

**Lincoln/Lancaster Planning Commission Public Hearing  
July 18, 2001**

I am here to support the planning department's recommendation to deny the inclusion of the East Far Beltway in the comprehensive plan.

There have been several references to development in the Stevens Creek Basin in relation to the location of the beltway. I was a member of the Stevens Creek Task Force and even though I am not speaking for the group I would like to address one subject that we discussed at length--historic and cultural resources.

Briefly, we recognized that "The area from Stevens Creek east is one of the oldest, most historic areas of the County." The task force recommended that historic sites should be identified and well documented and that the significant resources should be preserved.

These recommendations are important to consider in relation to the comp plan amendments before you because there are 9 historic sites in close proximity to the EF-1 beltway corridor. These sites are in the basin and the far beltway route would cut a swath right through the middle of the area and negatively impact seven of these historic resources. Continued efforts to preserve these sites would be consistent with the task force's recommendations and the recommendations of the planning staff to deny the EF-1 route.

I would also like to address some questions I have heard about what constitutes a historic site and what are negative impacts.

First, in order to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places or be considered eligible for the register the resource must meet a strict set of National Register Criteria. Not every old farm or house meets the criteria. Each resource is unique and requires individual research and documentation.

In 1966 Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act. This act provides protection for historic resources that are listed on the National Register from potentially destructive projects such as federal highways. It provides exactly the same protection for those resources that are eligible for the register.

The National Historic Preservation Act provides two kinds of protection for historic resources. They are direct and indirect impacts.

A direct impact is obvious--the physical destruction of all or part of the property such as buildings or the land that is associated with the buildings. Direct impacts are not all there is to consider.

An indirect impact is equally as important as the bulldozing of a property. Anything that may alter the characteristics that were important for inclusion on the Register or diminish the integrity of the property is an indirect effect. These indirect effects may include anything that may occur later in time or be cumulative. Examples of these adverse effects would be the introduction of visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that would alter a quiet rural atmosphere; any intrusion that would diminish the integrity of the property's setting; or something that might happen in the future such as road signs, commercial development in a rural area, or the widening or paving of roads.

For example the exit ramp for the EF-1 route at Pioneers near 138th would result in a significant amount of additional traffic using 138<sup>th</sup> to go north. 138<sup>th</sup> is a 11/2 lane curving gravel road that cuts through the Stevens Creek Stock Farm. Consequently, the increased traffic traveling through the middle of the Stock Farm and all of the impacts from that traffic would dramatically impair the historic setting of the farm. Federal law provides protection from an indirect impact such as this.

Unfortunately, this impact as well as many other possible adverse effects were not addressed in the DEIS. The law requires that all of these impacts be evaluated and mitigated. The final EIS must include these considerations.

According to the staff report the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment is not to determine the accuracy or merits of the DEIS. However, when amended the EIS will only further substantiate the planning staff recommendations.

In summary, I agree with the staff recommendation to deny amendment #94-63 the east far beltway route for inclusion in the comprehensive plan. In addition to the impacts the route has to seven historic sites I concur with the other important considerations that make EF-1 the least desirable route.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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# NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

## C. Historical and Cultural Features

### Current Situation

A number of cultural and historic sites exist in the Stevens Creek Basin. The historic significance of these sites has varying degrees of documentation. The area from Stevens Creek east is one of the oldest, most historic areas of the County. It includes farms and farmsteads, farmyards, native prairies, hedge rows, wetlands, beautiful vistas, wind mills, and churches.

### Transition Situation

Further inventory and delineate the Basin's valuable historical and cultural assets. Clearly identify those historic areas that must be preserved. Document their importance to promote greater understanding by the public as to why it is important to preserve these areas or buildings. Respect the current landowner's position, but do not assume the land will never be developed. Commence preserving significant sites by private land owners or through the State Historical Society, local foundations, or negotiations with developers.

### Future Situation

Significant historic and cultural sites and districts in Stevens Creek Basin are preserved as state, county, local or private areas.

