property owners fronting Woodland Avenue from Center Street to Willow Glen and advertised a 30-day comment period and an open house on July 10, 2018. 30 people attended the open house and a total of 60 public comments were received. 58 of the 60 comments expressed opposition to Woodland Avenue as a complete street option. The City provided the results of this public process to the Trail Crew (the community stakeholder volunteer group acting as a sounding board for the Project), who recommended to the City Council that Woodland Avenue should be removed as an option based on the opposition from potentially affected property owners.

Public comments to date on the complete street options proposed as part of Phase II of the Project (i.e., the Kalispell Trail) have been almost entirely in response to the City's direct community engagement efforts. The overwhelming majority of public comments have been positive and focused on trail design, including crossings and features ranging from landscaping and lighting to amenities that may be built over time through community contributions, such as a splash pad proposed by Kalispell Rotary.

COMPLETION EVALUATION ALIGNMENT

ALIGNMENT CRITERIA	ALIGNMENT #1: 8TH ST. W	ALIGNMENT #2: 6TH ST. W	ALIGNMENT #3: WOODLAND AV
Overall North-South Connectivity	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Value to Transportation Network as a Whole	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Value to Improve Economic Activity in the Core Area	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Value to Non-Motorized Connectivity	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Access to Destinations	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Impact to Neighborhoods	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)
Impacts to Private Property	High connectivity (many dots)	Low connectivity (few dots)	High connectivity (many dots)

Handwritten Notes:

- Top left: "Some... out..."
- Top center: "WE NEED W-SIDE connectivity"
- Top right: "one stop per road", "No KEEP TRACK OF SIDE ROAD"
- Right side: "make trail traffic/border primary - cars lead for woodland area", "Don't put it with life for stupid things!"
- Bottom left: "Don't even play area's", "Don't even understand"



Kalispell Trail & Core Area News Update

SUMMER 2018

Dear Woodland Avenue Resident,

We had a great week June 4-8 as we began the first steps of preparing a design for the Core Area Trail intended to replace the railroad tracks in Kalispell. Over 600 people attended the open houses, workshops and meetings. As many of you know, the new trail will extend from Meridian



Road on the west side of Kalispell, through the middle of town easterly to just across the underpass bridge on US 2 (Idaho). The design and public input will continue into the Fall. We anticipate that the railroad tracks will be coming out of

Kalispell sometime next fall as CHS and Northwest Drywall finish their relocation

plans to the new Glacier Rail Park. Construction of the trail improvements would most likely begin in the spring of 2020.



A second and equally important part of this project is the construction of at least one "complete street" connecting Center with Idaho to provide better community access across an area that was formerly hampered by the presence of the railroad.

