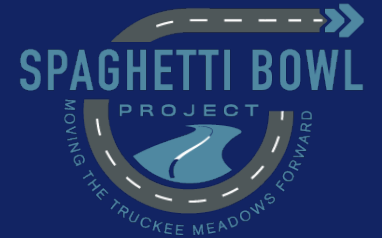


CHAPTER 4:   
PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT  
SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECIPIENTS TO  
WHOM NOTICE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT STATEMENT AVAILABILITY WAS  
SENT







# PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECIPIENTS TO WHOM NOTICE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AVAILABILITY WAS SENT

## Public Involvement and Agency Coordination After Draft EIS Approval

### INTRODUCTION

Following the release of the Draft EIS, the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) continued its community involvement and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies. NDOT offered opportunities for citizens, Native American tribes, local governments, and state and federal review agencies to review and comment on the Draft EIS. The public involvement process was open to all residents and population groups in the study area and did not exclude any persons due to income, race, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability.

### PUBLIC HEARING

NDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the Draft EIS for public comment and held a public hearing on the Draft EIS. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS in the *Federal Register* on November 16, 2018. It was noted that the 60-day comment period would end on January 15, 2019. Due to the United States federal government shutdown that took place during the comment period, NDOT and FHWA extended the comment period for federal cooperating and participating agencies to February 15, 2019.

NDOT held a public hearing on December 12, 2018, at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. 187 people signed in at the hearing, not including project staff. Interested persons were encouraged

to attend the open-house style hearing anytime between 3:00 and 7:30 PM to review displays and other hearing materials, ask questions, and provide testimony. NDOT gave the same presentation at 3:30 and 5:30 PM, followed by a question and answer period. The presentation and public comments were recorded by a court reporter and the transcript is included in [Appendix G](#).

During the public hearing, representatives from FHWA, NDOT, and the consultant team were available to review exhibits showing Alternatives 1, 2, and 3; listen to comments; answer questions; and explain procedures for providing testimony. NDOT real estate staff answered questions about property acquisition and relocations. All attendees had three options for providing testimony:

- Making an oral statement to the court reporter during the public hearing
- Filling out a comment form and placing it in the comment box or giving to a project representative at the public hearing
- Submitting a comment form/letter/email to NDOT Project Manager Dale Keller or the project information email address during the Draft EIS comment period that ended on January 15

Information on how to submit comments by mail was provided on the comment form, in all notices, and on the project website. NDOT and FHWA gave all forms of testimony equal consideration.

Both hearing presentations were broadcast on Facebook Live, and are available to review at any time on NDOT's Facebook page. The presentations had approximately 1,000 viewers on Facebook Live. Users were also able to submit questions via Facebook during the presentation and those questions were read out loud at the hearing and are part of the hearing testimony.

The public hearing had a Spanish translator available. Handouts and comment forms were available in Spanish, and NDOT's presentation was simultaneously translated from English to Spanish using earpiece technology.

# ADVERTISING AND NOTICES

Along with the Notice of Availability published in the *Federal Register* on November 16, 2018, notices announcing the public hearing dates and locations, the Draft EIS availability period, and the release of the Draft EIS were published in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* and *Ahora Latino Journal*.

Digital advertisements were also posted on the *Reno Gazette-Journal* website from November 27 through December 12, 2018.

A public hearing notice letter in both English and Spanish was sent to a mailing list of approximately 28,300 people prior to the hearing. Additionally, door hangers were delivered to all properties potentially affected by Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. Fliers were posted in over 20 public locations, and project personnel staffed a table at Meadowood Mall on Saturday, November 24, 2018, to provide information during the busy Thanksgiving shopping weekend about the project and the December public hearing.

All persons who expressed an interest in the proposal’s environmental effects to NDOT were notified of the availability of the Draft EIS, which had been filed according to the National Environmental Policy Act. Copies of the Draft EIS were available for inspection and copying at the following locations and on the project’s website (<https://ndotspaghettibowl.com/environmental-review-docs/>):

- NDOT District 2 Office
- Downtown Reno Library
- Duncan/Traner Community Library
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Library
- Senior Center Community Library
- Sierra View Library
- Sparks Library



## DRAFT EIS COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING DRAFT EIS AVAILABILITY PERIOD

During the Draft EIS availability period, NDOT received 456 comments from cooperating and participating agencies, local officials, interest groups, and the public.

### Government Agencies and Elected Officials Comments

The Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority, Nevada National Guard, and State Assemblyman Michael Sprinkle commented on access to the airport, urging NDOT to include the ramp from I-580 to the airport. The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) commented on the Draft EIS, urging NDOT and FHWA to continue their close coordination during design and construction to avoid adverse effects to the RSIC and for more data on air quality near the RSIC. RSIC also asked for mitigation measures to mitigate noise and visual impacts. RSIC Tribal Council approved a resolution endorsing Alternative 2 on January 30, 2019.

Other local governments endorsed the project:

- City of Reno on February 27, 2019
- City of Sparks on March 11, 2019
- Washoe County on March 26, 2019
- RTC Washoe County on April 19, 2019

The Sparks Fire Department commented that the changes to the Rock Boulevard interchange will increase their response time to incidents on I-80.



Comments were also received from:

- University of Nevada, Reno
- Federal Railroad Administration
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Analysis
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The commenting agencies are listed in the table below. Copies of each letter and NDOT’s and FHWA’s responses are included in Appendix G.

