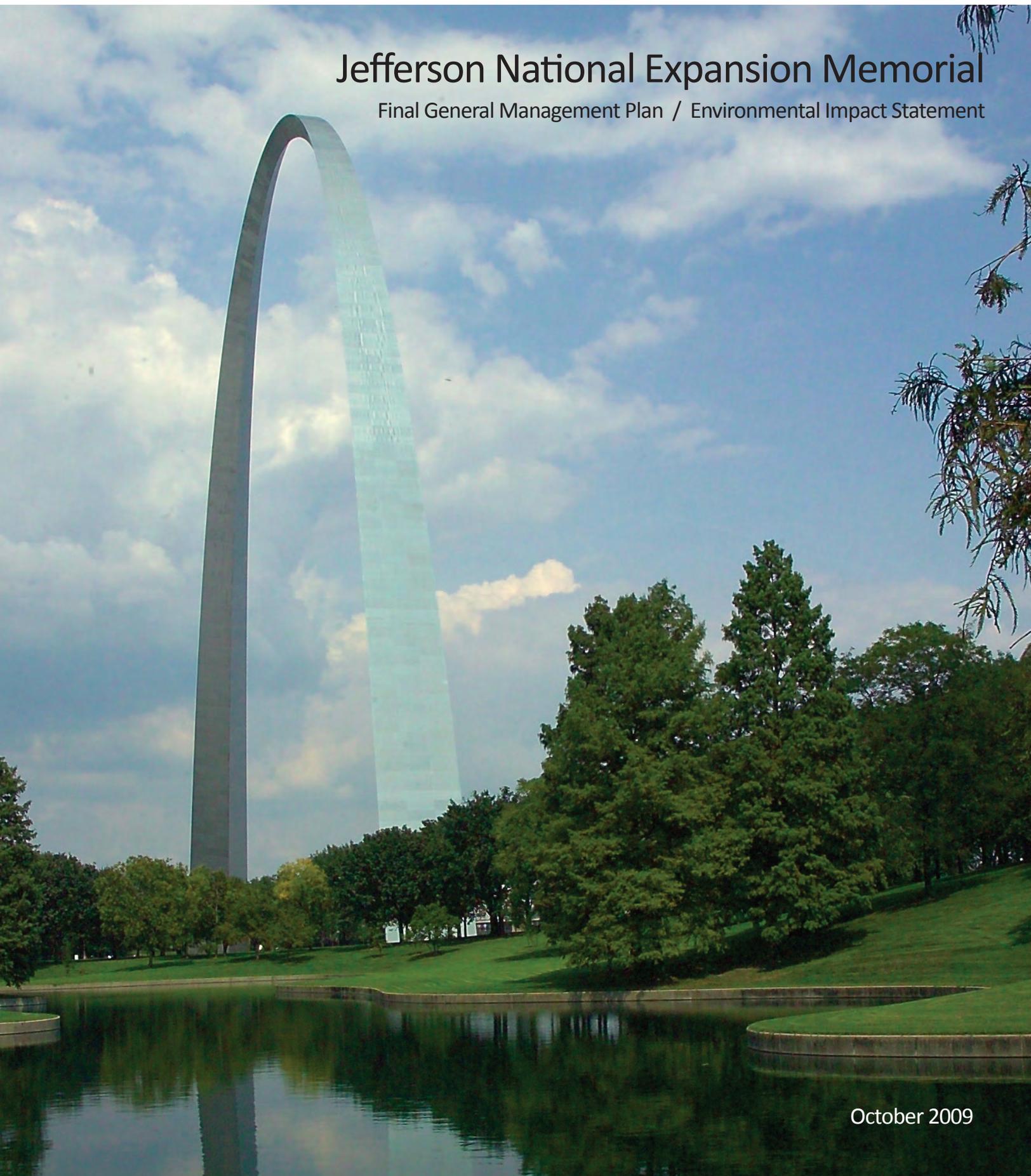




Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement



Final
General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement
Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

St. Louis, Missouri

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial was established December 21, 1935, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order directing the Secretary of the Interior to acquire property and develop the Memorial along the riverfront in downtown St. Louis, Missouri. The Memorial was the first Secretarial designation under the Historic Sites Act of 1935, and has always been administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The Memorial honors the memory of the pioneers of U.S. westward expansion, and its construction served as the central foundation in revitalization efforts for the entire downtown section of St. Louis. The Gateway Arch is an icon within the city, a major tourist destination, and the symbolic portal to the American West.