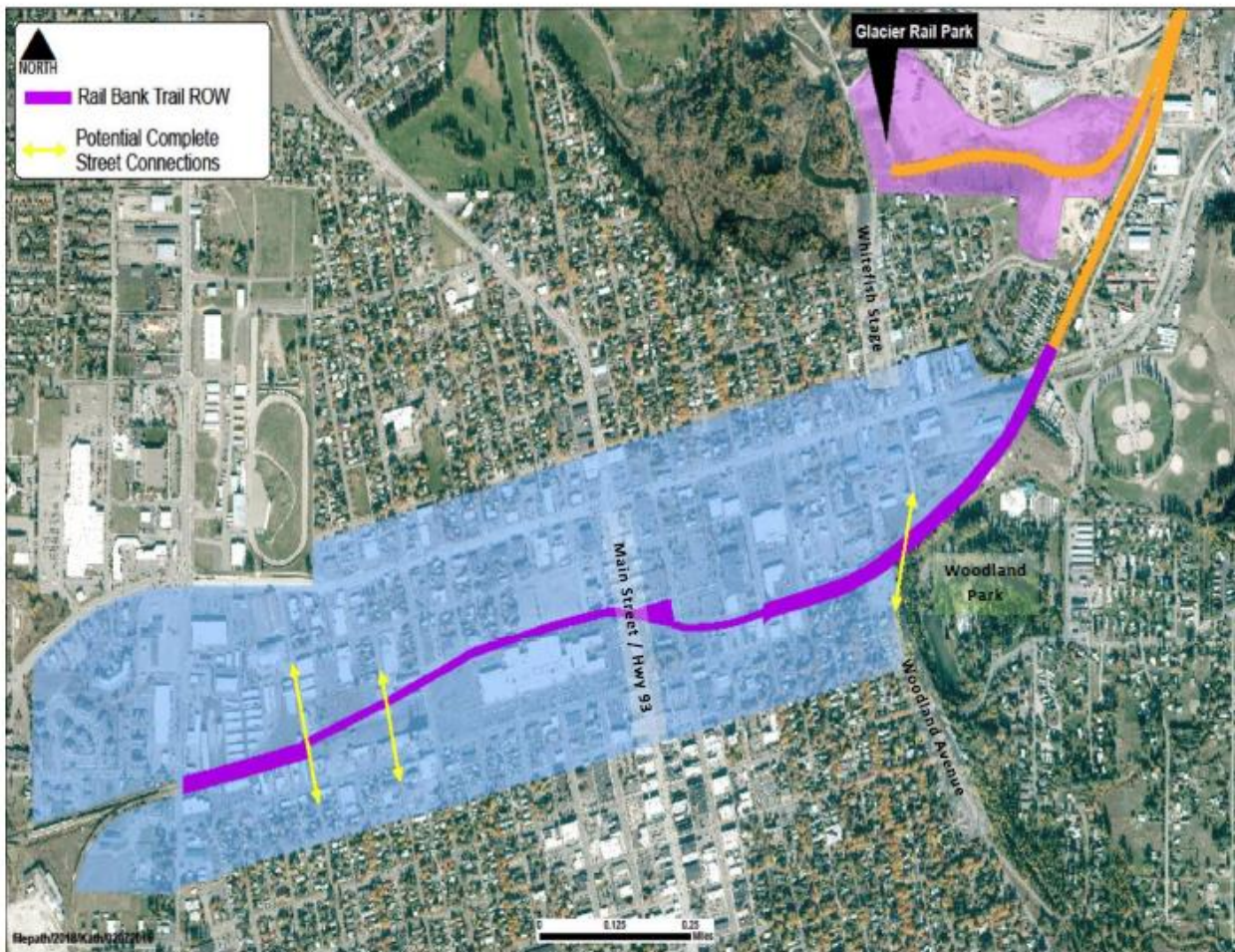
Three routes were originally selected (see the attached site map) – extending 8th Ave. West, extending 6th Ave. West and extending Woodland Avenue. During our workshops, the Woodland Avenue extension was ranked highest by those attending.

Woodland Avenue Extension

This new road would conceivably extend from the intersection of Center Street and Woodland Avenue and go northeasterly connecting to 7th Ave. East which ultimately becomes Whitefish Stage. It would be designed to be a typical 2 lane local street, with curb and gutter, grass boulevard, street trees, and a sidewalk on one side and bike path on the other.

The Woodland Avenue extension has been a long standing idea in our city transportation plans. However, because of strong neighborhood sentiment years ago, it was removed from our current city transportation plan and our current city-wide Growth Policy as a priority. While there is community interest in extending Woodland Avenue, we want to hear from you, the neighborhood, to see if there is support to proceed with this idea. We are sending letters to all property owners along Woodland Avenue. If there is neighborhood support, we will continue to keep this route in the mix. If not, we will remove this route from the process and focus our efforts on one of the other routes. Again, our goal is to make this project a win-win for everyone. Below is a brief summary of pros and cons to the Woodland Avenue route.

1. This route will improve community traffic circulation.
2. This route will provide little economic benefit to the Kalispell Core Area.
3. This route would afford the community a convenient east side connection between north Kalispell and Whitefish Stage, east Kalispell and south Kalispell/Willow Glen. However, pass through traffic will increase on Woodland Avenue.
4. It will allow the bike path along Woodland Avenue to be extended north towards Idaho Street.
5. The new route will add greater pressure to an already difficult intersection at Woodland Avenue and Second Street (this intersection is currently under review by Montana Department of Transportation).



Community Input schedule: We are looking for your comments during the month of July. We want to give you at least five ways to comment. We will be mailing this notice to all property owners along Woodland Avenue from Center Street to Willow Glen, provide information to local media outlets, and post a Public Service Announcement to all the media outlets subscribed to notifications on our city web page at <http://kalispell.com>.

How do you Comment? – 5 easy ways. You only have to comment once and any of the methods that are most convenient for you will work.