Date of Letter/E-mail	Agency
December 10, 2018	Federal Railroad Administration
December 14, 2018	Sparks Fire Department
December 27, 2018	Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority
January 14, 2019	Nevada National Guard
January 14, 2019	University of Nevada, Reno
January 15, 2019	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
January 29, 2019	U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs
February 4, 2019	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
February 15, 2019	U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
June 7, 2019	Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
Undated	State Assemblyman Michael Sprinkle

## Public Comments and Responses

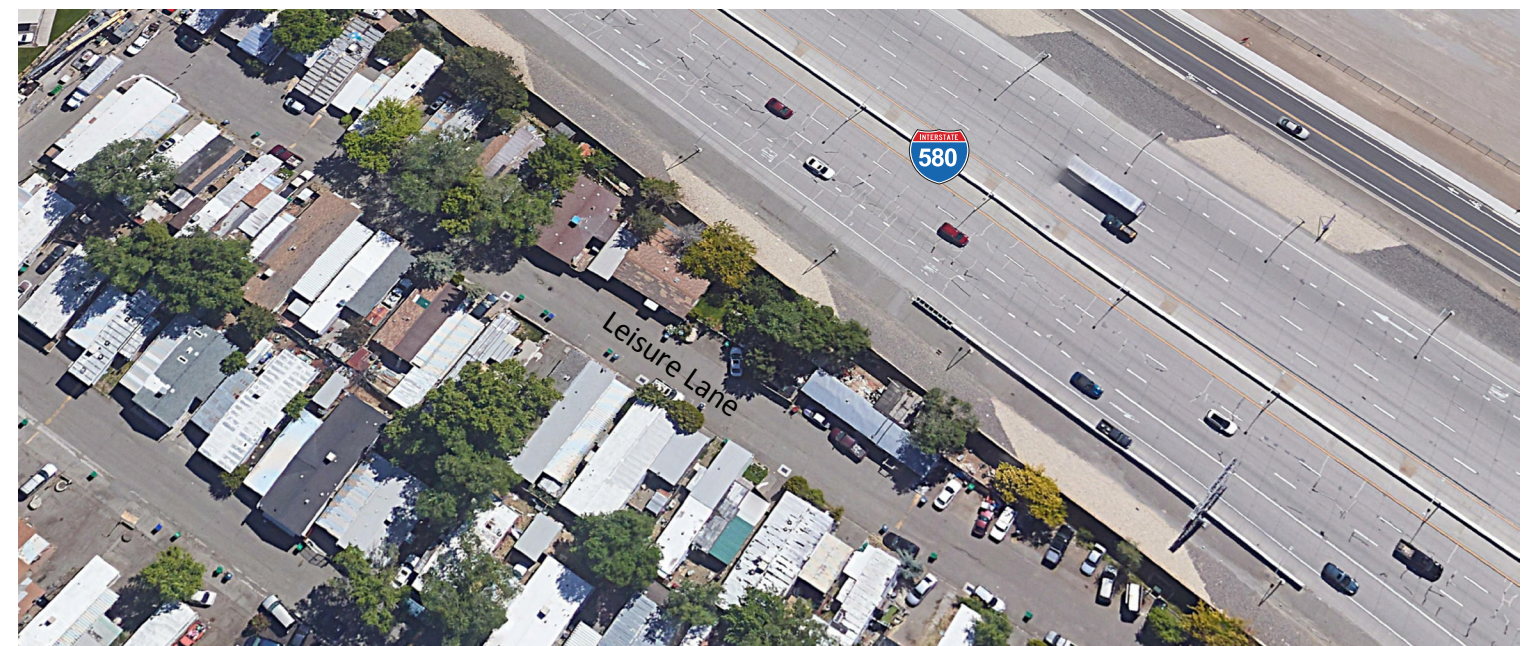
By far the most frequent topic of the public comments was to urge NDOT to keep a direct-connect ramp from southbound I-580 to the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. Based on those comments, NDOT added this ramp to Alternative 2, the Preferred Alternative. The impacts of including this ramp in the Preferred Alternative are documented in the Final EIS.

Another topic that prompted multiple comments was the proximity of the freeway reconstruction to the homes on Leisure Lane. Twelve homeowners and renters on Leisure Lane expressed concerns about nearby construction. They live on the west side of I-580 just north of Moana Lane, and the homes are only a few feet from the existing traffic noise barrier. They are concerned about the close proximity and noise of construction, especially if the existing traffic noise barrier is removed and replaced. Based on these comments, NDOT will leave the existing traffic noise barrier in place during construction of the new traffic noise barrier, which is on the freeway side of the existing wall, so that the existing traffic noise barrier will shield Leisure Lane residents from the freeway construction noise. NDOT will incorporate the existing traffic noise barrier into the design of the new barrier so as not to remove or disturb the adjacent residents. The existing traffic noise barrier would either be incorporated into the new barrier's design to protect in place or would not be disturbed. The segment of the Spaghetti Bowl Project adjacent to Leisure Lane is currently planned as the fourth of five phases, based on NDOT’s initial staging plan. That means construction would occur in the mid-2030s, or about 15 years from now.

Other public comments included the following:

- Supported the project
- Had questions about specific property impacts or questions about the relocation assistance program
- Suggested improvements such as removing interchanges to address weaving

These and other comments are responded to below. NDOT followed up via e-mail and/or phone calls with commenters who had specific questions.



Leisure Lane adjacent to I-580. © 2019 Google

Topic: Property Acquisition

**Comment:** Will the residential area along Selmi Drive between Sutro Street and N. McCarran Boulevard be impacted?

**Response:** No. There will be no impacts to the residential area on Selmi Drive under any of the alternatives.

**Comment:** For relocated residences, how soon do the residents need to move out of the residence?

**Response:** The displacements for the Preferred Alternative are expected to be spread between 2022 and 2039. It is not until phase 3 of the project begins in approximately 2025 that a significant number of residential displacements occur. Residents would not be required to move until a year or so before construction starts. All residents (both owners and renters) are protected by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Act). Residents that need to be relocated are typically contacted by NDOT real estate staff months in advance of needing to move. At this point, NDOT staff discusses the relocation process, resources, and benefits with residents so that questions can be answered, and the relocation process can start. NDOT staff will continue to coordinate with residents throughout the process (See [Section 3.2](#) for more information).

Residents will be provided a 90-day advance written notice (“90-day Notice”) before being required to vacate their property. The timing of when the 90-day notice is issued can vary. If the 90-day notice is issued before a comparable replacement dwelling is made available, the notice must clearly state that the occupant will not have to move earlier than 90 days after such a dwelling is made available. If purchasing or leasing a replacement dwelling takes longer than 90 days, the resident will be allowed more time to complete the transaction. No one will be given a 90-day notice, or be required to move, without NDOT first making comparable replacement property available to them. According to the Uniform Act, a comparable replacement dwelling is considered to have been made available to a person if:

1. the person is informed of its location;
2. that person has sufficient time to negotiate and enter into a purchase agreement or lease for the property; and
3. subject to reasonable safeguards, the person is assured of receiving the relocation assistance and acquisition payment (if an owner) to which the person is entitled in sufficient time to complete the purchase or lease of the property.

