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Welcome to the Downtown Access Project Virtual Public Meeting!

¡Bienvenido a la reunión pública virtual del proyecto Downtown Access!

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This virtual public information meeting will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week from August 24-September 22, 2020.

Kristina Swallow, NDOT Director



Thank you for participating in our virtual public meeting!

How to navigate:

- Click on the arrows on the right side of your screen.
- Use the navigation bar at the left of your screen to revisit any part of the meeting.

How to participate:

- Click through all 25 slides to learn more about the project.
- While we have developed three alternatives, we want your input to guide us as we move into the next phase of this project.
- Submit comments or questions on specific elements of the project by clicking the "Comment" button at the bottom right of each slide.



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The information you provide becomes a public record subject to disclosure (NRS 239.0107)





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Project Overview

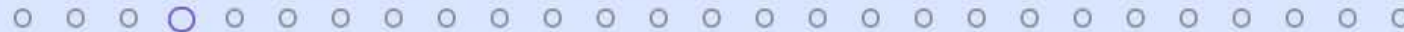
The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) has initiated an environmental study to evaluate alternatives to improve safety and travel time reliability on Interstate 515 between Rancho Drive and Mojave Road in Clark County, Nevada.

All information presented is preliminary and subject to change.



Comment

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Project Goals

- To improve safety and operations
- To remedy aging infrastructure
- To improve downtown access



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What is an auxiliary lane? A lane that is added between interchanges to give drivers more room to speed up and slow down when getting on or off the freeway.

Other NDOT Planned Projects in the Area

As shown on this map, NDOT has several projects under development along the I-515 corridor between I-15 and Flamingo Road. For more information on other NDOT projects, please visit <https://www.nevadadot.com/projects-programs>.

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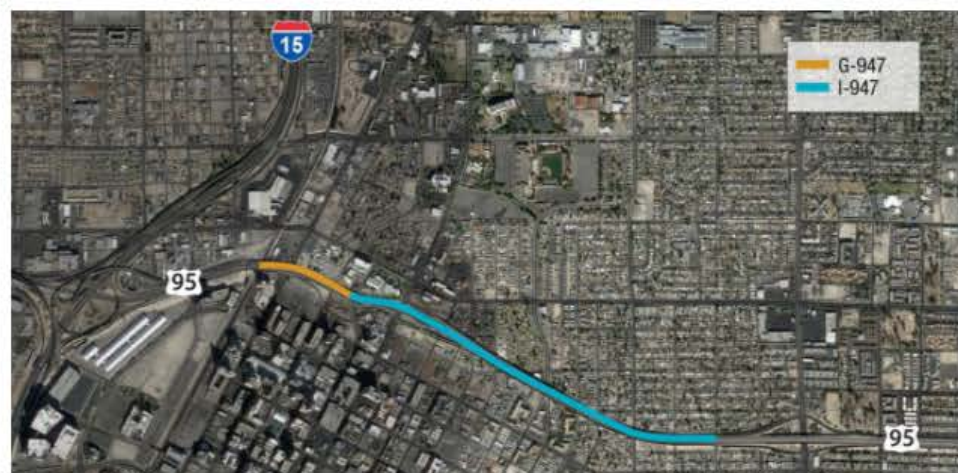
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Purpose and Need

NDOT is looking for a long-term solution to address the aging infrastructure, improve safety, and improve travel time reliability while addressing future travel demand in this corridor.

Address Aging Infrastructure



I-15 in this area is on a viaduct that consists of two older bridges. The G-947 bridge is 52 years old (built in 1968) and extends from the UPRR crossing to 4th Street. The I-947 bridge is 40 years old (built in 1980) and extends from 4th Street to 21st Street.



Signs of wear include spalling, cracking, and water intrusion.

[Comment](#)



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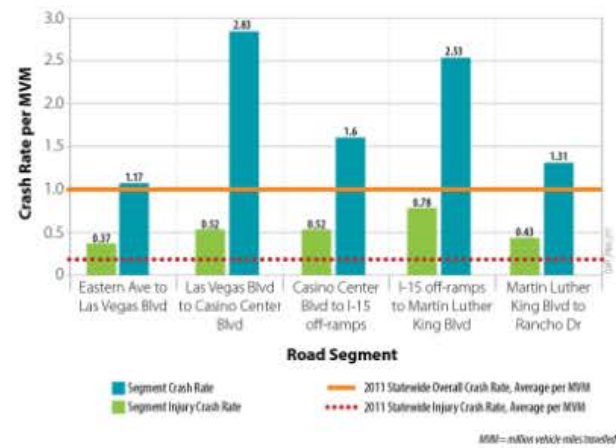
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Purpose and Need (continued)

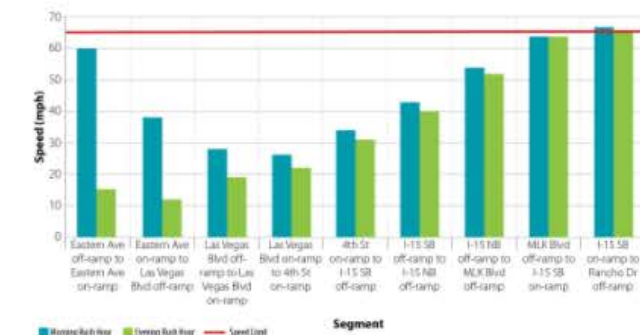
Improve Safety and Operations



This segment of freeway has a higher crash rate and a higher injury crash rate than the statewide average.