1. Send us an email at kalispellplanning.com
2. Send us a letter addressed to Kalispell Planning Dept., PO Box 1997, Kalispell, MT 59903.
3. Give us a phone call at 406-758-7940.
4. Attend an open house at City Hall Council Chambers, scheduled **Tuesday, July 10, 2018** from **11:00 am—2:00 pm** and **5:00—7:00 pm** (201 First Ave. East).
5. Stop by the Planning Office at City Hall any time over the next few weeks (201 First Ave. East—Downstairs).

Thanks for your thoughts. Again, whatever complete street is ultimately built, we intend for it to be a win-win for everyone in the community. If you have questions, please call Tom or Jarod at 758-7940.



Appendix C

*Memorandum for the Kalispell Trail and
Complete Streets Traffic, May 2019*



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Memorandum

Date: 5/23/2019
To: City of Kalispell
From: Steve Grabill, PE, PTOE; Oz Khan, EIT
RE: Kalispell Trail and Complete Streets Traffic

This document updates the 2015 traffic study that examined potential street connection impacts related to each of the seven complete street options that were considered along the soon to be abandoned railroad tracks and that would cross the Kalispell Trail in Kalispell, MT (i.e., 8th, 6th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, 1st Avenue WN and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]). The 2015 traffic study analyzed construction of at least one north-south complete street. Based on information known at the time and public input received for the Project, only three of the options (i.e., 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road [7th Avenue EN]) were evaluated in detail. Four of the options (i.e., 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN) were not analyzed in detail, due to the comparatively stronger positive public input received for the 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) options at the time of the original analysis. Subsequently, the 8th Avenue WN, 6th Avenue WN, and Whitefish Stage Road (7th Avenue EN) options were included in the original analysis for the Project.

However, due to responses received during public outreach after issuance of the Project's Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in 2017, the 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN options, which were not analyzed in detail, are being considered in this analysis as potential Build Alternatives. Constructing at least one of these three complete street options would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area; increase accessibility and connectivity to the development in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area, as well as the underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor; improve circulation in the Core Area, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93; and provide opportunity for development of additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN. This memorandum will focus on these three complete street options:

- Alternative 1: 4th Avenue WN
- Alternative 2: 3rd Avenue WN
- Alternative 3: 1st Avenue WN

This memorandum analyzes the three eliminated complete street options and updates the previous findings based on the most recent traffic data available within the study area.

The most recent traffic data, sourced from the *Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Interactive Traffic Map* were collected in 2017. Figure 1 below presents the key corridors and *Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)* in the area.