As part of the Uniform Act, NDOT will provide replacement housing for homeowners and renters. No one is required to move from a residence without NDOT offering a comparable replacement. See [Section 3.2](#) of the Final EIS for more information.



**Comment:** If NDOT purchases homes at fair market value and a comparable home to costs more due to local housing market factors, is that difference covered?

**Response:** As part of the Uniform Act, NDOT will pay fair market value for homes purchased and locate comparable replacement housing for homeowners. No one is required to move from a residence without having a comparable replacement to move into. Comparable replacement is defined as similar housing of the same character, presently on the market, within the financial means of the homeowner, large enough, decent, safe, and sanitary. If there is nothing available within the homeowner’s financial means, NDOT must pay the difference between the cost of the current house and cost of the replacement housing at the time a replacement is purchased, which is called an “owner supplemental payment.” If the homeowner has poor credit, NDOT will provide assistance, including a payment to enable the homeowner to qualify for loans at a fair rate of interest. If a displaced person or family wants to move out of the area or even out of state when NDOT buys their house/rental, they can do that and receive the same benefits under the Uniform Act. See [Section 3.2](#) of the Final EIS and Section 7 of the *Spaghetti Bowl Community Impacts Assessment Technical Report* in [Appendix D.2](#) for more information.

**Comment:** Is there anywhere to find what specific residences will be relocated?

**Response:** Figure 3.2-14 in [Section 3.2](#) of this Final EIS shows residential displacements under each alternative. The public can also contact NDOT's project manager with questions regarding impacts on a specific property. The Final EIS describes a worst-case scenario regarding the number of residences potentially impacted. As the design of the Preferred Alternative is refined, some properties currently shown as a displacement may no longer be required.

**Comment:** Is there protection for mobile home owners who do not own the land they live on but own the property (the mobile home)?

**Response:** Mobile homes are treated substantially the same way as other homes under the Uniform Act. NDOT must provide assistance for people who live in mobile homes just like renters and homeowners, but compensation is calculated based on specific circumstances, like whether the residents own the mobile home, own the land it sits on, or rent the mobile home or land. The result is the same: mobile-home residents have protections like renters and homeowners. If the need to relocate any mobile homes does occur, by law, NDOT must pay for those relocation costs. This includes moving the mobile home and paying for moving expenses for the belongings in the home.

Other options may be available to families that are asked to relocate, such as applying funds toward renting an apartment or as a down payment on a different home. These options can be discussed with NDOT staff as the project moves closer to the construction phase affecting the specific location.

**Comment:** Following the Draft EIS, what is the next step in the decision-making process, when does that occur, how, and by whom?

**Response:** Following the public comment period for the Draft EIS, NDOT and FHWA reviewed the comments received from the public, project stakeholders, and government agencies, and revised the alternatives and environmental impact statement. The revised document is a combined Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD confirms the selection of the Preferred Alternative by FHWA and NDOT. FHWA is the final decision maker in the process. Following FHWA's signature of the combined Final EIS/ROD, NDOT begins final design of the Preferred Alternative.

After evaluating the comments received on the Draft EIS from the public and government agencies and receiving written endorsements from local governing bodies, NDOT and FHWA identified Alternative 2 as the Preferred Alternative.

**Comment:** It appears that Alternative 1 moves traffic faster and is safer but costs twice as much as other alternatives. Is this why it was not selected as the Preferred Alternative?

**Response:** Cost was one element that went into the alternative selection process. The Preferred Alternative would cost about \$1.7 billion less than Alternative 1. Alternative 1 would also displace nearly three times as many residences as the Preferred Alternative, more businesses, more publicly owned and social-service buildings, and more parks. Alternative 1 would also directly impact businesses and residences at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, while the Preferred Alternative would have no direct impacts to RSIC. The Preferred Alternative would improve freeway traffic speeds and travel delay as well as or better than Alternatives 1 and 3. It would improve safety performance to a level similar to or better than Alternative 1, with fewer impacts and at a lower cost.

The larger cost and impacts of Alternative 1 over the other alternatives did not justify selecting that alternative. In addition, Washoe County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), the Cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County, and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony reviewed the alternatives and ranked Alternative 2 higher than Alternatives 1 and 3.



## PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TOPIC: PROPERTY ACQUISITION

**Comment:** How should people plan for residential displacements? Some people may want to make improvements to their residence but don't want to if their residence will be torn down in the near future.

**Response:** Residents should continue to make planned improvements to their residences. Most displacements are several years away. Any improvements made to a property will be taken into account when the property value is appraised by NDOT.

**Comment:** Will the Community Services Agency be impacted by the Preferred Alternative? What is the specific timeline for CSA's displacement?

**Response:** Yes. Community Services Agency will be displaced in Phase 5 of the project, which is tentatively planned to begin in 2037.

**Comment:** Can those impacted by the Preferred Alternative be contacted as soon as possible to ensure a smooth and timely relocation process?

**Response:** NDOT will ensure that all persons, businesses, and agencies being displaced, will be provided at least 90 days notification prior to being relocated. Any persons, businesses, or agencies displaced will be provided sufficient information well in advance of any need to acquire property. A relocation agent and an acquisition agent will be assigned to each displaced party once a determination has been made that property will be impacted. See [Section 3.2](#) and [Nevada Highways and Your Property](#) for more information.

**Comment:** What is the process for mitigating displacements? Whose appraiser is used?

**Response:** An NDOT relocation agent and an acquisition agent will be assigned to each displaced party once a determination has been made that property will be impacted. All properties are appraised by a licensed, certified third-party appraiser selected by NDOT based on their ability and qualifications, prior to any necessary acquisition and relocation. The act of appraising the property occurs in advance of an offer being made to the property owner and will reflect the fair market value of the asset at the time of appraisal, which may not occur until the year before the construction phase is scheduled to start. Property owners may accompany the appraiser to point out specific or unique aspects of the property.

**Comment:** Will my property be impacted?

**Response:** Several people asked if their property would be impacted. NDOT responded to those commenters directly either in writing or at the public hearing.