Interchanges spaced too close together create merging and weaving, resulting in more crashes.



During morning and evening rush hour, the speed traveled in this corridor is often below 30 mph.

[Comment](#)

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Proposed Improvements

NDOT has developed three design alternatives. The following improvements are included in all three alternatives. Click through the following slides for more detail.

- Replace or remove the 1.6-mile viaduct
- Fix ramp spacing with ramp braiding to/from I-15 and I-515
- Add freeway capacity
- Construct new High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) interchanges at City Parkway and Maryland Parkway
- Enhance bicycle/pedestrian mobility



Comment

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Fix Ramp Spacing with Ramp Braiding to/from I-15 and I-515 Southbound

Ramp braiding keeps ramp traffic separate from mainline freeway traffic to improve travel time. The proposed ramp braiding maintains the same access to surface streets as the mainline freeway.



Currently, traffic from I-15 NB and I-15 SB merges with I-515 SB traffic near City Parkway, creating a bottleneck as traffic merges and weaves to enter or exit the freeway.



Ramp braiding will move the merge point of the I-15 ramp traffic near Maryland Parkway.

Comment

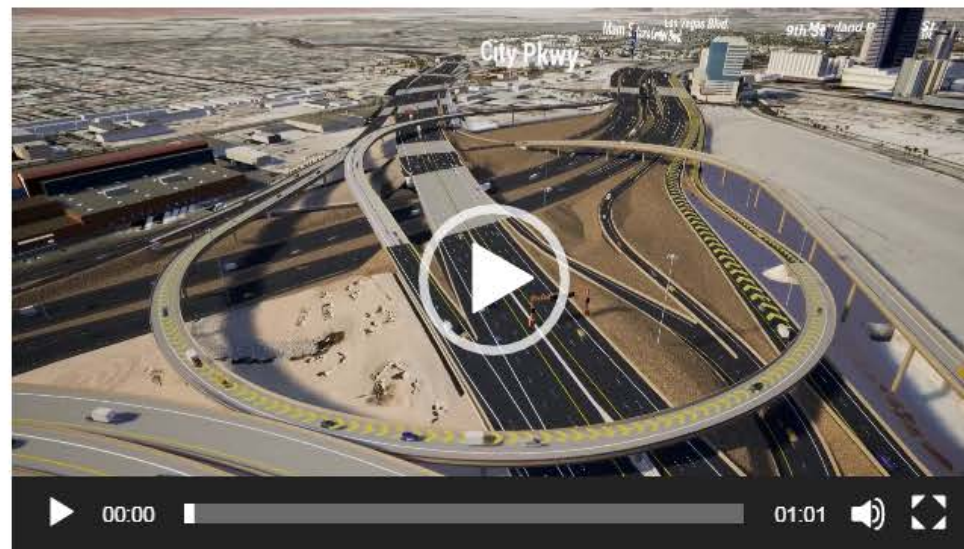


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Simulation of Southbound Ramp Braiding

Comment





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Fix Ramp Spacing with Ramp Braiding to/from I-15 and I-515 Northbound



Currently, traffic on I-515 NB exiting to I-15 SB competes with the Casino Center Blvd on-ramp entering the freeway.



This braided ramp will move the decision point for access to I-15 SB east of Las Vegas Blvd. All existing access to I-15 SB will be maintained.

[Comment](#)

