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4.0 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Pyramid Highway/US 395 Connection Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process involved an extensive public and agency involvement program, with the goal to provide numerous opportunities for interested parties to participate in and contribute to the EIS process. The intent was to solicit information, ideas, and opinions from the public and public agencies. This was accomplished by providing these stakeholders opportunities for participation, contribution, and education within the EIS process. Comments and input received as part of this outreach helped identify project issues, develop and evaluate alternatives, and conduct the impact analysis used in the Draft EIS.

This chapter presents the agency and public involvement activities undertaken for this project. Appendix A Agency Coordination contains copies of agency correspondence.

4.2 AGENCY COORDINATION

4.2.1 Lead Agencies

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the federal lead agency for this project and is responsible for conducting the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Washoe Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) are joint local Lead Agencies and assist in preparation of the environmental analysis and documentation in accordance with Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

FHWA, NDOT, and RTC conducted agency coordination throughout the process to ensure a timely flow of project information among the federal, state, and local agencies involved in the EIS and to ensure necessary interaction with and awareness of public issues and concerns identified during public involvement activities. The Study team conducted the agency coordination as outlined in the Coordination Plan prepared for the project, which is describe in Section 4.2.3 Coordination Plan. This section discusses the agency coordination activities conducted for this project.

4.2.2 Letters of Intent

In March 2008, NDOT sent letters of intent to project stakeholders to announce preparation of an EIS for this project. The letter, included in Appendix A Agency Coordination, provided a brief project description, solicited comments concerning the project, and announced the April 15, 2008, public scoping meeting described in Section 4.3.4 Public Meetings/Open Houses/Workshops. The letters were sent to 55 representatives of the following stakeholder organizations:
4.2.3 **Coordination Plan**

The Coordination Plan defined the roles of the joint Lead Agencies, cooperating agencies, and participating agencies, described expectations for those agencies, outlined the project’s milestone review process, and described the project’s issues resolution process. The Coordination Plan was provided to agencies and stakeholders invited to serve as cooperating and participating agencies, as identified in Section 4.2.4 *Cooperating and Participating Agencies*. 

- City of Reno
- City of Reno Fire Department
- City of Reno Police Department
- City of Sparks
- City of Sparks Fire Department
- City of Sparks Police Department
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)
- Nevada State Assembly
- Nevada State Senate
- Reno Tahoe Airport Authority
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- Truckee Carson Irrigation District
- Truckee Meadows Flood Control Project
- Truckee Meadows Water Authority
- U.S. Senate, Reno
- U.S. House of Representatives, Reno
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Washoe County
4.2.4 Cooperating and Participating Agencies

A cooperating agency, according to NEPA implementing regulations, is any federal agency, other than a lead agency, that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposed project or project alternative. A state or local agency of similar qualifications, or a Native American Tribe when the effects are on lands of tribal interest, may also become a cooperating agency. Cooperating agencies have a higher degree of authority, responsibility, and involvement in the environmental review process than participating agencies.

Participating agencies are those agencies with an interest in the project. Federal agencies invited to serve as participating agencies will be designated as such unless the invited agency responds in writing explaining why they are unable to serve in that role. Conversely, if a tribal government, state agency, or local agency declines or fails to respond to the invitation, they are not considered a participating agency.

The federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies, and Native American Tribe invited to serve as a cooperating and/or participating agency, and their role in this study, are summarized below:

- FHWA invited the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony to serve as participating agencies because the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony owns land adjacent to Pyramid Highway, and both accepted. When potential impacts to the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony property were identified as the EIS process progressed, FHWA invited the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and BIA to serve as cooperating agencies, and both agencies agreed to serve in that role. However, the reduced project footprint that resulted from design changes made after the Draft EIS would avoid direct impacts to the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony property. As a result, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and BIA were no longer required to serve as cooperating agencies, and FHWA informed them of this change.

- FHWA invited the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to serve as a cooperating and participating agency because the BLM owns and manages a considerable amount of land within the Study Area, and BLM accepted. BLM has participated in the NEPA and scoping process, and its staff members have served on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that is discussed in Section 4.2.6 Section 106 Consulting Parties.
- FHWA invited the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), City of Reno, City of Sparks, and Washoe County to serve as participating agencies, and they accepted.

- FHWA invited FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to serve as participating agencies. Although no response was received from these agencies, because they are federal agencies, they are serving as participating agencies for this project.

- The Fish and Wildlife Service-Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office was invited to serve as a participating agency, and they declined. However, the Fish and Wildlife Service provided wildlife data and consultation throughout the EIS process.

- The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and NDOW were invited to serve as participating agencies. No response was received from these state agencies; therefore, they are not serving in those roles for this study. However, the SHPO has participated in Section 106 consultation throughout the EIS process, and the NDOW was consulted regarding wildlife resources.

4.2.5 Agency Scoping Meeting

The scoping phase for this project began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the February 2008 Federal Register. Agencies and stakeholders invited to serve as participating agencies for the project also were invited to attend the April 16, 2008, agency scoping meeting held at NDOT offices in Sparks, Nevada. Representatives from NDOT, RTC, FHWA, BLM, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) attended the meeting.

Information presented and discussed at the agency scoping meeting included project goals and objectives, Study team organization and roles, roles of participating and cooperating agencies, project development process, project Purpose and Need, alternative screening methods, range of alternatives, and environmental resources information.