**Comment:** Concern about noise and dust during construction.

**Response:** Noise, construction access, air pollution, and public safety are all important concerns. NDOT's construction contractor must follow strict guidelines to minimize impacts to surrounding property owners. Even with these guidelines in place, noise and dust may be a nuisance to adjacent residents during construction. However, construction impacts are temporary and tend to be localized. See construction mitigation measures in Final EIS [Section 3.4 Noise](#), [Section 3.5 Air Quality](#), and [Section 3.6 Transportation](#).





**Comment:** During the recent Fourth Street reconstruction my business decreased. Expecting a similar loss of revenue as a result of the Spaghetti Bowl Project due to closed exits and detours. Concerned about viability of business during and after the project. Concerned about replacing property with another equal property in the community due to increasing land values.

**Response:** NDOT will develop and implement a plan to minimize disruption to businesses during construction. The plan will include measures to minimize changes in access, and to inform customers of upcoming local street and on-/off-ramp closures, and detours. For Project NEON in Las Vegas, NDOT developed and implemented an extensive outreach campaign to businesses and the general public with the goal of “no surprises.” Examples include extensive outreach to mapping apps to make sure closures are accurately reflected on their app, frequent stakeholder meetings, almost daily social media updates, and branded outreach for major traffic events.

**Comment:** Two businesses, a service station and an auto body repair business that also provides recreational vehicle service, sales and rental in the southeast quadrant of the Spaghetti Bowl that would be displaced under Alternative 2 commented on their concern over finding a suitable replacement location given their current centrally located property with high visibility to over 200,000 vehicles each day on adjacent I-80 and I-580, and easy access to/from the freeway. The businesses also had questions over the relocation process, including any hazardous material on the property, impact on employees’ commute.

**Response:** The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Act) is the cornerstone of NDOT’s mitigation for business displacements. Nevada Revised Statutes (the current codified laws of the State of Nevada) 37.110 and 37.111, as well as NDOT policies and procedures, also guide relocation assistance. No displaced business would need to vacate its existing location without assistance in assessing its specific relocation needs or in locating potential replacement properties.

Unlike residential relocations, business relocation is not a make-whole program, so early identification of problems may reduce losses resulting from displacement. Identifying suitable replacement property for the displaced businesses is a primary concern. NDOT will continue networking with local realtors and will provide information to affected businesses on the availability, purchase prices, and rental costs of suitable replacement properties. NDOT’s relocation plan produced as part of the Spaghetti Bowl Project will identify issues and problems that, if not addressed, could result in unanticipated costs and delays.

NDOT will meet with affected business owners to work out a plan for relocating the business or provide alternative compensation if the owner does not wish to relocate the business. In a full acquisition, under state law just compensation is paid for the land and the improvements located thereon. The first step is to appraise the real property at market value, offer to purchase the land, and begin the relocation process for the occupants. If the owner wishes to relocate the business, NDOT will work with the owner to find a suitable property. NDOT understands the concern that it will be difficult to find a site that has the same exposure and access to pass-by traffic as a business’s current site.

If the business is relocated, the Uniform Act does not compensate for loss of goodwill, loss of profits, loss of trained employees, or any additional operating expenses of a business incurred because of operating at a new location (including the loss of being located at an interstate interchange with 250,000 vehicles passing by daily). However, Nevada Revised Statute 37.111 does provide compensation for loss of goodwill if the condemnation causes the business to be dissolved for reasons beyond the control of the landowner, such as the value of the business is inextricably tied to the location of the property being condemned. In this instance, goodwill means the component value attributed to a business’s reputation, loyal customer base, ability to attract new customers, and location of business.

If the business fails, goodwill is the component of value attributed to reputation, loss of customer base, ability to attract new customers, and location, as previously noted. Income lost during construction, loss of key employees or having to pay them more, loss of anticipated profits, and loss of business opportunity are not paid.

The closing or moving of underground storage tanks would take place in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Division of Environmental Protection requirements. These requirements are in place to safely avoid environmental impacts.

NDOT will work with the affected business owners to find new locations for their businesses. The new location may result in some employees having different commutes to work. Depending on where they live, the commutes could be shorter or longer.



Topic: Design

**Comment:** Concern over eastbound I-80 to southbound I-580 ramp necking down to one lane

**Response:** NDOT will correct that issue in the first phase of the project, scheduled to be built in 2020. Two lanes will continue onto southbound I-580, rather than merging into one lane as they do today.

**Comment:** Alternative 2 is the best of the three alternatives but could be made better by not having a loop ramp in the northwest quadrant. Rather have a flyover ramp from westbound I-80 to southbound I-580 instead of the loop. Commenter noted several specific freeway-to-freeway interchanges in California (I-580 and SR 24 in the Oakland area as one example) that move traffic efficiently. Also commented that NDOT should “build for the future, not just present demand.”

**Response:** NDOT and FHWA have designed the Spaghetti Bowl and the adjacent freeways to operate safely and efficiently in 2040. See [Chapter 2](#).

The I-580/SR 24 interchange in Oakland is a fully directional or four-level stack interchange. According to CalTrans traffic volume data, it carries approximately 350,000 cars per day (198,000 on I-580 and 150,000 on SR 24) (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/census/volumes2017/Route22-33.html>). In comparison, the Spaghetti Bowl carries about 260,000 vehicles per day and is expected to carry about 330,000 vehicles per day in 2040.

NDOT did consider a stack interchange for the Spaghetti Bowl. The Initial Concepts Report in [Appendix B.1](#), pp 18-19, says: “At this time, it is not recommended to carry [the four-level stack] forward. It requires the highest cost for an optional form with limited operational benefit. There are constructability concerns related to the very large pier/columns required and the room required during maintenance of traffic.” At the time the Initial Concepts Report was prepared, the four-level stack interchange was referred to as Alternative 2, not to be confused with the Preferred Alternative. Also, a four-level stack interchange would likely have required NDOT to acquire land from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, which the RSIC residents and Tribal Council are very opposed to. For these reasons, the four-level stack interchange was dropped from consideration.

The Initial Concepts Report documents the wide range of alternatives NDOT considered for the Spaghetti Bowl and adjacent service interchanges.