Between 1939 and 1942, 40 square blocks of condemned buildings were razed to make way for the Memorial. Only the Old Courthouse and the Old Cathedral were saved and still stand. In 1940, the City of St. Louis gave the Old Courthouse to the National Park Service and it was incorporated into the Memorial. Groundbreaking for the Gateway Arch occurred on June 23, 1959, and the structure was completed in October of 1965. The landscape design and Museum of Westward Expansion were completed during the following twenty-five years. Legislation was passed in 1984 and 1992 establishing the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Addition in East St. Louis, Illinois. Though the legislation authorized an addition of approximately 100 acres, the boundary has yet to be determined and property has yet to be acquired.

The last comprehensive master plan for the Memorial was completed in 1962. This general management plan will help guide the future of the Memorial.

This document examines four alternatives for managing the Memorial for the next 15 to 20 years. It also analyzes the impacts of implementing each of the alternatives. The **no action alternative (alternative 1)** consists of continuing the existing park management and serves as a basis for comparison in evaluating the other alternatives. Three **action alternatives (alternatives 3, 4 and 5)** propose actions that differ from the current management of the Memorial. The action alternatives propose different ways to manage resources and new facilities that would allow new types of visitor uses and amenities. Over the course of planning, alternative 2 was dismissed from consideration after public scoping and further analysis because the benefits of this alternative already existed in or could be incorporated into other alternatives. In this final plan, alternative 3 has been identified as the National Park Service's preferred alternative.

The *Draft Jefferson National Expansion Memorial General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*, published in January 2009, was distributed to other agencies and interested organizations and individuals for their review and comment. Following a 60-day public review and comment period, the NPS planning team evaluated comments from federal and state agencies, organizations, and individuals regarding the draft plan. Subsequently, the team incorporated appropriate changes into the *Final Jefferson National Expansion Memorial General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*. The final plan includes substantive comments on the draft document and the NPS responses to those comments. Following distribution of the final plan, and a 30-day no-action period, a Record of Decision approving the final plan will be signed by the National Park Service Regional Director, in November 2009. The Record of Decision documents the National Park Service selection of an alternative for implementation. With the signed Record of Decision, the approved plan can be implemented, depending on funding and staffing. A Record of Decision does not guarantee funds and staff for implementing the approved plan.

Executive Summary

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (hereafter referred to as the Memorial) was established by Executive Order in 1935. Part of the national park system, the Memorial consists of the Gateway Arch and grounds - a National Historic Landmark (NHL) - as well as the Old Courthouse and Luther Ely Smith Square. The Memorial is located in downtown St. Louis, on the west bank of the Mississippi River, and consists of 91 acres.

Purpose of the General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

General Management Plans (GMPs) are required of all national park units by law and serve as long-term plans to guide the management and use of park lands. The prior master plan for the site was released in 1962, more than a decade before the completion of key elements of the Memorial grounds, and was completed prior to the enactment of the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and other relevant laws. As such, it was out of date. The development of a GMP for Jefferson National Expansion Memorial is critical for guiding the operations and management of the Memorial over the next 15 to 20 years.

Management Zones

One of the key tools used in planning for units of the national park system is the definition and application of management zones. Management zones can be used to identify how different areas within the Memorial could be managed to achieve resource preservation, provide visitor access and use, and serve operational purposes. Each management zone specifies complementary resource conditions,

opportunities for visitor experiences, and appropriate facilities, and combines these into a possible management strategy that could be applied to locations within the Memorial. As such, management zones give an indication of management priorities for various areas.

Five management zones have been developed for use within the Memorial. These include: Heritage Education and Visitor Amenities, Original Landscape, Orientation, Streetscape/Riverscape, and Service. In addition, a Design Competition Overlay has been applied to the grounds of the Memorial.