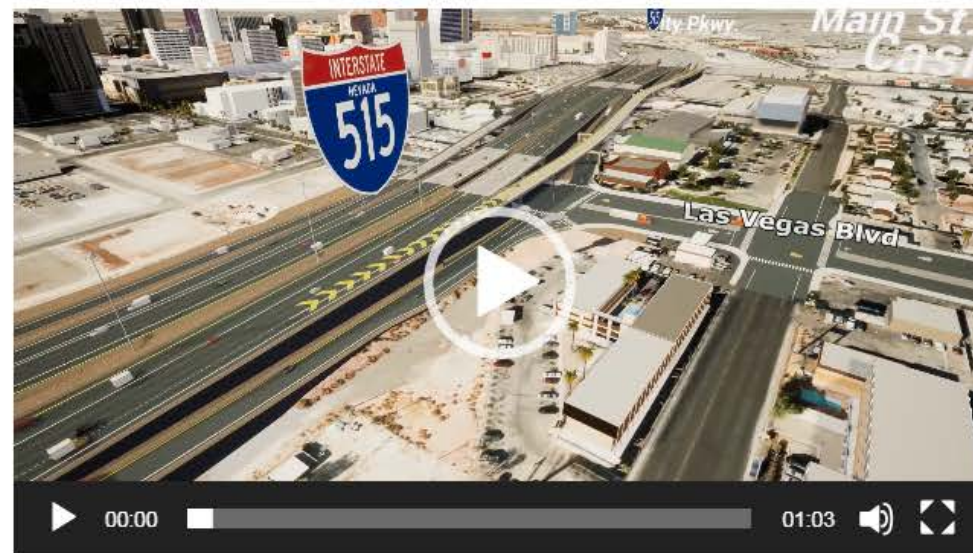
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Simulation of Northbound Ramp Braiding

Comment





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Add Freeway Capacity



Currently, I-515 has four lanes (three lanes and one auxiliary lane) in each direction.



In the proposed configuration, I-515 will have six lanes (four lanes, the auxiliary lane, and an HOV lane) in each direction.

[Comment](#)



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New High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Interchanges



Two new HOV interchanges – one at City Parkway and one at Maryland Parkway. Adding these proposed access points on I-515 will provide five points of access for traffic entering and exiting the downtown area. Nevada's rules for HOV usage can be found on the [NDOT HOV page](#).

Comment



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Bicycle/Pedestrian Mobility



Each of the alternatives also includes bike and pedestrian mobility improvements with freeway crossings at 21st and 15th Streets and a trail adjacent to the freeway from Las Vegas Boulevard to Eastern Avenue.

[Comment](#)



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Design Alternatives

Recess Freeway

Demolish existing bridges and put freeway into a trench

1

Replace Bridge Structures – South Alignment

Demolish existing bridges and build a wider freeway at similar height

2

Replace Bridge Structures – North Alignment

Demolish existing bridges and build a wider freeway at similar height

3

No Build

Don't improve the freeway beyond the interim improvements

4

Comment





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Alternative 1: Recess Freeway

In this alternative, the existing bridges are demolished and the freeway is recessed below grade with major cross streets and new pedestrian facilities crossing over the freeway.



[A high resolution pdf version of this image can be downloaded here.](#)



Comment

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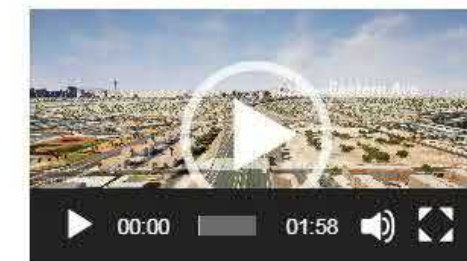
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Alternative 2: Replace Bridge Structures – Southern Alignment

In this alternative, the existing bridges are demolished and the freeway is rebuilt at a similar height, but wider to accommodate additional capacity. The proposed southern alignment takes a path through the downtown area that adjusts the freeway slightly to the south of its existing location. The freeway alignment east of Las Vegas Boulevard is essentially the same as the northern alternative.”



Comment

[A high resolution pdf version of this image can be downloaded here.](#)

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Alternative 3: Replace Bridge Structures – Northern Alignment

In this alternative, the existing bridges are demolished and the freeway is rebuilt at a similar height, but wider to accommodate additional capacity. The proposed northern alignment takes a path through downtown that adjusts the freeway slightly to the north of its existing location. The freeway alignment east of Las Vegas Boulevard is essentially the same as the southern alternative.



Comment

[A high resolution pdf version of this image can be downloaded here.](#)

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Alternative Comparison

The interactive map below allows you to view the corridor from six different vantage points. In each area, you can see the existing freeway condition and the three proposed design alternatives by using the buttons on the right hand side. For the best viewing experience of this interactive map, click the blue Full Screen button. To exit the full screen mode, press the Esc key. If the interactive map is not loading correctly, [please try this link](#).

Comment

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FullScreen





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Permanent Street Closures

As noted earlier, I-515 is on a bridge for most of this corridor, which allows most surface streets to cross underneath the freeway. Today, 12 surface streets cross under the freeway between Las Vegas Boulevard and Eastern Avenue. **As part of this project, NDOT may permanently close 7 of these streets under I-515.** Two of these will become bike/pedestrian access only.