SR-124 and I-580 Interchange in Oakland, California. © 2019 Google

**Comment:** Will the reconstructed freeway be “earthquake proof?”

**Response:** It is not possible to make a freeway earthquake proof. NDOT follows two American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO, <https://www.transportation.org/>) publications that prescribe criteria for designing bridges for earthquake resistance:

- Load Resistance Design Factor (LRFD) Bridge Design Specifications
- Guide Specifications for LRFD Seismic Bridge Design

NDOT also has state-specific additions/modifications to these AASHTO publications. The intent of the design codes is to detail and construct bridges that are earthquake-resistant. For bridges designed following the governing codes, damage is not expected for low-level earthquakes. However, in a large earthquake, some level of damage is expected (spalling and/or cracking concrete, reinforcing steel yielding, etc.). The underlying goal of design code requirements is to prevent bridge collapse in any earthquake. In many cases, damaged bridges can be repaired and restored to service following a large earthquake.

**Comment:** Remove service interchanges that are close to the Spaghetti Bowl, like Wells Avenue, Oddie Boulevard, 4th Street, Second Street/Glendale Avenue. Build frontage roads to connect those streets to the next interchange away from the Spaghetti Bowl.

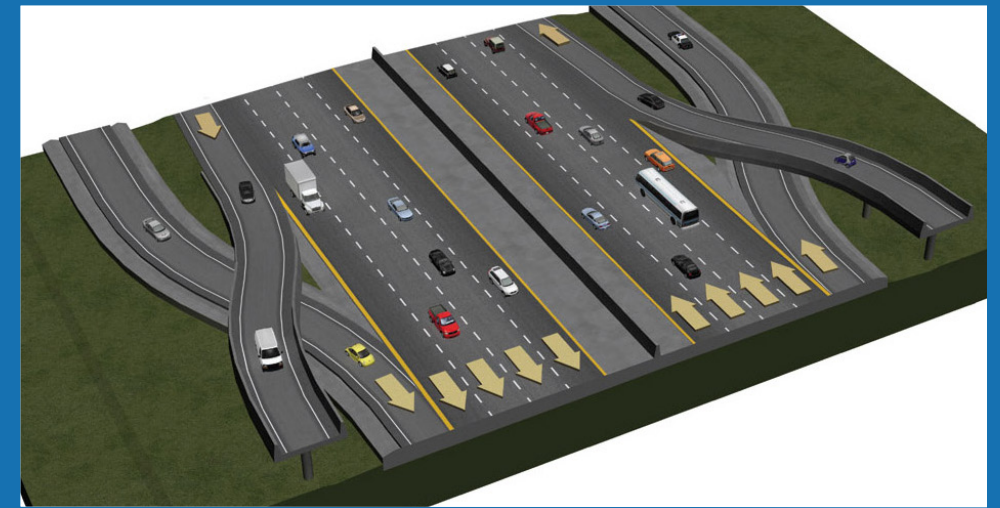
**Response:** NDOT did consider removing some of these interchanges. See the Initial Concepts Report in [Appendix B.1](#). In the case of the Wells Avenue interchange, emergency service providers felt that removing this interchange would be very detrimental to their response times. The Preferred Alternative will consolidate the Fourth Street/Prater Way and Rock Boulevard interchanges at Kietzke Lane. The Wells Avenue and Oddie Boulevard interchange will have braided ramps so that drivers entering on those on-ramps will not conflict with drivers exiting I-80 or US 395 in the Spaghetti Bowl.

**Comment:** I-580 northbound should have a three-lane ramp to westbound I-80 and a three-lane ramp to eastbound I-80.

**Response:** Forecasted traffic volumes in 2040 will not require three-lane ramps to westbound or eastbound I-580. Also, the space needed for those lanes to diverge from I-580 and merge into I 80 would require NDOT to acquire additional land from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Nugget Casino, and numerous other property owners.

### Ramp Braiding

Ramp braids are freeway on- and off-ramps that are close to one another and built so one ramp crosses over the other. Ramp braids eliminate the need for weaving.



**Comment:** On-ramps and off-ramps are too close together, at Second Street and Mill Street for instance. Also concerned about lanes that end, like on US 395 southbound and I-580 northbound to I-80 eastbound ramp.

**Response:** The Preferred Alternative will address all the locations where entrance ramps and exit ramps are too close together. In some cases ramps will be removed and in other cases the ramps will be braided with one another. See [Chapter 2 Alternatives Development Process](#) for a picture of braided ramps and discussion of the benefits.

**Comment:** Ramps from westbound I-80 to southbound I-580 and northbound US 395 should be separate ramps, not combined into one exit like they are today.

**Response:** The Preferred Alternative will accomplish this. The exit from westbound I-80 to southbound I-580 will be separated from the exit to northbound US 395.

**Comment:** Supports Alternative 2 but suggests long-term study of light rail as well.

**Response:** The Regional Transportation Plan (<https://www.rtcnv.com/planning-engineering/regional-transportation-plan/>) does not include light rail transit but it does discuss the possibility of a streetcar and/or commuter rail from Reno or Sparks to the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center. RTC’s 2040 Regional Transportation Plan mentions rail transit elements as ideas that were explored and “included in the ‘unfunded needs’ section of the financial plan.” The Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction will not preclude rail transit systems from being implemented in the future.

**Comment:** The problem with Spaghetti Bowl is not lack of capacity but rather turbulence and speed changes caused by abrupt merges around the interchange during peak hours. In particular Wells Avenue, Second Street. Suggest eliminating Oddie Boulevard, Wells Avenue, Second Street/Glendale, and Fourth Street interchanges. If that cannot be done, then supports Alternative 3.

**Response:** The commenter is correct that the closely spaced interchanges adjacent to the Spaghetti Bowl are a key reason for congestion and crashes. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2) will address this by removing some ramps (4th Street), braiding service interchange ramps with the system ramps to eliminate weaving (Wells Avenue, Oddie Boulevard), and reconfiguring the Spaghetti Bowl to increase the weave distance (Second Street). NDOT considered removing the Wells Street interchange, but emergency service providers were very opposed due to the expected increase in response times.

**Comment:** After this project is constructed 20 years down the road, will we be right back to congested freeways? Does the project account for increased traffic on the freeways?