The purpose of the **Heritage Education and Visitor Amenities** zone is to provide visitor education, interpretation, orientation, and amenities. This zone is characterized by the cultural resources and visitor facilities that serve the educational and practical needs of the visitor. It is situated so as to have little impact on the National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of the **Original Landscape** zone is to preserve the National Historic Landmark (NHL). The Original Landscape may be rehabilitated, as necessary, as defined by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (compatible materials, design, and features) only to provide safe visitor access and security.

The purpose of the **Orientation** zone is to provide visitor orientation, enhance visual and physical connectivity, and support Memorial operations. This zone is characterized by visitor orientation, parking, and practical needs. It is situated so as to have little impact on the National Historic Landmark.

The purpose of the **Streetscape/Riverscape** zone is to create visual and physical connectivity between the city streets, the riverfront, and the Memorial. This zone is characterized by the formal, pedestrian-oriented avenues and/or riverfront the visitor passes through when approaching, entering, leaving, or walking by the Memorial.

The purpose of the **Service** zone is to support Memorial operations. Appropriate types of facilities in this zone may include administrative and operational facilities, parking, storage, roads, and security checkpoints.

The purpose of the **Design Competition Area Overlay** is to provide opportunities to explore innovative approaches to revitalizing the Memorial, including enhancing connections to the adjacent cities and introducing new elements while protecting the character defining features of the NHL. The description of the Design Competition Overlay is similar to the Design Competition zone that was described in the *Draft Jefferson National Expansion Memorial General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*, but has been divided into two separate areas (A and B) with varying degrees of allowable change that could occur as a result of a design competition. The area for the design competition has been enlarged to include sizeable portions of the Memorial that would be managed under the Original Landscape zone. The rationale for including areas zoned Original Landscape in the design competition is to encourage a cohesive design for connectivity both within the Memorial and between the Memorial and the surrounding cities.

Because the Memorial is not currently zoned, management zones only apply to action alternatives (alternatives 3, 4, and 5). The action alternatives each propose a different configuration of the management zones within the Memorial based on the concept for each alternative. In each management zone, the Memorial intends to preserve and protect resources to the greatest extent possible. The National Park Service will not allow an action that would cause the National Historic Landmark to be delisted.

Alternatives and Impacts

The alternatives in this general management plan represent different methods of applying management zones onto the grounds and to facilities and include alternative actions that could be taken at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. Each of the action alternatives consists of an overall management framework and a concept of how different areas of the Memorial would be managed.

ALTERNATIVE 1: NO ACTION

The no action alternative primarily reflects current conditions and activities at the Memorial. This alternative is provided as a baseline against which to compare the other “action” alternatives. The Memorial would continue to function much the way it does today, and the NPS management of the site would continue to be based upon the 1962 *Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Master Plan Handbook*, which currently guides park managers on the completion and preservation of the Memorial grounds. As funding permits, the National Park Service would continue to look for opportunities to complete unfinished portions of the design, according to *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, as well as *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* and the treatment recommendations of the *Cultural Landscape Report for Jefferson National Expansion Memorial* (rev. 2010).

Under the no action alternative, no major changes, or new construction projects would be undertaken. Mechanical, electrical, and climatic conditions at the Old Courthouse would continue to cause minor to moderate adverse impacts to the Memorial curatorial resources and museum collections. The appearance of the Memorial grounds would remain unchanged and necessary repairs to landscape elements would continue to be made, creating overall long-term minor to moderate beneficial impacts to the cultural landscape. Natural resources conditions would remain unchanged. The visitor experience would have minor to moderate adverse impacts due to the lack of accessibility and connectivity between the Memorial and the surrounding city, unfriendly streetscapes,

and aging exhibits. Transportation and access would also continue to experience minor adverse impacts due to the lack of accommodation of alternative means of transportation and the separation between the Memorial and public rail transportation lines. The socioeconomic condition would remain unchanged and the lack of focus on planning activities for the East St. Louis Addition would continue to create a minor long-term adverse impact on land use. Minor to moderate adverse impacts to Memorial operations would continue due to current funding constraints.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE 3: PROGRAM EXPANSION