The environmental resources of concern identified at the meeting were as follows:

- The USFWS expressed concerns about direct and indirect effects to the Carson Wandering Skipper, including those related to induced growth, within the following areas:
  - Vista Boulevard around the Kiley Ranch development, just east of the 2008 Study Area.
- Winnemucca Ranch Road on BLM land west of Pyramid Highway.
- Other private lands within the 2008 Study Area.

- BLM:
  - All BLM lands are designated for recreation or open space. These lands may have some limitations if they are proposed for transportation.
  - There was public concern about reserving the BLM land as open space.

In response to the NOI, the EPA provided scoping comments in a letter dated March 31, 2008. Their comments included general guidance on development of a Purpose and Need statement, and noted that a full range of alternatives should be examined. They also noted that undeveloped areas in the project vicinity could contain ephemeral streams, washes, or other hydrologic features that may provide water quality, flood control, and ecological values. They stated that changes in hydrology, sediment transport, impervious surfaces, decreases in water quality, disruption of hydrological and ecological connectivity, and decreases in biodiversity and ecosystem stability should be addressed in the EIS. They also noted requirements under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and outlined recommendations for assessing impacts associated with indirect growth, cumulative impacts, air quality, environmental justice, historic and cultural resources, and biological resources.

### 4.2.6 Section 106 Consulting Parties

As part of the scoping process for this project, the Lead Agencies invited several agency and stakeholder representatives to participate as Section 106 consulting parties to identify any concerns regarding the potential effects of the proposed project on cultural resources. The SHPO, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, and Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California served as Section 106 consulting parties.

The Lead Agencies provided the Section 106 consulting parties the opportunity to comment on historic findings, impacts, and mitigation measures throughout the EIS process. Because it was determined through the Section 106 consultation process that the project would result in an adverse effect to historic resources, FHWA invited the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) to participate in the Section 106 consultation, and the ACHP declined). More information on Section 106 consultation is located in Section 3.17 Historic Preservation.

### 4.2.7 Technical Advisory Committee

The Study team established a TAC to guide the EIS process, disseminate information to their respective agencies, provide input on major study elements (Purpose and Need, alternatives development and screening), and provide input on technical issues. The TAC was one of the primary mechanisms used to obtain input at project milestones, per
the Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU requirement stated in Section 4.2.3 Coordination Plan. TAC members included representatives from cooperating and participating agencies (BLM, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Washoe County, and EPA) and their various departments, such as public works, planning, transportation, and traffic. Because the BIA was invited to serve as a cooperating agency later in the EIS process, they did not attend TAC meetings listed below. Although the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony became an official cooperating agency later in the EIS process as well, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony participated throughout the EIS process as owners of tribal land within the Study Area. Also, as noted earlier, because the design changes made after the Draft EIS would avoid direct impacts to the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony property, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and BIA were no longer required to serve as cooperating agencies.

The TAC meetings held to-date, discussion topics, and project milestones reviewed are summarized in Table 4-1 and documented in Appendix A Agency Coordination.

Table 4-1. TAC Meeting Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 21, 2008</td>
<td>• Reviewed the project’s goals (Purpose and Need)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overview of the project process and TAC responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reviewed and discussed problem statement and screening criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussed needs in the corridor to support Purpose and Need development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project milestone review: Purpose and Need, alternatives screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 17, 2008</td>
<td>• Reviewed existing traffic collection data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Update on the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan by RTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussion regarding the results of the April 2008 public scoping meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Milestone Review: Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources, Public and Agency scoping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 17, 2008</td>
<td>• Further reviewed and discussed Purpose and Need elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determined the range of project alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussed concept screening methodology and process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Milestone Review: Purpose and Need, Methodology for Alternatives Screening, Range of Alternatives, Environmental Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18, 2008</td>
<td>• Reviewed, discussed, and completed Level 1 concept screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussion of Section 4(f) issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15, 2009</td>
<td>• Overview of Level 2A screening and criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Preliminary traffic findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discussion of environmental justice, historic, and Section 4(f) issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identification of April 2009 public meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19, 2009</td>
<td>• Traffic and environmental analysis results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level 2A screening review and completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Update on environmental justice information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Socioeconomic Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Date</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| May 21, 2009       | • Engineering, traffic, and environmental analysis results  
                     • Level 2B screening review and completion  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental Resources                                                                 |
| July 16, 2009      | • Right-of-entry footprint review and determination  
                     • Update on environmental analysis  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Environmental Resources                                                                                   |
| October 15, 2009   | • Detailed review and preliminary screening of initial concept alternatives  
                     • Confirmed alternatives for detailed Level 3 screening analysis  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening                                                                                     |
| January 21, 2010   | • Traffic forecasting results for Level 3 screening  
                     • Interim Level 3 screening review  
                     • Environmental resources update  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental Resources                                                              |
| August 19, 2010    | • Project status, project phasing, project organizational structure, project progress, off alignment options and impacts, US 395 interchange alternatives review and screening, new alternative concept to connect Pyramid and Sun Valley Boulevard using connections to El Rancho and Rock Boulevard to distribute traffic, and environmental update  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental Resources                                                                 |
| February 17, 2011  | • Project status, Sun Valley Workshop overview, Level 3 screening recap, Level 3 traffic analysis, Sun Valley crossings and interchange alternatives, environmental update, consensus items  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening, Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources                                           |
| March 17, 2011     | • Supplemental alternatives screening, alternatives screening recap, outreach update, consensus items  
                     • Project Milestone Review: Alternatives Screening                                                                                     |
| February 19, 2014  | • Project progress update  
                     • Review of the build alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS  
                     • TAC input and endorsement on Freeway Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative to carry forward into the Final EIS                             |
| March 3, 2015      | • Project progress update  
                     • Results of traffic reanalysis  
                     • Validation of previous EIS decisions (e.g., purpose and need, alternatives screening) considering the lower forecasted traffic  
                     • Redesign of Alternative 3 (referred to as Revised Alternative 3 at the time)  
                     • Revised impacts under the Revised Alternative 3  
                     • Reconfirmed Revised Alternative 3 as the Preferred Alternative                                                                              |
| June 7, 2017       | • Project progress update/changes following Draft EIS  
                     • Redesign of all build alternatives, referred to as Arterial Alternatives  
                     • Revised impacts under the four Arterial Alternatives  
                     • Identification of the Preferred Alternative (Arterial Alternative 3)                                                                      |
4.2.8 **Individual Agency Meetings**