**Response:** The alternatives developed for this project were designed to handle the forecasted traffic volume in the year 2040. In 2040, approximately 330,000 vehicles are expected to pass through the Spaghetti Bowl each day (compared to 260,000 vehicles in 2016). Traffic on I-80 is expected to grow by 13 to 26 percent and on I-580/US 395 by 50 to 100 percent in 2040 as compared to 2016.

The traffic model for the Preferred Alternative shows that during the most congested periods (peak hours) in 2040, traffic will continue to move at over 50 mph on I-80, I-580, and US 395.



**Comment:** Currently the eastbound I-80 exit to southbound I-580 is often backed up. The cause seems to be that the exit is for both southbound I-580 and northbound US 395 traffic but more importantly because the two southbound exit lanes merge into one. It would help if the southbound exit stayed two lanes.

**Response:** As part of the Preferred Alternative, the eastbound I-80 to southbound I-580 exit would have two lanes for the entire length of the ramp, continuously onto I-580. Additionally, the eastbound I-80 exit to northbound US 395 would be separated from the southbound I-580 exit, improving traffic operations and safety. This exit will be reconstructed as part of phase 1 of the project (Spaghetti Bowl Xpress) beginning in 2020.

**Comment:** Concerns over the freeway's ability to handle increased traffic volumes from the thousands of homes going up in North Valleys.

**Response:** NDOT conducted a traffic analysis to assess the impact of the project on existing and future traffic conditions (see [Appendix C, Traffic Analysis](#)). Design year (2040) traffic forecasts were developed and updated in conjunction with the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan. These plans consider projected population growth and other planned projects in the study area. The traffic forecast looked at movements along the freeway as well as local streets. Even with increased population in the area, the freeway will be able to handle the projected traffic volumes.

**Comment:** The plan just moves congestion from the Spaghetti Bowl to Plumb Lane.

**Response:** Alternative 2 will also increase capacity along I-580 south of the Spaghetti Bowl to ease traffic congestion. Based on traffic analysis, these changes as part of Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative) are designed to meet the traffic needs for the study area in the design year 2040 along I-580 to Plumb Lane, Moana Lane, and Meadowood Mall Way.

**Comment:** In the last construction improvements to the Spaghetti Bowl the public was told the I-580 NB to I-80 EB ramp would be increased to two lanes to ease congestion. The ramp was expanded to accommodate two lanes, however, when the project was completed the ramp remained one lane. Why was the ramp left at one lane when it was expanded to accommodate two lanes? It is this kind of mismanagement and waste of funds that people are so dubious of what NDOT wants to accomplish with the new proposal.

**Response:** The primary purpose of that project was to replace the failing concrete and provide as many operational and safety improvements as possible that wouldn't require NDOT to purchase any new land for right-of-way. NDOT looked at many ways to try to get two lanes to enter east-bound I-80 from north-bound I-580 but could not do that without extensive widening of eastbound I-80 that would result in purchasing new right-of-way. Also, since the 4th Street and Prater Way exit is just to the east of where that ramp enters the freeway, adding an additional lane onto the freeway would create an unsafe weaving issue and conflict point between the ramps, and potentially create more safety issues than already existed.

**Comment:** Closely spaced Mill Street and Glendale Avenue/Second Street entrances and exits are unsafe. Lane drop on southbound US 395 at I-80 and exit from northbound I-580 to eastbound I-80 are also unsafe. New design should look at examples that work well, such as Salt Lake City freeway interchanges that use long, elevated on- and off-ramps.

**Response:** The project will address all three of these current unsafe design elements. Figure 2-13 illustrates the new design of I-580 and the Mill Street and Second Street/Glendale Avenue on- and off-ramps. Figure 2-14b illustrates the new Spaghetti Bowl ramp configuration that provides longer, higher-speed ramps and eliminates the lane drop on southbound US 395 at I 80.

**Comment:** Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 still rely on excessive weaving and maintain too many freeway access points. Mill Street, Second Street/Glendale Avenue, Oddie Boulevard and 4th Street interchanges are too close to the Spaghetti Bowl. The design should focus more on through traffic than accommodating local traffic. The design should provide local frontage roads for local traffic to use until they reach one of the fewer freeway interchanges. NDOT should expand control of local street intersections adjacent to freeway interchanges with the goal of getting traffic away from the freeway ramps as quickly as possible. The design's dropping lanes from the freeway as exit-only lanes at interchanges is unsafe.

**Response:** [Chapter 2](#) of the Final EIS and the Initial Concepts Report ([Appendix B.1](#)) document alternatives NDOT considered and then eliminated from consideration, including concepts that eliminated the Wells Avenue interchange and other interchanges located close to the Spaghetti Bowl. Emergency services response time was one key reason the Wells Avenue and Mill Street interchanges will remain. Alternative 2, the Preferred Alternative, does move the 4th Street/Prater Way interchange east to Kietzke Lane. Several other aspects of the Preferred Alternative address the short weaving conditions and other design issues that the commenter is concerned about:

- 1) The Oddie Boulevard southbound entrance ramp will only allow access to US 395/I-580, not I-80. This will eliminate weaving with drivers exiting US 395 to I-80.
- 2) The Wells Avenue eastbound entrance will have a braided ramp so it does not conflict with I-80 eastbound traffic exiting to northbound I-580. There will be a weave segment with I-80 eastbound traffic exiting to southbound I-580, but the weave segment will be much longer than it is today and there will be less traffic making that weave because the exit to northbound I-580 will be separated from the ramp to southbound I-580.
- 3) The off-ramp intersections with cross roads will be reconstructed and the signals timed so that traffic will move efficiently through the intersections and not affect freeway traffic operations.

- 4) Lane drops are inevitable as the Preferred Alternative's 5- or 6-lane freeway segments narrow towards the east, west, north, and south ends of the study area. But the Preferred Alternative will provide more advance notice of the upcoming lane drops and those lane drops will be farther from the Spaghetti Bowl than they are today, allowing drivers more time to merge into their correct lane.

These and all other design elements of the Preferred Alternative have been reviewed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration and will provide a safer freeway system that balances safety, cost, and impacts.