In this alternative, the Memorial would be revitalized by expanded programming, facilities, and partnerships. The National Park Service would capitalize on multiple opportunities to expand visitor experience throughout the Memorial. In order to gain the widest breadth of ideas for expanding interpretation, education opportunities, and visitor amenities at the Memorial, a design competition, akin to the 1947 competition, would be initiated by the National Park Service in close coordination with partners. Project funding would not come all at once; it most likely would be provided by partners, donations, and other non-federal and federal sources. Private funding would be required in order to implement the winning entry of the design competition. In addition to considering the “winning” ideas from the competition, the National Park Service would continue the educational and interpretive programs currently offered at the Memorial and expand opportunities for visitors to participate in more interactive experiences across the Memorial grounds. The grounds surrounding the Gateway Arch would be managed in such a way as to accommodate and promote more visitor activities and special events than are currently provided. The National Park Service would actively coordinate with the City and State to enhance the pedestrian environment around the Memorial by developing a unifying streetscape along the Gateway Mall and the other streets adjacent to the Memorial, including Leonor K. Sullivan Boulevard and the riverfront levee.

The National Park Service would use the design competition to seek opportunities to

enhance existing entrances to the Memorial on the north and south, as well as to capitalize on the primary axis between the Old Courthouse and the Gateway Arch with new entrances on the west and east and by establishing a new east portal linking East St. Louis to the Gateway Arch grounds by water taxi. The competition would offer designs for a new external and internal visitor transportation system. The ultimate configuration and use of the south end of the Memorial would be determined by the results of the design competition. It is the agency’s intention that the maintenance facility remain in the current location; however, the Memorial would vacate the area if a design should emerge from the competition that offered a compelling program for the entire south end and could assure the Memorial the same high quality maintenance facility nearby. While the design solutions might include the development of above ground structures within a portion of the designated Design Competition Overlay, the National Park Service would not allow the implementation of a project that would cause impairment to the Memorial, and all of the enhancements would be required to be located in such a manner as to preserve the integrity of the National Historic Landmark and National Register Historic District.

Major long-term adverse impacts to historic buildings and cultural landscapes are avoided. There may be minor adverse to minor beneficial short- and long-term local impacts on historic structures, with minor short term adverse and moderate adverse to major beneficial long-term impacts to the cultural landscape at the Memorial as a result of the Program Expansion alternative. Depending on the locations of design elements and the extent of ground-disturbing activities, impacts on archeological resources could range from minor beneficial to major adverse. Mechanical, electrical, and climatic conditions would be replaced and/or upgraded, creating moderate long-term beneficial impacts to the Memorial curatorial resources and museum collections.

Depending on the results of the design competition, critical habitat for the federally listed Threatened species, decurrent false aster, could be impacted, but any future development that might result from the

design competition would be preceded by a site survey to determine if the species is present within the study area. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be required as part of the design process and prior to any construction.

Alternative 3 would have moderate to major beneficial short-term impacts on visitor use and moderate beneficial long-term impacts due to the development of new facilities. Improvements in barrier-free access and streetscapes are expected to increase connectivity to downtown St. Louis and to have a long-term beneficial impact on the visitor experience. Modification and rehabilitation of exhibits and heritage programs, including more interactive experiences, is expected to improve visitor opportunities, attracting new visitors and encouraging more use of underutilized facilities.

The expected improvements to the flow and circulation of visitors to the Memorial, depending upon the outcome of the design competition, could create moderate long-term beneficial impacts on transportation resources.

Visitation to the Memorial will have a long-term beneficial economic impact due to visitor spending and expenditures associated with operations at the Memorial, though the magnitude is indeterminate at this time. Improvements to streetscapes and connectivity with local neighborhoods are expected to have long-term beneficial impacts on land use within and immediately adjacent to the Memorial. Changes in management in the East St. Louis addition are expected to have long-term beneficial impacts on local land use, though purchase of lands for Memorial expansion in East St. Louis could have a minor, adverse fiscal impact to local government taxing entities.

Memorial operations would be impacted in this alternative and would range from major beneficial to major adverse. Much depends on the outcome of the design competition, and whether the new programs and elements that emerge from the competition come with additional financial resources for operations.