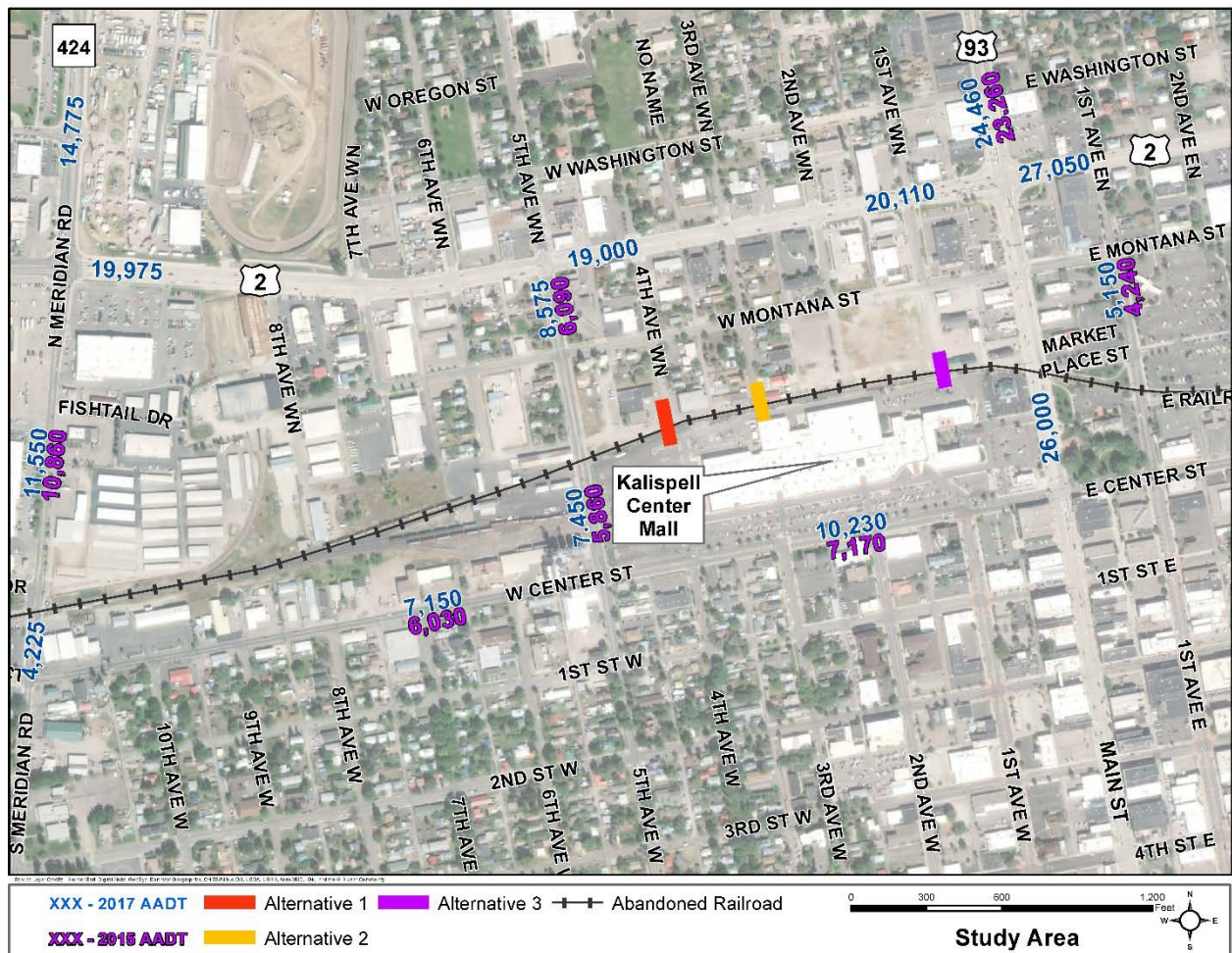


Figure 1. Study Location

Traffic volumes have increased since 2015. Access to the largest retail activity in the immediate area, the Kalispell Center Mall (Mall), is currently provided by six driveways: four on West Center Street, one on US Highway 93/Main Street, and one on 5th Avenue WN. Except for the driveway at the intersection of West Center Street and 1st Avenue W, all other driveways are currently unsignalized. The driveways at the West Center Street/2nd Avenue W and West Center Street/3rd Avenue W intersections are restricted to entering/exiting right turns only. Areas identified as undeveloped and underdeveloped immediately north of the railroad tracks are only accessible from the north.

The additional access on the north side of the Mall is expected to increase connectivity and improve circulation, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93. Parking relocation recommendations are not included in this analysis; however, if any of these alternatives are advanced, circulation and parking at the Mall and adjacent businesses north of the railroad corridor should be reviewed and modifications should be made if needed or desired.

Current traffic volumes on all proposed streets is low (estimated 500-1,000 vehicles per day). The volume of traffic destined for the Mall that is expected to move from 5th Avenue WN and Main Street to any one

of the proposed complete streets is estimated to be 1,400 vehicles per day and would not exceed the approximate traffic capacity of 4th, 3rd, and 1st Avenue WN (8,000 - 10,000 AADT) nor would it significantly change the level of service.

The segment of US Highway 2 between North Meridian Road and Main Street carries 20,000 vehicles per day. Constructing any one of the proposed complete streets would likely result in approximately 140 vehicles per hour on the proposed street during the PM peak hour (this assumes a peak hour of 10% of the daily volume).

Alternative 1: 4th Avenue WN and Alternative 2: 3rd Avenue WN will expect the following similar traffic characteristics at the intersection with US Highway 2 during the PM peak:

- Entering (Eastbound right) = 42 vehicles/hour
- Entering (Westbound left) = 42 vehicles/hour
- Exit (Northbound left) = 28 vehicles/hour
- Exit (Northbound right) = 28 vehicles/hour

Alternative 3: 1st Avenue WN will expect the following traffic characteristics at the intersection with US Highway 2 during the PM peak:

- Entering (Westbound left) = 59 vehicles/hour
- Entering (Eastbound right) = 25 vehicles/hour
- Exit (Northbound left) = 17 vehicles/hour
- Exit (Northbound right) = 39 vehicles/hour

It should be noted that the intersections of US Highway 2 with 4th and 1st Avenue WN are each in proximity to a signalized intersection. Given proximity of the 1st Avenue WN alternative to the US Highway 2 and Main Street intersection, the adequacy of turn lane storage would likely need to be monitored in the future. A possible solution to address turn lane storage would be to construct a median to prevent westbound to southbound left turns from US Highway 2 onto 1st Avenue WN from occurring.