**Comment:** Build a four-lane route over the Union Pacific Railroad parallel to I-80 from Robb Drive on west side of Reno to USA Parkway east of Sparks. This would solve problem of narrow freeway at Nugget Casino, Wells Avenue. It would be designed to handle east-west freight movement, and through traffic. If funding available build a US 395 bypass through Spanish Springs to USA Parkway.

**Response:** The cost of building such a four-lane freeway on top of the Union Pacific Railroad would be cost-prohibitive and would not address many of the substandard design issues in the Spaghetti Bowl or on I-580/US 395. A northern bypass of US 395 through Spanish Springs to USA Parkway is outside the scope of this study.



## Topic: Miscellaneous

**Comment:** What is the timeframe for the project? Concern that the project is moving too quickly since construction will already be starting next year. Concern that the whole area will be torn up and impassable for years.

**Response:** This Final EIS represents years of planning to address the needs of the project. NDOT has communicated extensively with the public regarding the development of the project. Chapter 4 of the Final EIS provides information on the public involvement meeting, local stakeholder meetings, and agency coordination NDOT conducted throughout the study phase.

The project will be constructed in five phases over 20 years starting in 2020. Each phase of the project will be complete before moving onto the next phase. This phasing prevents the entire area from being under construction at the same time. Only phase 1 (Spaghetti Bowl Xpress) will begin next year. NDOT will develop a construction plan to minimize impacts during each phase of the project. See the [Executive Summary](#) for a discussion of the timeframe for each phase of the project.

**Comment:** When will it be decided which alternative moves forward?

**Response:** The Record of Decision, which is attached to this Final EIS, documents the FHWA and NDOT decision that Alternative 2 will be carried forward into final design and construction. [Chapter 2](#) explains the process of identifying the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2).

**Comment:** Request information on the impacts of Alternative 2.

**Response:** [Chapter 3](#) describes the impacts of Alternative 2 along with the measures NDOT will complete to mitigate for those impacts.

**Comment:** Concern about dust and light during construction.

**Response:** NDOT will implement best management practices to minimize impacts to surrounding properties from dust emissions during construction. NDOT's contractor will comply with applicable dust-control requirements of the Washoe County Health District - Air Quality Management Division as necessary and will submit a Dust Mitigation Plan. Nighttime lighting during construction will be minimized or shielded at staging and construction areas to minimize light and glare to adjacent properties. See [Sections 3.5, Air Quality, and 3.7, Visual Character/Aesthetics](#), for more information about impacts and mitigation measures.

**Comment:** Where is NDOT getting \$2.5 billion dollars to fund the project?

**Response:** The project will be funded by a mix of state and federal funds. The cost of the project is spread out over many years. The first phase is already budgeted as part of the State Transportation Improvement Program.

**Comment:** What can be done to improve the sidewalks north of I-80 near 4th Street to make it safe for everyone using the area to walk and play for the kids? From El Rancho Drive to D Street going west to Field Street limited sidewalks. Field Street has no sidewalks to G street/ Ninth Street. The streets off the main streets have no sidewalks. (View Street, E Street, Maxine Circle, Varnum Circle and Ball Circle). The route is used by school buses to and from the Boys and Girls Club. Traffic affects people living in the area. My main concerns are safety for the children playing in area. It does not meet needs of people using wheelchairs or just walking in the area.

**Response:** NDOT will provide sidewalks on local streets that need to be reconstructed as part of the project. Existing sidewalks in place today will remain as part of the project.

Currently, there are no plans to add additional sidewalks on local streets that are NOT reconstructed as part of this project however, NDOT will coordinate with the City of Sparks and RTC on planned pedestrian and bike improvements to incorporate them into Spaghetti Bowl Project design wherever practical.



# Public Involvement and Agency Coordination Prior to Draft EIS Approval

NDOT and FHWA have engaged in an extensive effort to inform, involve, and encourage feedback from the public and agencies about the Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction. The purpose of the coordination and outreach program is to make the Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction a long-term benefit to the community by seeking input from the public, businesses, local governments, and Indian tribes.

Outreach began in January 2017, when NDOT sent initial coordination letters to federal, state, and local agencies and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony to notify them NDOT and FHWA were initiating an EIS for the project.

[Appendix E, Community Involvement and Agency Coordination](#), contains detailed information regarding NDOT's community involvement and agency coordination efforts.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

NDOT held public meetings in April and September 2017. To encourage participation in the public meetings by all persons, the meetings were held at schools and community buildings that are within or adjacent to the study area, close to bus routes, easily accessible, and familiar to nearby residents. A public hearing **was held** in December 2018 following the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment.

### April 2017 Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings were held April 12 at Sparks Library and April 13 at Wooster High School in Reno. Prior to the meetings, NDOT mailed 13,346 letters, in English and Spanish, to businesses and residents within one-quarter mile of the study area, and to local, regional, federal, and tribal agencies. Approximately 135 people attended the two April meetings. A Spanish translator and court reporter were present at both meetings.

NDOT and FHWA have discussed the Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction at more than 200 meetings with neighborhood, tribal, community, environmental, business, minority, and other stakeholder groups since early 2017. Open house public involvement meetings were held in April and September 2017. A public hearing **was held** December 12, 2018, following the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment.



### September 2017 Preliminary Alternatives Meetings

Public information meetings to present the preliminary Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction alternatives were held September 13 at Traner Middle School in Reno and September 14 at City of Sparks Council Chambers. Prior to the meetings, NDOT mailed 13,432 notifications of the meeting, in English and Spanish, to businesses and residents within one-quarter mile of the study area. A Spanish translator and court reporter were present at both meetings. The Reno meeting was attended by 53 people and the Sparks meeting was attended by 30 people (excluding the project team). Presentations at both meetings were broadcast on Facebook Live, with a total of 2,061 views for both nights.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE OUTREACH

NDOT created an Environmental Justice Outreach Plan to involve minority and low-income populations in the study process. Detailed information about outreach to environmental justice populations can be found in [Appendix E, Community Involvement and Agency Coordination](#), and the [Final EIS Section 3.3, Environmental Justice](#).

Based on census data and community outreach, Spanish is the primary language other than English in the study area. Printed project materials including public meeting handouts were translated to Spanish. A Spanish translator was available at the public meetings. NDOT also used social and print media sources to help reach the Latino populations and provide project information.

