

Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Further Study

Alternatives	Reason for Elimination from Further Study
<p>Alternatives A, A1, A2, A3 & A4. CTC adopted Alternative A as the original alignment in 1962. Versions of Alternative A known as A1 - A4 identified different combinations of interchange locations.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected Alternative A due to the substantial potential impacts to wetlands and other sensitive natural habitat. Alternative A also required time-consuming and extensive construction techniques to address embankment settlement and consolidation caused by poor soil conditions in northern Little Lake Valley.</p>
<p>Alternative B. In an effort to modify Alternative A to avoid wetlands, Alternative B diverged from Alternative A beginning just north of the crossing of Hearst-Willits Road, then veered to the east and skirted the eastern limits of Little Lake Valley.</p>	<p>Preliminary investigations revealed that Alternative B, rather than having lower wetland impacts, actually had higher wetland impacts than Alternative A. In addition, a later alignment, Alternative K, better represented the intent of Alternative B.</p>
<p>Alternative C. Similar to Alternative B, Alternative C diverged from Alternative A beginning just north of the crossing of Hearst-Willits Road. From there, Alternative C skirted the west side of Little Lake Valley and rejoined Alternative A and the existing highway on Oil Well Hill. Alternative C1T developed from Alternative C. Versions of Alternative C known as C1-C4 identified different combinations of interchange locations.</p>	<p>Alternative C1 was retained for further study. The PDT rejected other versions of Alternative C because of the substantial potential impacts to wetlands and due to the high cost and growth-inducing impacts of additional valley interchanges. Mendocino County requested Caltrans to investigate the Alternative C/J in 1993. This was a combination of what is now the south portion of C1T and the north portion of J1. Most of Alternative J1 north of Quail Meadows is no longer under consideration, and hence, the C/J alternative is no longer considered viable.</p>
<p>Alternative D traversed the hilly terrain west of Willits and was similar to E3 but closer to Willits.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected Alternative D based on its similarity to Alternative E and due to substantial potential impacts to wetlands and riparian habitat along the north end of Little Lake Valley.</p>
<p>Alternative E ran through the hills near Willits cemetery. The north end connected to Alternative A after traversing the hills west of the old Louisiana Pacific mill site. Versions of Alternative E known as E1-E3 had different combinations of interchange locations.</p>	<p>Alternative E3 was retained for further studies. The PDT rejected other versions of Alternative E3 due to potential impacts to residential development and the estimated higher cost for interchanges at Wild Oat Canyon and at Oil Well Hill.</p>
<p>Alternative F proposed relocating the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks through a portion of Willits and using the resulting right of way for a low speed expressway.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected Alternative F due to its similarity with Alternative O and due to the high cost of relocating railroad tracks.</p>
<p>Alternative G describes many variations of alternatives from the Project Study Report that connected with US 101 south of Oil Well Hill and north of Haehl Creek.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected Alternative G because there was no cohesive alternative described from the public scoping sessions. Many of the proposals loosely defined under this alternative were studied as variations of other alternatives.</p>
<p>Alternative H came out of the scoping sessions as an alignment that would relocate U.S. 101 at least 8 miles west of Willits to remove noise and air pollution from town.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected this alternative due to the high costs and because it was outside the scope of the study area.</p>