The Study team met with individual agencies throughout the EIS process to discuss various topics of concern to their particular agency, including several meetings with the EPA, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, BIA, BLM, Washoe County, City of Sparks, and the SHPO.

4.2.9 **Coordination with Other Local, State, and Federal Agencies**

Local, state, and federal agencies were contacted at various points in the process to collect technical information and discuss concerns regarding such issues as wetlands, wildlife, community resources, and city and county long-range plans. This included consultation with water resource agencies in the development of best management practices (BMPs) for the project. Agencies consulted include the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (regarding Truckee River diversions and wells), Washoe County Department of Water Resources (regarding wells and wellhead protection in the Study Area), and the Nevada Division of Water Resources (regarding mitigation to be employed for impacts to springs, streams, or groundwater). The Study team also consulted with the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection and local municipalities, including the City of Sparks, City of Reno, and Washoe County, to develop BMPs to address their concerns about compliance with the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (regarding roadway discharge).

Section 4.3.3 *Stakeholder Working Group* has additional information about local agency coordination.

4.3 **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS**

This section presents the public involvement activities undertaken during the EIS process for this project.

4.3.1 **Notice of Intent**

The Notice of Intent (NOI) is a formal, legal notice that an EIS will be prepared. FHWA published the NOI for this project in the *Federal Register* on February 29, 2008, which is included in Appendix B *Public Involvement*.

4.3.2 **Project Web Site**

The Study team established a project Web site (www.pyramidus395connection.com) to provide project information to the public, including project schedule, background, and alternatives analysis and results. The Web site also solicited input, announced public meetings, and provided public meeting summaries. In addition, a link to the project website can be found on the NDOT Web site.

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**Project Web Site**

The project Web site is used to announce availability of the Draft EIS and Final EIS, make the documents available for public review, and provide opportunities for public comments.
4.3.3 Stakeholder Working Group

The Study team formed a Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) comprised of various community group and local agency representatives to provide input to the Study, assist the Study team to better understand the community’s needs and interests, and serve as a community liaison to the Study team. The SWG also served as an additional mechanism to obtain input at project milestones, as required under Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU. The SWG met several times during the Study’s alternatives development phase. Local community groups and agencies invited to participate in the SWG are listed below:

- Desert Research Institute
- North Valley Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB)
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
- NV Energy
- Spanish Springs Citizen Advisory Board (CAB)
- Sun Valley CAB
- Sun Valley General Improvement District
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Washoe County Sherriff’s Office
- Washoe County Department of Regional Parks and Open Space

SWG meetings are summarized in Table 4-2 and documented in Appendix A Agency Coordination.

### Table 4-2. SWG Meetings Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date and Location</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 2008, Summit Christian Church, 7075 Pyramid Highway, Sparks, Nevada, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Provided project background; project overview and goals; Study team organization; overview of proposed Purpose and Need elements; NEPA process overview; and outline of SWG roles, protocols, and working agreements. Opportunity for comments and Q&amp;A provided. Thirteen people attended. <strong>Project Milestone Review:</strong> Purpose and Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28, 2008, Desert Research Institute, 2215 Raggio Parkway, Reno, NV, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Provided overview of the Level 1 Alternatives Development and Screening Process and obtained feedback regarding findings and recommendations prior to moving forward to next phase of analysis. Eleven people attended. <strong>Project Milestone Review:</strong> Alternatives Screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27, 2009, Spanish Springs Library, 7100A Pyramid Highway, Sparks, NV, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Provided overview of the Level 2A alternatives screening process and obtained feedback regarding findings and recommendations prior to moving forward with additional analysis. Five people attended. <strong>Project Milestone Review:</strong> Alternatives Screening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4-2. SWG Meetings Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date and Location</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| November 9, 2009, Spanish Springs Library, 7100A Pyramid Highway, Sparks, NV, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. | Reviewed and discussed design concepts and project status. Nine people attended.  
**Project Milestone Review:** Alternatives Screening |
| March 28, 2011, Spanish Springs Library, 7100A Pyramid Highway, Sparks, NV, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. | Reviewed and discussed Level 3 screening results and project status. Six people attended.  
**Project Milestone Review:** Alternatives Screening |

### 4.3.4 Public Meetings/Open Houses/Workshops

The purpose of public meetings, open houses and/or workshops is to allow participants to interact with planners, engineers, RTC, NDOT, FHWA, and other Study team members to obtain information about the project. The events allow individuals interested in the project to express their concerns and have questions answered. Public meetings held for this Study are summarized below. Additional information on public meeting summaries is contained in Appendix B *Public Involvement*. The RTC project contact identified in Section 4.3.7 *Project Contact* also has meeting materials for review.