# BUSINESSES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

NDOT met individually with 39 businesses and multiple trade organizations, chambers of commerce, citizen advisory groups, and other organizations to discuss their specific interests in the project.

## RENO-SPARKS INDIAN COLONY

NDOT held meetings at least monthly with the RSIC management staff, the Tribal Council, or the Colony community beginning in March 2017. NDOT held meetings for the Colony residents on September 18, 2017, and September 19, 2018, at the Colony Community Center in Reno. Nearly 100 residents attended the meetings.

In November and December 2017, the Tribal Council distributed a survey to Colony members, residents, and employees to collect their concerns about the project and provided the survey results to NDOT.

## PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website is hosted by NDOT at <http://ndotspaghettibowl.com/>. The website includes a project overview, schedule, alternatives, environmental review documents, frequently asked questions, and contact information.



# AGENCY COORDINATION

NDOT and FHWA contacted federal, tribal, state, and local agencies with a direct interest in the project or special expertise to involve them in the project. On March 22, 2017, NDOT and FHWA sent formal invitations to each agency to either be a cooperating or a participating agency. FHWA and NDOT held a scoping meeting for the invited cooperating and participating agencies on April 12, 2017, at the Sparks Library.

NDOT held 92 separate meetings with tribal, local, state, and federal agencies, City Council members, and county commissioners to discuss specific issues and Spaghetti Bowl reconstruction alternatives. Meetings held prior to June 15, 2017, were primarily to obtain input on the need for the project and scoping. Meetings after that date primarily focused on the alternatives. Table 5-2 of Appendix E provides detailed information about these agency meetings. The following is a list of agencies that met with the project team and the frequency of those meetings:

## City and County Agencies and Officials

- City of Reno – 7 meetings
- City of Reno Parks Department – 2 meetings
- City of Sparks – 6 meetings
- City of Sparks Community Advisory Committee – 1 meeting
- Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County – 4 meetings
- Reno City Council Members – 10 meetings
- Reno Fire Department – 1 meeting
- Reno Housing Authority – 3 meetings
- Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve – 1 meeting
- Reno Police Department – 1 meeting
- Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority – 11 meetings
- Sparks City Council Members – 4 meetings
- Sparks Fire Department – 1 meeting
- Sparks Police Department – 1 meeting
- Truckee Meadows Flood Management Authority – 1 meeting
- Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency – 3 meetings
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority – 1 meeting
- Washoe County – 2 meetings
- Washoe County Commissioners – 6 meetings
- Washoe County School District – 1 meeting
- Washoe County Sheriff's Office – 1 meeting



## State Agencies and Officials

- Governor's Office – 2 meetings
- Lt. Governor's Office – 1 meeting
- Nevada Air National Guard – 1 meeting
- Nevada Division of Environmental Protection – 1 meeting
- Nevada Department of Wildlife – 1 meeting
- Nevada Highway Patrol – 1 meeting
- State Transportation Board – 5 meetings
- University of Nevada, Reno – 3 meetings
- University of Nevada, Reno, Early Head Start Program – 1 meeting

## Federal Agencies

- Bureau of Indian Affairs – 1 meeting
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – 2 meetings
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – 1 meeting

## Tribal Consultation

- Pyramid Lake Piute Tribe – 2 meetings
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony – over 20 meetings
- Washoe Tribe of Northern California – 5 meetings

# List of Recipients to Whom Notice of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision was Sent

<b>Native American Tribes</b>	U.S. Department of the Interior – Fish and Wildlife Service	Nevada Department of Public Safety – Office of Traffic Safety
Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe	U.S. Department of the Interior – National Park Service	Nevada Department of Transportation – Board of Directors
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony	U.S. Department of the Interior – Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance	Nevada Department of Wildlife
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California	U.S. Department of the Interior – United States Geological Survey	University of Nevada, Reno
<b>Federal Agencies</b>	U.S. Department of Transportation (Federal Aviation Administration)	<b>Regional/Local Units of Government</b>
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Reno Regulatory Office	U.S. Department of Transportation (Federal Railroad Administration)	Carson-Truckee Water Conservancy District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Sacramento District Office	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 9	City of Reno
U.S. Coast Guard	<b>State Agencies</b>	City of Reno City Council
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Services	Nevada Department of Administration – State Library, Archives, and Public Records	City of Sparks
U.S. Department of Agriculture – United States Forest Service	Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Division of Environmental Protection	City of Sparks City Council
U.S. Department of Energy – Nevada Site Office	Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Division of State Lands/Nevada State Clearinghouse	Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County
U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency	Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Division of Water Resources	Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County – Board Members
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Reno Field Office	Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Nevada Natural Heritage Program	Reno Housing Authority
U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs	Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – State Historic Preservation Office	Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority
U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management		Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Reclamation		Truckee River Flood Management Authority
		Washoe County
		Washoe County Commission

**Other Interested Parties**

Nevada Chapter of American General Contractors

Nevada Environmental Coalition Inc.

NV Energy

Sierra Club – Great Basin Group

Sierra Club – Toiyabe Chapter

**Federal/State/Local Officials**

Nevada Governor **Steve Sisolak**

Nevada Lieutenant Governor **Kate Marshall**

Nevada State Controller **Catherine Byrne**

U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto

U.S. Senator **Jacky Rosen**

U.S. Representative Mark Amodei

Nevada State Senator Heidi Gansert

**Nevada State Senator Ira Hansen**

Nevada State Senator Ben Keickhefer

Nevada State Senator Julia Ratti

Nevada State Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson

Nevada State Assemblyman Skip Daly

**Nevada State Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen**

**Nevada State Assemblyman Al Kramer**

Nevada State Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner

**Nevada State Assemblywoman Sarah Peters**

Nevada State Assemblyman **Greg Smith**

Nevada State Assemblywoman Jill Tolles

**Repositories**

NDOT District 2 Office

Downtown Reno Library

Duncan/Traner Community Library

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Library

Senior Center Community Library

Sierra View Library

Sparks Library

In addition to the agencies and officials noted above, notice of the availability of the **Final** EIS was sent to over 13,000 residents located within one-quarter mile of the study area.