Alternative 1: 4th Avenue WN

Alternative 1 is shown in Figure 2.

Benefits

- Increases the number of north-south connections and accessibility and connectivity.
- Improves circulation in the local area.
- Provides opportunity for new/additional development.

Potential Impacts

- The Mall parking lot would require reconfiguration to address the offset between 4th Avenue WN and the major aisle in the parking lot. Unless the diagonal parking configuration is modified, traffic entering the Mall would be required to turn right to access the Mall parking lots.
- There would be an increase in traffic between US Highway 2 and the Mall. The Mall traffic expected at the intersection with US Highway 2 is minimal and would not likely require turn lanes on the approaches of US Highway 2.



- A construction agreement would be required to connect 4th Avenue WN to the Mall parking lot. Approximately 3,300 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and approximately 8 parking spaces at the Mall would be lost.
- Railroad Street West at 4th Avenue WN would need to be closed due to safety reasons.
- The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 4th Avenue WN (not shown in Figure 2) might need to be relocated, and parking spaces could be lost.
- The residents and businesses along 4th Avenue WN, between US Highway 2 and the Mall would experience higher traffic levels in front of their properties.



Figure 2. Alternative 1 - Access at 4th Avenue WN

Alternative 2: 3rd Avenue WN

Alternative 2 is shown in Figure 3.

Benefits

- Increases the number of north-south connections and accessibility and connectivity.
- Improves circulation in the local area.
Provides opportunity for new/additional development.

Potential Impacts

- There would be an increase in traffic between US Highway 2 and the Mall. The Mall traffic expected at the intersection with US Highway 2 is minimal and would not likely require turn lanes on the approaches of US Highway 2.
- A construction agreement would be required to connect 3rd Avenue WN to the Mall parking lot. Approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and approximately 2 to 4 parking spaces at a private business immediately north of the proposed Kalispell Trail, on the east side of 3rd Avenue WN would be lost.
- The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 3rd Avenue WN (not shown in Figure 3) might need to be relocated or reconfigured, and parking spaces could be lost.
- The residents and businesses along 3rd Avenue WN, between US Highway 2 and the Mall would experience higher traffic levels in front of their properties.

Alternative 3: 1st Avenue WN

Alternative 3 is shown in Figure 4.

Benefits

- Increases the number of north-south connections and accessibility and connectivity.
- Improves circulation in the local area.
- Provides opportunity for new/additional development.

Potential Impacts

- The Mall parking lot would require reconfiguration to address the offset between 1st Avenue WN and the major aisle in the parking lot. Unless the diagonal parking configuration is modified, traffic entering the Mall would be required to turn right to access the Mall parking lots.
- There would be an increase in traffic between US Highway 2 and the Mall. The Mall traffic expected at the intersection with US Highway 2 is minimal. The existing left-turn storage lane on the east approach of the US Highway 2/1st Avenue WN intersection might not be adequate to accommodate left-turning traffic during peak hours.
- A construction agreement would be required to connect 1st Avenue WN to the Mall parking lot. Approximately 900 square-feet of Mall property would be temporarily disturbed, and approximately 10 parking spaces at the Mall would be lost.
- The approach to the business parking lot at the intersection of US Highway 2 and 1st Avenue WN (not shown in Figure 4) might need to be relocated, and parking spaces could be lost.