The initial public scoping meeting was held on April 15, 2008, followed by subsequent public open houses and workshops held at various stages in the Study process. These meetings are described below. Please refer to Section 4.5 *Comments and Public Hearings on the Draft EIS* for a summary of public hearings held for the Draft EIS.

- **April 15, 2008 public scoping meeting.** Held at the Lazy 5 Community Center, 7100 Pyramid Highway, Sparks, Nevada, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Approximately 100 people attended. The scoping meeting provided background information, study goals, timeline, and an overview of the NEPA process. Also, the Study team solicited input on a range of possible alternatives and draft Purpose and Need elements that were presented. The meeting was held in an open house format with a formal presentation followed by an open comment and questions/answer period. Meeting attendees could provide comments by completing and submitting comment sheets or by providing verbal comments to the court reporter present at the meeting. A Spanish interpreter was present at the meeting to assist Spanish-speaking attendees with project information and to obtain their comments.

  The meeting was announced through e-mail notifications, one Reno Gazette-Journal newspaper notice, two Ahora! newspaper notices, and approximately 8,000 postcards mailed to property owners within or adjacent to the Study Area.

- Public input received during project scoping included:
  - Consider alternative modes—transit, specifically bus service was a common interest. Rail transit was also mentioned.
- Consider expanding study boundaries to consider alternatives northwest of the valley.
- Safety, specifically getting on and off the highway is a major concern.
- Concern about rapid development and the ability to plan ahead—control the growth.
- Congestion in general during the peak periods is a key concern.
- Signal timing along highway is frustrating.
- Location of the connection route—should it be further north?
- Timing of project—need something done now.

**March 4, 2009 public open house.** Held at the Lazy 5 Community Center, 7100 Pyramid Highway, Sparks, NV, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Approximately 75 people attended. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information on project progress, potential alternatives being considered (corresponding with Level 1 screening), and initial findings and recommendations; and to obtain public comment and answer questions prior to moving forward to next phase of analysis. The meeting was announced through e-mail notifications; five Reno Gazette-Journal newspaper and website notices; two Ahora! newspaper notices; Sparks Tribune newspaper notice; RTC press release; KOLO television “The Road Ahead” weekly news program interview; project, RTC, and NDOT websites; public postings at churches, libraries, community centers, and retail locations; and mailed notices.

**April 29, 2009 public open house.** Held at the Sun Valley Neighborhood Center, 115 West 6th Avenue, Sun Valley, Nevada, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Approximately 23 people attended. The meeting purpose was to provide information on project progress, potential alternatives being considered (corresponding with Level 2A screening), and initial findings and recommendations; and to obtain public comment and answer questions prior to moving forward to next phase of analysis. The location was selected to encourage increased involvement of Sun Valley residents. The meeting was announced through e-mail to county and state representatives, mail notice to local area churches, project website, RTC website, Highland Ranch Homeowner’s Association website, Highland Ranch Homeowner’s Association Newsletter, and public postings at area retail locations.

**January 19, 2011 Sun Valley community workshop.** Held at the Sun Valley Neighborhood Center, 115 West 6th Avenue, Sun Valley, Nevada, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Approximately 118 people attended. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information on the Study’s progress and potential connector alignment and interchange alternatives being considered within the Sun Valley area (corresponding with Level 2A screening), and to obtain vital public feedback prior to moving forward into the next phase of analysis. The meeting was announced through Sun
Valley GID bill inserts, direct mail to Sun Valley residents outside the GID service area, Sun Valley Voice newsletter notice, postings in various local businesses and public spaces, door hangers placed at Sierra Point Apartments, project website, RTC website, and Sun Valley website. Additionally, the Study team conducted pre-workshop business outreach between January 4 and 12, 2011, by meeting with Sun Valley area businesses to discuss the project and provide an opportunity to review alternatives and provide input. Section 1.3.5 Specialized Environmental Justice Outreach has more information about this meeting.

- **October 26, 2011 Sun Valley neighborhood meeting.** Held at Hobey’s Casino, 5195 Sun Valley Boulevard, Sun Valley, NV, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Approximately 112 people attended. The purpose of the meeting was to provide additional information on the connector alignment and interchange alternatives being considered within the Sun Valley area (corresponding with Level 3 screening), and to obtain vital public feedback prior to moving forward into the next phase of analysis. The meeting was announced through direct mail to potentially affected property owners, businesses, and residents (approximately 500), press release, e-mail blast, and project website, as well as distribution of English and Spanish language flyers.

- **January 31, 2012, Sun Valley neighborhood meeting.** Held at Truckee Meadows Community College, 7000 Dandini Boulevard, Reno, NV, from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Approximately 96 people attended. The purpose of the meeting was to respond to questions raised during the previous neighborhood meeting; provide additional, detailed information regarding the right-of-way acquisition process and the legal protections afforded to property owners; and provide an opportunity for additional questions and comments on the alternatives under consideration. Attendees provided written comments and questions via cards provided during the meeting, or provided verbal comments to the court reporter who was available at the meeting. The meeting was announced through direct mail to potentially affected property owners, businesses, and residents (approximately 500), press release, e-mail blast, and project website.