ALTERNATIVE 4: PORTALS

This alternative focuses on revitalizing the Memorial through enhanced visual and physical connections from the surrounding neighborhoods to the Memorial. It features the development of four portals from the north, south, east, and west as formal entrances into the Memorial. Capitalizing on the established visual link between the Old Courthouse and the Gateway Arch, the east-west axis would be strengthened with a new east portal, linking East St. Louis to the Gateway Arch grounds by water taxi, and the creation of an expanded west portal that includes a wide at-grade lid or deck above the recessed highway to provide additional open space. Directly above the lid/deck, two elevated pedestrian bridges would be constructed for visitors to walk between Luther Ely Smith Square and the Gateway Arch grounds. The north portal would be improved at both the northwest plaza (at Memorial Drive and Washington Avenue) and in the vicinity of the MetroLink station at Eads Bridge. The south portal would provide improved visitor access and orientation to the south end of the Memorial grounds and riverfront. Pedestrian at-grade improvements would be made at all major entrances. Further connectivity would be promoted with a new transportation system linking visitor attractions within and outside of the Memorial. The National Park Service would actively coordinate with the City and State to enhance the pedestrian environment around the Memorial by developing a unifying streetscape along the Gateway Mall and the other streets adjacent to the Memorial, including Leonor K. Sullivan Boulevard and the riverfront levee.

The Portals alternative may result in local negligible to moderate long-term adverse and moderate to major long-term beneficial impacts on the cultural landscape at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. The implementation of the Portals alternative would result in moderate long-term beneficial impacts on curatorial resources and museum collections.

Implementation of alternative 4 may have moderate long-term beneficial impacts

on visitor opportunity and use. Visitor opportunities and use are expected to improve with redesign of exhibits at the Museum of Westward Expansion and the Old Courthouse and development of barrier-free access to the riverfront and museum. Improvements in streetscapes, the introduction of a new transportation system, and a water taxi service are expected to increase connectivity to local neighborhoods in downtown St. Louis and East St. Louis, and have a long-term beneficial impact on visitor opportunities and use. The Memorial would continue to be a major attraction for visitors coming to the St. Louis area, and its appeal to local residents and visitors is expected to have a minor positive increase on visitation under this alternative. Visitation to the Memorial would have a long-term minor beneficial economic impact due to visitor spending and expenditures associated with operations at the Memorial, though the impacts would be focused within the local geographic area.

Implementation of the Portals alternative would have a long-term moderate beneficial impact on local land use. The expanded facilities would require a commensurate increase in NPS operational resources.

ALTERNATIVE 5: PARK INTO THE CITY

The focus of this alternative is to extend the visitor's experience of the Memorial into the surrounding city. In this alternative the Memorial would be revitalized by emphasizing enhanced services and visual themes that begin and continue into adjacent neighborhoods and areas, and by addressing the transportation and access challenges of the Memorial. The single largest change to the character of the Memorial would be caused by the removal and rerouting of Memorial Drive away from the Memorial between Poplar and Locust Streets. With the removal of this

major thoroughfare from the Memorial's boundary, the edge of the Memorial could be transformed into a series of large pedestrian plazas, which would increase connectivity between the Old Courthouse and the Gateway Arch, all centered on Luther Ely Smith Square. Connectivity would be further promoted with a new transportation system linking visitor attractions within and outside the Memorial. The National Park Service would actively coordinate with the City and State to enhance the pedestrian environment around the Memorial by developing a unifying streetscape along the Gateway Mall and the other streets adjacent to the Memorial, including Leonor K. Sullivan Boulevard and the riverfront levee.

The Park into the City alternative may result in long-term moderate to major beneficial and minor to moderate adverse local impacts on the cultural landscape at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. The implementation of the Park into the City alternative would result in local moderate long-term beneficial impacts on curatorial resources and museum collections. The Park into the City alternative would have moderate long-term beneficial impacts on visitor opportunity and use. Visitor opportunities are expected to improve with the redesign of exhibits at the Museum of Westward Expansion and the Old Courthouse and development of barrier-free access to the riverfront and the museum. Improvements in streetscapes and the introduction of a new transportation system are expected to increase connectivity to local neighborhoods in downtown St. Louis, and to have a long-term beneficial impact on visitor opportunities and use.

The implementation of alternative 5 would have a long-term moderate beneficial impact on local land use. The expanded facilities would require a commensurate increase in NPS operational resources.

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