Which streets may be permanently closed? 7th, 8th, 10th, 14th, 15th, 19th, and 21st

Which streets may become bike/pedestrian access only? 15th and 21st

Why? In some of the design alternatives, the freeway is either recessed or placed on fill (dirt embankment), which eliminates the 1.6-mile long bridge. Traffic analysis shows that the arterial streets proposed for permanent closure carry a small volume of traffic and can be rerouted to larger streets without a significant increase in congestion on those streets. For instance, the proposed closure of 7th and 8th Streets can reroute to Las Vegas Boulevard and 9th Street. With smaller volume traffic streets rerouting to larger streets without significant impact, NDOT can save the construction and maintenance cost of seven bridges. The proposed bike and pedestrian crossings at 15th and 21st is a recognition that additional access across the freeway is needed for the mobility of foot traffic and bike access.



Please click on the images to see full screen.

While these proposed permanent street closures make sense from a traffic operations perspective, we need to hear from you! Please let us know how these proposed closures will impact you by clicking the comment button below.

Comment



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Preliminary Risks

This early in the project development process, there are many risks still to be managed. This is a preliminary list of risks shared by all three alternatives and unique to each alternative.

Shared Risks

- Right-of-Way Required
- Utilities
- Realignment of Regional Flood Control Facilities
- Maintenance of Traffic During Construction

Unique Risks

Alternative 1: Recessed

- Retaining Walls
- Groundwater
- Realignment of sewer system
- Union Pacific Railroad

Alternative 2: South Alignment

- Parking Garages
- Bridges/Foundations

Alternative 3: North Alignment

- Fire Station/Rec Center
- Bridges/Foundations



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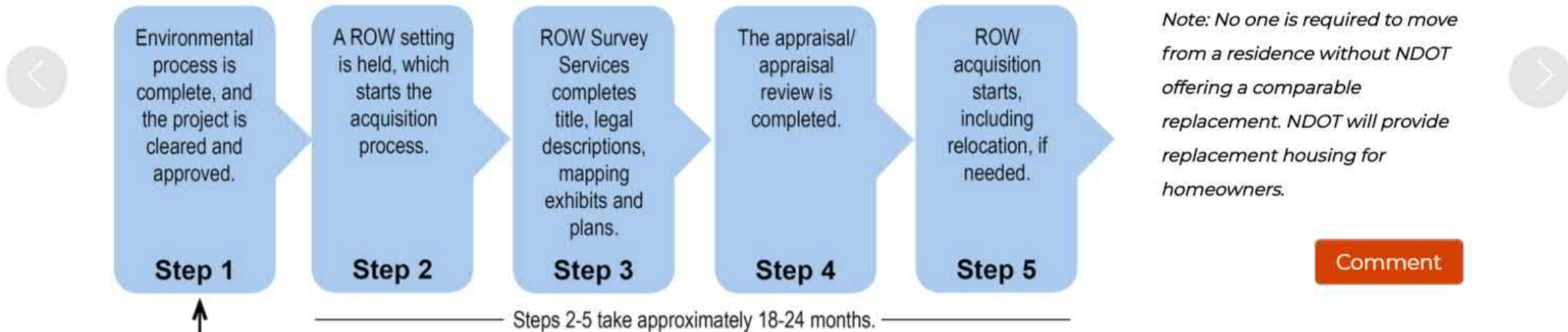
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Right-of-Way Acquisition

Right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions, if necessary, will not be considered until after the NEPA (environmental) process is complete and design is completed to a level adequate to establish right-of-way needs. The NEPA process is just beginning and it, alone, will take two years to complete. NDOT is at a preliminary stage of design. Right-of-way needs will not be established until after 2022-2023 at the earliest. Property owners will be offered just compensation for any rights being acquired. All acquisition and relocation activities must be in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act (1970). Below are the steps that NDOT is required to complete during the right-of-way acquisition process and may only take place after the NEPA process is complete and property owners have been notified.



NDOT expects Downtown Access Project to complete Step 1 in late 2022, but this schedule is subject to change. Moving on to Steps 2-5 is also contingent on funding availability.



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Project Schedule

We're currently focused on the environmental phase, which will take us into late 2022. At the end of this phase, the preferred alternative will be known.

Timing of the remaining phases is subject to funding availability. *Now is the time for residents and businesses in the area to suggest other ideas.*



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Community Input

As noted throughout these slides, your input is critical at this point in the project development process. You can revisit any of the slides and provide additional comments as needed. All input from this meeting will be reviewed and considered.

In the next two years, as the environmental phase moves forward, we will have two additional opportunities for community input.

Please share this presentation with your friends and neighbors! Copy and paste this link into your social media channels or to send in an email: www.ndotdap.com.

Comment





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Stay Informed

Thank you for taking the time to participate in our virtual public information meeting! Here's how you can stay informed as the project moves forward. *If you signed in for this meeting, you will automatically be added to our email list. For more information on the Downtown Access Project, please visit our main website.*



Our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be updated based on comments and questions received.

FAQs



Follow the conversation on Facebook and Twitter (@nevadadot) using #DowntownAccessLV!



Comment

✕

Name

Email (required) *

Subject (required) *

Please choose one

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