- **June 13, 2012, Spanish Springs open house.** Held at Yvonne Shaw Middle School, 600 Eagle Canyon Drive, Sparks from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Approximately 63 people attended. The purpose of the meeting was to provide additional information to Spanish Springs residents and business owners about the potential freeway alignments and interchange alternatives being considered within the Spanish Springs area. NDOT Right-of-Way Division personnel were present to provide information on the property acquisition process. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the Study team to obtain additional public feedback on the various alternatives. Attendees provided written comments and questions via cards provided during the meeting, verbal comments and questions during the question/answer session, or verbal comments to the court reporter present at the meeting. A Spanish language interpreter was also available. Handout materials were
provided in English and Spanish. The meeting was announced through bilingual (English/Spanish) public notices distributed by direct mail, local agencies and elected officials, email blast, project and RTC websites, and public notices posted at locations within the project corridor, including Scolari’s, Oasis Mobile Estates, Blue Gem Estates, Spanish Springs Library, Save Mart, and 7-Eleven.

### 4.3.5 Small Group Meetings

In addition to public meetings, several meetings were held to obtain input and provide more focused project information to smaller groups and organizations, as summarized in Table 4-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, Meeting, Location</th>
<th>Meeting Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 26, 2009, Wedekind Road Neighborhood Outreach, RTC Offices</td>
<td>• Met with residents from the Wedekind Road area at their request to discuss concerns and answer questions regarding alternatives under consideration that would potentially impact their neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 14, 2009, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) and Desert Research Institute (DRI) Meeting, Desert Research Institute</td>
<td>• Reviewed and discussed design concepts with TMCC/DRI facilities representatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19, 2009, Tanamera Development/Iratcabal Properties</td>
<td>• Reviewed and discussed design concepts with Tanamera Development representatives and legal representative for Iratcabal property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12, 2009, Wingfield Nevada Group, Wingfield Nevada Group Offices</td>
<td>• Reviewed and discussed design concepts with Lazy 8 Casino Resort developers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 12, 2010, Desert Research Institute meeting, RTC Offices</td>
<td>• DRI Master Plan coordination meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 8, 2010, Desert Research Institute meeting, Desert Research Institute</td>
<td>• Design concept review and Study team familiarization with DRI development plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12, 2010, TMCC and Washoe County Sheriff, NDOT offices</td>
<td>• Project process and alternatives overview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31, 2010, Special meeting with Sun Valley Residents and Washoe County Commissioner Weber, RTC Offices</td>
<td>• Meeting held at the request of Commissioner Weber and Sun Valley residents to discuss Sun Valley crossings and project status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19, 2010, Special meeting with Sun Valley Residents and Washoe County Commissioners Weber &amp; Jung, RTC Offices</td>
<td>• Meeting with Commissioners Weber and Jung and Sun Valley Residents to discuss Sun Valley crossings and project status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 11, 2011, City of Sparks Council Presentation, Sparks City Hall Council Chambers</td>
<td>• A brief presentation about the two Pyramid projects in the City of Sparks. Lee Gibson of RTC provided an update on this Study, including project history, alternatives moving forward, public involvement conducted, and next steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14, 2011, Golden Valley Homeowner's Association, Raleys Community Room in the Golden Valley Raleys</td>
<td>• A presentation at their regular meeting to provide an overview of the project scope and schedule, including the benefits and impacts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4-3. Small Group Meetings Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, Meeting, Location</th>
<th>Meeting Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 14, 2014, City of Sparks City Council</td>
<td>• Presented a project status update and solicit comments on the Preferred Alternative 3 to carry forward in the Final EIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 22, 2014, Washoe County Commission Presentation</td>
<td>• Presented a project status update and solicit comments on the Preferred Alternative 3 to carry forward in the Final EIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26, 2014, Washoe County Commission Presentation</td>
<td>• Presented a project status update and solicit comments on the Preferred Alternative 3 to carry forward in the Final EIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2, 2014, Washoe County Planning Commission Presentation</td>
<td>• Summarized the project background, presented traffic reanalysis, validated the purpose and need and alternatives screening, and summarized the modified project design based on reduced traffic forecasts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 29, 2016, Spanish Springs Library</td>
<td>• Presented a project status update.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4 summarizes the Study team meetings with representatives of the Sun Valley General Improvement District (GID):

### Table 4-4. GID Meetings Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, Meeting</th>
<th>Meeting Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 11, 2010, Sun Valley GID</td>
<td>• Presented project status update and design concept review for Sun Valley GID and members of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 27, 2011, Sun Valley GID</td>
<td>• Presented project status update, review of connector alternative crossings through Sun Valley, overview of Sun Valley workshop and feedback received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 14, 2011, Sun Valley GID</td>
<td>• Brief presentation with project status update, review of connector alternative crossings through Sun Valley, and schedule for completing the Draft EIS and Final EIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11, 2013, Sun Valley GID</td>
<td>• Field trip of Alternative 3 (Ridge Alignment) with SVGID representatives to see the alignment’s visibility from the Sun Valley Community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 18, 2013, Sun Valley GID and Washoe County Commissioner</td>
<td>• Field trip of Alternative 3 (Ridge Alignment) with SVGID representatives and Washoe County Commissioner Jung to see the alignment’s visibility from the Sun Valley Community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-5 summarizes the Study team’s outreach to CABs:

### Table 4-5. CAB Outreach Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, Meeting</th>
<th>Meeting Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 11, 2009, Sun Valley CAB meeting</td>
<td>• Provided Sun Valley CAB members and general public in attendance with overview of project background, purpose, timeline, process, findings and recommendations, and next steps. Encouraged continued Sun Valley resident involvement and provided opportunity for comment submission and questions and answers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the meetings listed above, the Study team provided a project status update at the November 18, 2009 and March 2, 2011 monthly meetings of the RTC’s Citizen Advisory Committee, and presented a project status update and the initial proposed Preferred Alternative at their April 2, 2014 meeting.

