



## Frequently Asked Questions

*Updated August 2020*

*From August 24 to September 22, 2020, NDOT is seeking public input on all project elements. To view more detailed information and provide feedback, please visit [www.ndotdap.com](http://www.ndotdap.com).*

### **Where is the Downtown Access Project (DAP)?**

- I-515/US 95, from Mojave Road (east of Eastern Ave) to Rancho Drive

### **What is the DAP?**

- DAP is the long-term solution to address the aging bridge infrastructure, improve safety, reduce congestion between on/off ramps, add freeway capacity and HOV access to Downtown Las Vegas, and meet the community needs in this corridor.

### **Why is the DAP needed?**

- This portion of I-515/US 95 consists of two separate bridges (viaducts) that are 1.6 miles in length. The bridges are getting older, and a long-term solution is needed.
- The volume of cars continues to increase in the Las Vegas Valley, reducing travel time reliability.
- The merging and weaving between interchanges are a safety issue and crashes have increased above the state average over the last three years.

### **Which agencies are involved in project development?**

- The Nevada Department of Transportation is the lead agency.
- The Federal Highway Administration provides project oversight.
- The City of Las Vegas is a key partner in project development, given that the project is located within City limits.

### **What's the timing of this project?**

- The project is estimated to be 10-13 years in total. NDOT is just starting the necessary environmental studies to begin the project. The following tasks will be pursued: environmental studies (approximately 3 years), final design and right-of-way acquisitions (approximately 4 years), and construction (4-5 years).

### **Is the project funded?**

- A portion of the environmental study is funded.
- Final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction are not funded yet.

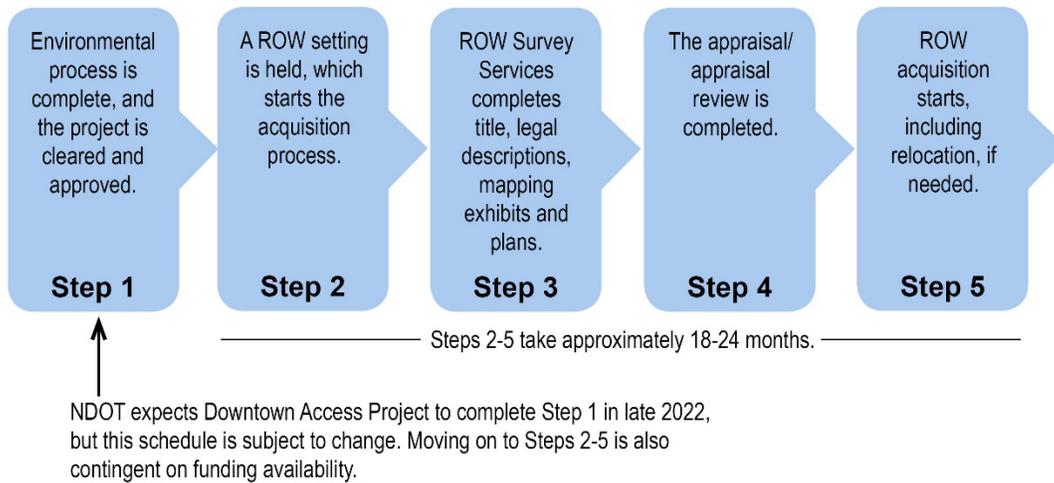
### **What occurs during the environmental studies?**

- FHWA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process allows transportation officials to make project decisions that balance engineering and transportation needs with social, economic, and natural environmental factors. During the process, a wide range of partners including the public, businesses, interest groups, and agencies at all levels of government, provide input into the project and environmental decisions.

- As part of the environmental process, NDOT will evaluate potential alternatives, perform environmental studies, and receive public and stakeholder input. The preferred alternative will be determined at the end of the environmental process.

**Will NDOT have to acquire right-of-way (ROW) to build this project?**

- Yes, some ROW acquisitions will be required. How much and where will be determined once a preferred alternative is selected and further design is completed. Right-of-way acquisitions will not be pursued until the environmental studies have been completed, which is scheduled for late 2022 or early 2023. See the graphic below illustrating NDOT’s process for acquisition.