<p>Alternative I was a tunnel located roughly in the Alternative E corridor. It was suggested as a means of reducing impacts to Willits Cemetery and the other properties along the proposed D/E alignments.</p>	<p>With an estimated cost of \$250 million to \$300 million for the tunnel alone, the PDT rejected this alternative.</p>
<p>Alternatives K and K2 were studied under the NEPA/404 MOU process. Alternative K was an easterly wetland avoidance alternative located in the hills to the east of Reynolds Highway. Alternative K2 followed K for about the first 1.2 miles, then continued north along the base of the hills on the east side of the valley.</p>	<p>With concurrence from the NEPA 404 agencies, the PDT rejected both alternatives. The PDT felt that constructing facilities on the east side of the valley resulted in poor service in terms of interchange locations. Studies indicated that both alternatives generated unavoidable impacts to wetlands, archaeological resources, and the destruction of millions of Baker's Meadowfoam plants, a listed species of concern and listed as rare under the California Plant Protection Act. Both alternatives required deep cuts in active landslide areas and traversed material of questionable stability.</p>
<p>Alternatives J1 and J2 followed the railroad tracks after leaving existing U.S. 101 at the south end of Willits, skirted the rodeo grounds, skirted the sewage plant to the east, and headed back toward U.S. 101, conforming just north of the Willits northerly city limits.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected J2 because it resulted in poor service in terms of interchange locations and could have growth-inducing impacts. The PDT retained Alternative J1 for further studies. Alternative J1 was truncated to become J1T.</p>
<p>Alternative L is a center valley alternative that avoids large wetland impacts along its northern half by conforming to the alignment of the existing highway and railroad.</p>	<p>The PDT retained Alternative L for further studies. Alternative L, which continued to a point on Oil Well Hill, was later truncated to become LT.</p>
<p>Alternative M offered an expressway through Willits skirting the wastewater treatment plant and corporation yard and widened existing U.S. 101 at the north end of the project to four lanes.</p>	<p>Based on its similarity with Alternative J, and because of safety concerns and whether an expressway could meet the project's purpose and need, the PDT dropped Alternative M.</p>
<p>Alternative N departed from U.S. 101 near Holland's Lane, then skirted the east side of the Mormon Church property crossing Haehl Creek, passing over East Hill Road and the railroad tracks, then paralleled the tracks with a two lane roadway through Willits.</p>	<p>A portion of Alternative N included four lanes with turn pockets and a portion included a continuous left turn lane. The PDT rejected this alternative based on its similarity to Alternative O.</p>
<p>Alternative O was similar to Alternative N, paralleling the Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracts. Alternative O proposed a four-lane boulevard expressway that continued beyond the old truck scales and railroad crossing north of Willits.</p>	<p>The PDT rejected this alternative due to substantial potential impacts to multi-dwelling residential units and potential impacts to Section 4(f) eligible properties.</p>

<p>Alternative P was a couplet through Willits. A couplet is a pair of one-way city streets with traffic running in opposite directions usually separated by a city block.</p>	<p>A preliminary traffic analysis revealed that this alternative would operate poorly because of the substantial out-of-direction travel it required. Citing the failure to meet project objectives of providing a safe and efficient highway, the PDT rejected this alternative.</p>
<p>Alternative Q involved a concept of two-lane routes with increased railroad use.</p>	<p>The modal analysis indicated a need for a highway solution rather than rail and, citing failure to meet project objectives of providing a safe and efficient highway, the PDT rejected this alternative.</p>
<p>Alternative R was a couplet through Willits. The alignment identified Main Street as the northbound lanes and suggested southbound lanes to the west of U.S. 101.</p>	<p>Like Alternative P, this alternative had widely separated north/southbound legs that required out-of-direction travel. Citing the failure to meet project objectives of providing a safe and efficient highway, the PDT rejected this alternative.</p>
<p>Alternative TSM (Transportation System Management) was a non-freeway alternative that paralleled existing U.S. 101 through Willits, with at-grade intersections.</p>	<p>In 2001, Caltrans management and FHWA considered but eliminated the TSM alternative because it would not attain the project purpose and need.</p>
<p>A two-lane alternative: In 1992, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) programmed funding for an initial two-lane expressway within an ultimate four-lane freeway right of way, due to limited funding.</p>	<p>Following programming in 1992, Caltrans and FHWA found that there was no local or regional agency support for a two-lane expressway. Responding to input from these agencies/organizations and the public, the CTC in the 1998 STIP changed the project from a two-lane expressway to a four-lane freeway, adding additional funding to the project. Based on the purpose and need of the project, a two-lane highway would result in a facility that would be functionally obsolete within the design period.</p>