### Specialized Environmental Justice Outreach

The Study team began outreach to Environmental Justice (EJ) populations during the initial scoping phase of the Study to ensure that the concerns of minority and low-income communities were considered, and that these groups had a voice in the EIS process. This allowed the Study team to begin working early on to avoid disproportionate adverse impacts to EJ populations.

Census data, other data sources, and field visits were used to identify minority and low-income populations in the Study Area. Local information sources included local neighborhood organizations, housing authorities, non-profit organizations, and community centers. Early in the process, the Study team contacted representatives from the following organizations:

- Catholic Community Services of Northern Nevada
- Washoe County Housing Authority (Reno)
• Sparks Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
• Sparks Citizens Advisory Committee
• Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce

The information obtained from these resources helped verify Census populations. These local contacts, based on their own familiarity with the area, provided additional information to more accurately identify EJ communities within the Study Area. Study team members also spoke with several managers of mobile home parks and discussed the project, their knowledge of the Study and involvement to date, and ways to participate.

The Study team monitored attendance at the initial public scoping meeting to check participation from EJ areas, which indicated that attendance from the Sun Valley community was sparse.

Because Sun Valley contains likely EJ populations and will likely experience project impacts, the Study team held specialized outreach meetings to more involve this community, as summarized below:

• **January 19, 2011, community workshop.** Held at the Sun Valley Neighborhood Center, 115 West 6th Avenue, Sun Valley, Nevada, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Approximately 118 people attended the workshop. Sandwiches and beverages were provided to attendees. The purpose of the workshop was to provide information on the study’s progress and potential connector alignment and interchange alternatives being considered within the Sun Valley area, and to obtain vital public feedback prior to moving forward into the next phase of analysis. The meeting was announced with bilingual (English/Spanish) public notices distributed as follows:
  * **Direct Mail.** Notification via Sun Valley GID billing inserts to all Sun Valley GID customers, supplemental direct mail notification distribution to Sun Valley residents outside of the Sun Valley GID service area, and door hanger meeting notification distributed to residents of Sierra Point Apartments in Sun Valley.
  * **Public Posting Locations.** Meeting notices were provided for posting and/or distribution at the Sun Valley GID, Sun Valley Neighborhood Center, Scolari’s Food & Drug, Rainbow Market, Dollar Loan Center, The House of Realty, Hobey’s Restaurant & Casino, Valley Jewelry & Loan, Local Publications, and The Sun Valley Voice (English language posting only).
  * **Pre-Workshop Outreach.** Study team representatives engaged in additional pre-workshop outreach activities to raise project awareness and encourage workshop participation, including visits with local businesses and outreach to local
community organizations. Organizations, community groups, and businesses that were contacted and/or visited prior to the workshop include:

- Sun Valley CAB
- Spanish Springs CAB
- Sun Valley Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association
- Lois Allen Elementary School Parent-Faculty Organization
- Rainbow Market
- Scolari’s Food & Drug
- Hobey’s Casino & Restaurant
- Valley Jewelry & Loan
- The House of Realty
- Sierra Point Apartments
- Dollar Loan Center
- La Gloria Market
- CVS Pharmacy
- Creaciones Vecis Dress Shop
- La Panaderia y Jalisco Bakery
- Unsuccessful attempts were made to contact Wells Fargo Bank, Super Buy Market, Quality Motors, Easy Living Realty, Norma Fink Inc. Realtors, and Sun Valley Smoke Shop regarding the project and the opportunity to meet with project representatives prior to the workshop.

4.3.7 Project Contact

RTC staff and Study team members were available to answer questions from the public. They were responsive and available to the public via phone, fax, e-mail, and in person. The main project contact was:

Doug Maloy, PE, Project Manager
Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County
1105 Terminal Way, Suite 108
Reno, NV 89502
(775) 335-1865
Fax (775) 348-0170
dmaloy@rtcwashoe.com