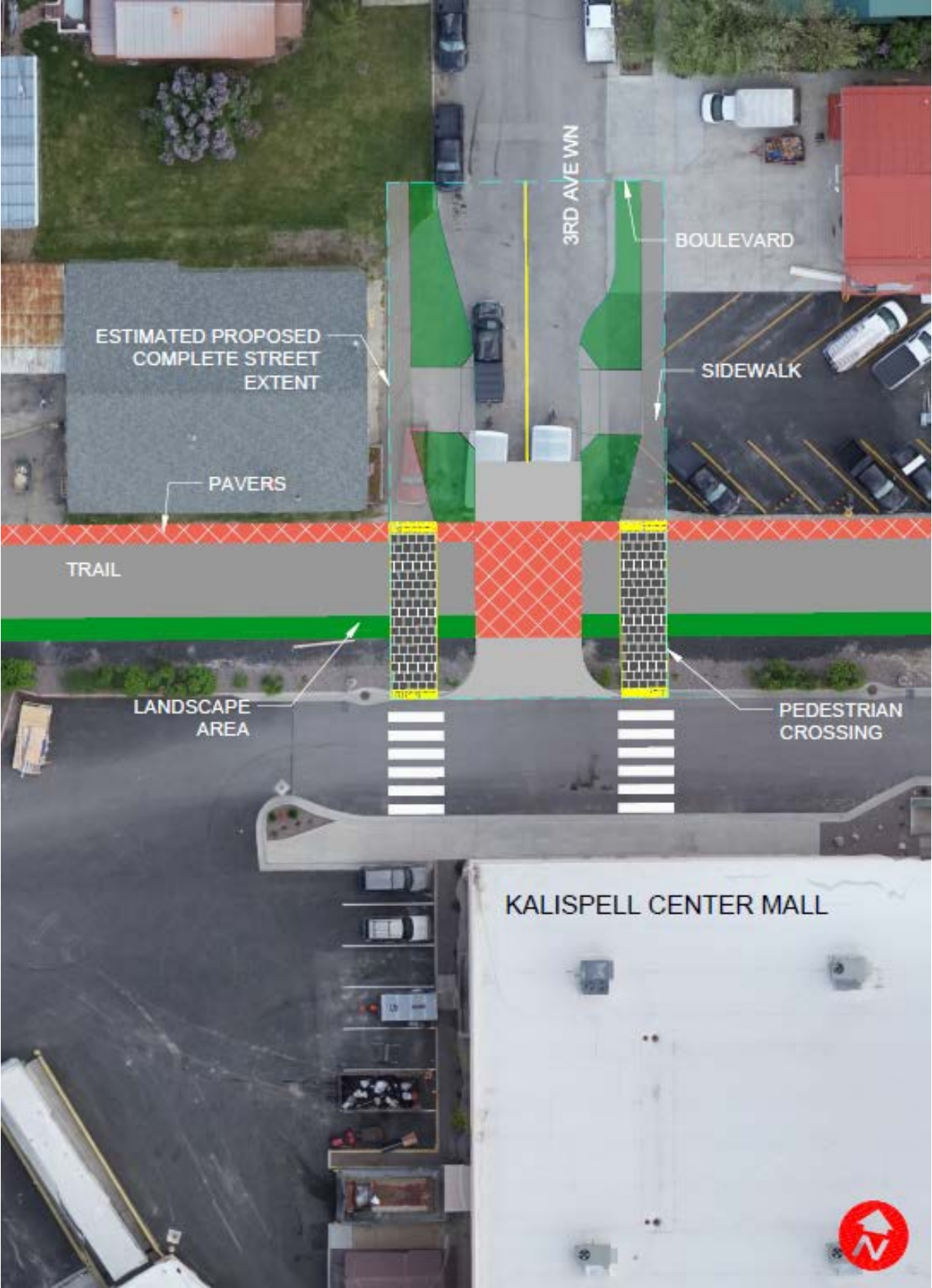


Figure 3. Alternative 2 - Access at 3rd Avenue WN

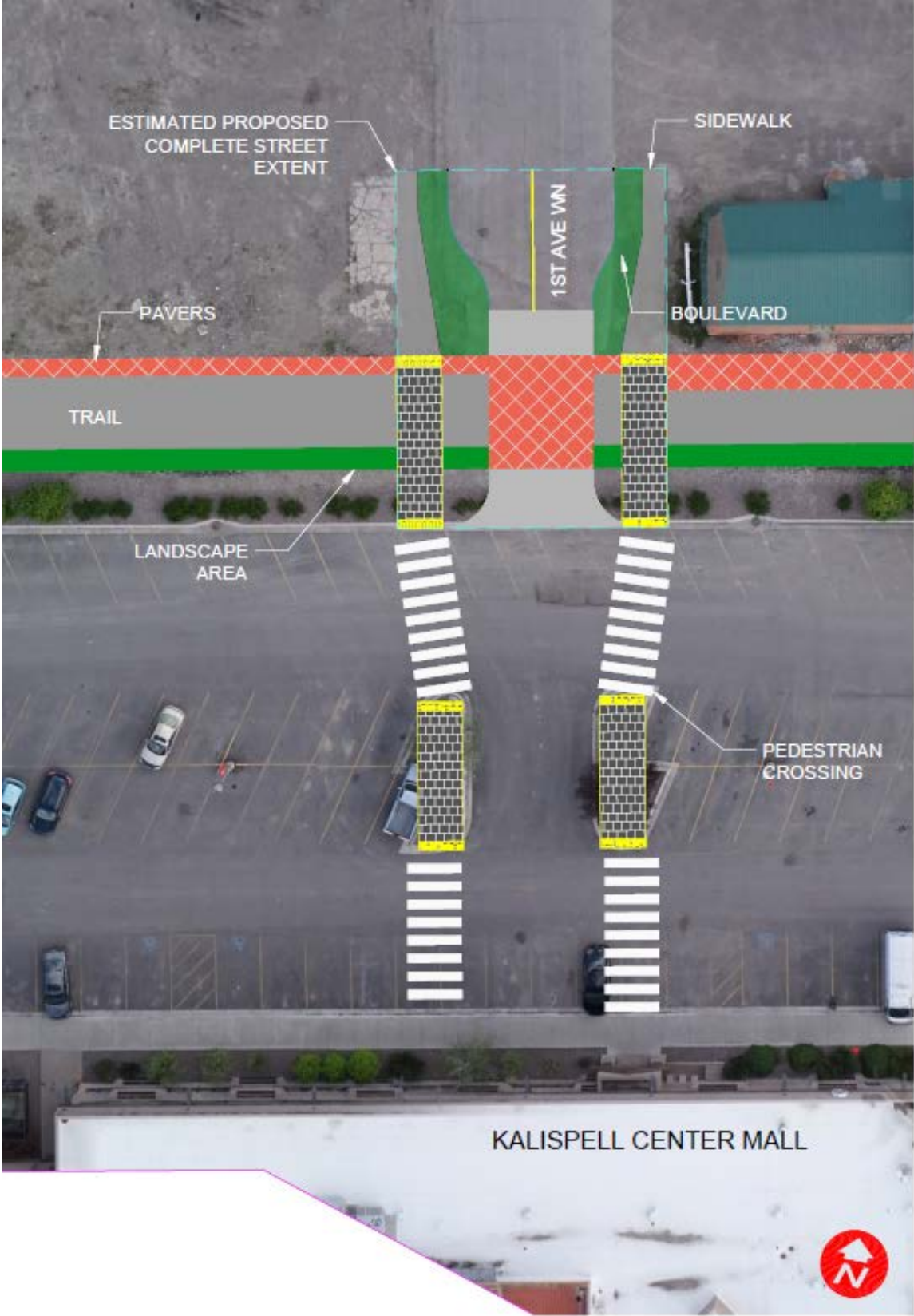


Figure 4. Alternative 3 - Access at 1st Avenue WN



Conclusion

This memorandum analyzes the three additional complete street options and updates the previous traffic related findings based on the most recent traffic data available within the study area. All the alternatives would increase the number of north-south connections in the Core Area; increase accessibility and connectivity to the development in the US Highway 2/US Highway 93 area, as well as the underdeveloped and undeveloped lots north of the railroad corridor; improve circulation in the Core Area, specifically in the vicinity of US Highway 2, 5th Avenue WN, West Center Street, and US Highway 93; and provide opportunity for development of additional businesses and residences along 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Avenue WN. However, these alternatives would also increase traffic activity on the roadways extending north of the Mall and at the connecting intersections with US Highway 2. The increased traffic might concern some residents and property owners along these roadways.

The intersections of US Highway 2 and 4th and 1st Avenue WN are each in proximity to a signalized intersection. Given proximity of the 1st Avenue WN alternative to the US Highway 2 and Main Street intersection, the adequacy of turn lane storage would likely need to be monitored in the future. A possible solution to address turn lane storage would be to construct a median to prevent westbound to southbound left turns from US Highway 2 onto 1st Avenue WN from occurring.