**How will my travel routes change as a result of this project?**

- The final design depends on the preferred alternative selected towards the end of the environmental phase.
- All entry/exit points to/from I-515 will be maintained. Two new access points are proposed – High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) interchanges at City Parkway and Maryland Parkway.
- Regardless of alternative selected, NDOT is looking at permanently closing some of the surface streets that currently go under I-515. These include 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>. Some locations may be converted to pedestrian and bike access only. NDOT wants your feedback on these proposed permanent closures.

**Which surface streets are proposed for permanent closure?**

7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> streets

**Which surface streets are proposed for bike/pedestrian access only?**

15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> streets

**Why does NDOT have to permanently close surface streets?**

NDOT understands that permanently closing streets is a difficult decision. We are proposing the permanent closure of some local streets for the following reasons:

1. Life-Cycle Costs: Replacing the 1.6-miles of bridge every 60-70 years is an expense of \$750 million, without construction cost escalation. By not reconstructing the 1.6-mile bridge, NDOT is saving hundreds of millions of dollars.
2. Maintenance Costs: Bridges need to be inspected every 2 years, require periodic general maintenance every 5 years, and an in-depth maintenance every 20 years. These maintenance

costs on 1.6 miles of continuous bridges become expensive. For example, NDOT is currently spending \$30 million to rehabilitate this 1.6 miles of bridge to extend the service life by 10-15 years.

3. **Safety:** There have been a few accidents where a large truck or cement truck crashed and went through the barrier rail, fell off the bridge, and landed adjacent to residential areas on either side of the freeway. Placing the freeway on earthen fill and reducing the frequency and length of bridges will greatly reduce this safety concern.
4. **Traffic Volumes and Traffic Safety:** NDOT has determined the local streets proposed for permanent closure have low traffic usage. NDOT has performed an initial traffic study that indicates traffic using these local streets can safely re-distribute to the major streets of Las Vegas Boulevard, 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Maryland Parkway, Bruce Street, and Eastern Avenue without significant rerouting or additional drive time.
5. **Pedestrian Traffic:** We understand the importance of pedestrian traffic in the area. The permanent closure of these streets will cause pedestrians to slightly re-route to a location where they can cross the interstate. NDOT has proposed pedestrian/bike paths adjacent to the interstate to facilitate this movement in addition to two new pedestrian/bike crossings at 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> streets in place of the vehicular crossings.

NDOT is anxious to receive your feedback on this topic and modify the current proposed permanent closures based on your input and what fits the community.

#### **Will the public have any say in what happens?**

- Yes, NDOT will be seeking public input, as part of the environmental process.
- The first opportunity for the public to provide feedback is the virtual public meeting occurring from August 24 to September 22, 2020. Information available at [www.ndotdap.com](http://www.ndotdap.com).
- Two additional opportunities for public input will occur before the end of the environmental process in late 2022. Sign up for project updates at [www.ndotdap.com](http://www.ndotdap.com) to stay informed.

#### **Will there be multilingual staff to communicate with residents and businesses?**

- Yes, our team can communicate with you in Spanish, and all materials are provided in English and Spanish.

#### **How can the public stay up to date on what's happening with the project?**

- Email us at [info@ndotdap.com](mailto:info@ndotdap.com) to be added to our email list or sign up on our website at [www.ndotdap.com](http://www.ndotdap.com)

#### **Why is NDOT proposing to extend the HOV system onto this stretch of I-515?**

- Expanding the HOV system and improving connectivity to the surface streets encourages usage.
- Two HOV interchanges with direct access to City Parkway and Maryland Parkway (from the center lanes of the freeway) will provide better connectivity and access into and out of downtown.

#### **Does NDOT have any other projects planned for this area?**

The graphic below depicts other projects planned for the I-515 corridor. More details can be found on NDOT's website at <https://www.nevadadot.com/projects-programs/programs-studies>.