4.3.8 Public Input Summary

During the course of the Study, and prior to the Draft EIS public comment period, many comments were received via letter, phone conversation, meetings, e-mail, or facsimile. Major themes emerging from these comments are summarized in Table 4-6.
## Table 4-6. Public Input Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Acquisitions/Property Values Concerns** | • Project will adversely affect property values and result in residential relocations.  
• Impacts to Sun Valley community.  
• Impacts to Wedekind Road area neighborhood.  
• Accommodations for mortgages with a higher balance than the free-market value of the home). |
| **Community Concerns** | • Provide Sun Valley improvements as mitigation—sidewalks, lighting, curb and gutter, community development.  
• Separation of Sun Valley community resulting from a grade-separated interchange or overcrossing at Sun Valley Boulevard  
• Impacts to Sun Valley businesses.  
• Impacts to Desert Research Institute.  
• Induced growth and inadequate infrastructure.  
• Proposed alternatives benefit the Spanish Springs community while adversely impacting the Sun Valley community.  
• Opportunity for redevelopment.  
• Ability to create a community gateway. |
| **Environmental Concerns** | • Impacts to the few existing wetlands.  
• Noise impacts and questions about use of sound walls.  
• Project effects to air quality, project effects to wildlife, flood potential. |
| **Traffic/Access/Safety Concerns** | • Access and circulation to community facilities, commercial areas, and neighborhoods.  
• Current unsafe access to Lazy 5 library at Pyramid Highway.  
• Traffic safety on Highland Ranch Road.  
• Increased traffic on Sun Valley Boulevard post project.  
• Effect on traffic on nearby roads and neighborhoods post project.  
• US 395 congestion worsening after east/west connection is added.  
• Project worsening the already problematic Parr interchange.  
• Insufficient access options for proposed connector.  
• Accuracy of traffic modeling/forecasting.  
• Bottleneck at McCarran and then I-80 even after Pyramid Highway is widened.  
• Which streets will project affect? |
| **Construction Concerns** | • Length of time to complete project—improvements are needed now.  
• Needed project 10 years ago.  
• The need to do study all over again if too much time elapses between completion of EIS and construction start.  
• Impacts such as dust and traffic during construction. |
| **Trail Concerns** | • Impacts to existing trails.  
• Existing unsafe bicycle conditions along Pyramid Highway and Sun Valley Boulevard.  
• Need a safe separated path along Pyramid Highway to encourage alternate transportation. |
Table 4-6. Public Input Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transit Concerns</td>
<td>• Improve/increase transit options within the corridor. Consider bus, light rail, monorail, or tram.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plan ahead and make roads wide enough to handle rapid transit system 20 or more years from now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>• Developers need to offset costs with impact fees—be part of the solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How is project being funded?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make the connector a toll road so it is paid for by those who use it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives</td>
<td>• Numerous comments opposed to Alternatives H-6 and H-7 due to high negative landowner and community impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Numerous comments supporting Alternative H-17 because it would provide the most traffic relief with the least negative impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support voiced for both the north and south crossing of Sun Valley Boulevard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support voiced for both the Pyramid Highway Off alignment and On alignment Alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimize residential relocations/acquisitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other alternatives were suggested, including a ring road around Reno, a road from Eagle Canyon Road to US 395, an underpass at Sun Valley Boulevard, and moving the entire alignment 0.5 mile west of existing Pyramid Highway, and building a West Sun Valley arterial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expand Study Area north to include planned development in that area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Existing travel delays and future traffic impacts on Sun Valley Boulevard after project is constructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sparks population’s traffic should be routed through Sparks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use McCarran to address traffic demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spanish Springs having only one way in/one way out via Pyramid Highway—build alternate routes and/or service roads first, before improving Pyramid Highway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Like east/west to reduce Highland Ranch Road/Sun Valley Boulevard cut through traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Address any planned improvements to US 395 at same time as, or prior to, construction of the connector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All alternatives cross through Sun Valley - Why not a north crossing of Sun Valley (near Highland Ranch Parkway)? Just build the West Sun Valley arterial and that will solve the problem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments received from agencies and the public helped guide decision making on major project elements, such as development of the Purpose and Need and alternatives. Chapter 2.0 Alternatives describes how the Study team incorporated public and agency input into the development, refinement, and screening of alternatives. Input also helped shape the public outreach activities conducted by the Study team.

4.4 DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIS

The distribution of a Draft EIS is a formal opportunity for the public, agencies, and other interested persons or groups to review and comment on the project and Study findings.
The Draft EIS was distributed for a 60-day comment period from September 13, 2013, through November 12, 2013. The Study team considered comments received on the Draft EIS to identify the Preferred Alternative addressed in this Final EIS.

The Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIS was published in the September 13, 2013 Federal Register. The NOA, the announcement of the October 9 and 10, 2013 public hearings, and the dates for the 60-day comment period were published as listed below. Notices are provided in Appendix B Public Involvement.

- *Sparks Tribune* on September 17, 2013
- Bulk mailing (English and Spanish versions) to approximately 17,000 individuals
- NDOT’s website (http://www.nevadadot.com/Public_Involvement/Meetings/Meetings,_Hearings_and_Notices.aspx)
- RTC’s website (http://www.rtcwashoe.com/section-hot-topics)

The Draft EIS was distributed for review as follows:

- An electronic link to the Draft EIS was emailed to the federal, state, and local agencies listed in Chapter 8.0 List of Recipients.
- The Draft EIS was available for download on NDOT’s website (http://www.nevadadot.com/Public_Involvement/Meetings/Meetings,_Hearings_and_Notices.aspx) and RTC’s website (http://www.rtcwashoe.com/section-hot-topics).
- Copies of the Draft EIS were available by request from NDOT Headquarters, Environmental Services Division, Room 104, 1263 S. Stewart St., Carson City, NV 89712; telephone: (775) 888-7013.
- Hard copies of the Draft EIS were available for review at both public hearings and at the following locations during the 60-day comment period:
  - NDOT District II offices, 310 Galletti Way, Sparks, Nevada
  - RTC Offices at 1105 Terminal Way, Suite 108, Reno, Nevada
  - Spanish Springs Library, 7100A Pyramid Lake Highway, Sparks, Nevada
  - Sparks Library at 1125 12th Street, Sparks, Nevada
  - Sun Valley General Improvement District Offices at 5000 Sun Valley Boulevard, Sun Valley, Nevada

### 4.5 Comments and Public Hearings on the Draft EIS

Two public hearings were held at different locations on separate dates. The purpose of the hearings was to present the alternatives, environmental impacts, and mitigation
measures described in the Draft EIS and to obtain public input. Both hearings were held in an open house format, with a formal presentation followed by a question/answer period. Boards were displayed around the meeting rooms that presented information from the Draft EIS and depicted the build alternative designs. Handouts were provided in both English and Spanish formats, and included the Draft EIS Executive Summary and summary of mitigation measures. A Spanish translator was also available during the hearings. The same information was provided at both public hearings. The public hearings are summarized below. Handouts and hearing transcripts can be found in Appendix B Public Involvement.

- **Wednesday, October 9, 2013.** Held at the Red Mountain Building Student Center, Truckee Meadows Community College, 7000 Dandini Boulevard, Reno, Nevada, from 4:30pm to 7:30 pm. Approximately 112 people signed in at the hearing.

- **Thursday, October 10, 2013.** Held at Shaw Middle School Library, 600 Eagle Canyon Drive, Sparks, Nevada, from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Approximately 116 people signed in at the hearing.

The following local, state, and federal agencies provided comments on the Draft EIS:

- National Park Service
- Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance, Pacific Southwest Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Washoe County Planning and Development Division, Community Services Department

Several comments and questions were received and responded to at the public hearings (see the public hearing transcripts in Appendix B Public Involvement). Comment letters, emails, or phone calls received during the 60-day comment period, and responses to those comments, are provided in Appendix D Draft EIS Comments and Responses. Table 4-7 summarizes common themes or concerns expressed in the comments received.
### Table 4-7. Draft EIS Comment Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Acquisitions/Property Values Concerns** | - Concerns about displacements by potential use of eminent domain.  
- Concerns about the number of homes acquired/relocated.  
- Questions about how financial issues will be handled during the right-of-way acquisition process.  
- Concerns about impacts to area churches. |
| **Community Concerns**         | - Concerns about impacts to Environmental Justice populations.  
- Concerns about roads being built closer to homes, in addition to impacts to property values and quality of life (noise and visual impacts).  
- Concerns about impacts to the Desert Springs Development septic tank system.  
- Concerns about the US 395 Connector dividing the Sun Valley community. |
| **Economic Concerns**          | - Concerns about impacts to businesses and retail establishments along Pyramid Highway because of traffic diverted to other alignment options. |
| **Environmental Concerns**    | - Concerns that project will increase greenhouse gas emissions.  
- Concerns about increased traffic noise, adverse air quality impacts, and visual impacts.  
- Concerns about how noise impacts and mitigation were determined. |
| **Traffic/Access/Safety Concerns** | - Concerns about relieving traffic congestion on Pyramid Highway south to McCarran Boulevard.  
- Concerns about poor safety conditions on Pyramid Highway.  
- Concerns about impacts to access at community facilities, such as Summit Christian Church, Spanish Springs Library, and Lazy 5 Regional Park.  
- Concerns about traffic congestion during inclement weather conditions under the build alts. (snow, ice, and flooding along Sun Valley Boulevard).  
- Concerns that the project will increase traffic on other roads, such as Sun Valley Boulevard, 1st Avenue, US 395, and the Spaghetti Bowl area.  
- Questions about forecasted traffic volumes and level of service. |
| **Construction Concerns**      | - Concerns about negative construction impacts for neighborhoods adjacent to improvements.  
- Questions about where construction detours would be located.  
- Concerns about traffic issues during construction and along detour routes. |
| **Trail Concerns**             | - Concerns about providing access to regional and other planned trails. |
| **Transit Concerns**           | - Requests to provide bus service along the Pyramid corridor.  
- Requests to provide a multimodal solution. |
| **Funding**                    | - Concerns that project is not fiscally constrained. |
| **Alternatives**               | - Support for Alt. 3.  
- Opposition to the No-Action Alt.  
- Opposition to the On Alignment and Off Alignment due to right-of-way impacts, increased traffic, and noise impacts.  
- Questions about whether spacing between on-ramps and off-ramps along the freeway is adequate.  
- Suggestions for different alts., different alignments, and extension of the Study Area to address issues beyond the current Study Area.  
- Several comments voicing preference for southern crossing of Sun Valley Boulevard under Alts. 2 and 3.  
- A few comments opposing northern crossing of Sun Valley Boulevard under Alts. 1 and 4.  
- Support for the project because improvements are needed. |
| **Project Schedule**           | - Questions clarifying timeframe of project construction and completion. |
Changes occurred following distribution of the Draft EIS, as described in Section 2.6, that address many of the comments received on the Draft EIS. These changes include a reanalysis of traffic volumes, resulting in reduced traffic forecasts and subsequent design modifications to the build alternatives. The Arterial Alternatives evaluated in this Final EIS would:

- Require fewer right-of-way acquisitions.
- Result in lower impacts to community facilities (area churches, Spanish Springs Library, and Lazy 5 Regional Park).
- Reduce overall project footprint/road cross-sections.
- Have lower costs. Because of the lower cost of Arterial Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), all phases of the project are now fiscally constrained.

### 4.6 FINAL EIS AND RECORD OF DECISION

FHWA, NDOT, and RTC considered all comments received on the Draft EIS to identify the Preferred Alternative. Further, several changes occurred after the Draft EIS was distributed, as discussed in Section 2.6, that resulted in design changes to all of the build alternatives—the Arterial Alternatives fully evaluated in the Final EIS. Based on the analysis in this Final EIS, Arterial Alternative 3 has been identified as the Preferred Alternative (for a description of the Preferred Alternative, please refer to Section 6.5 Identification of the Preferred Alternative).

RTC will announce the availability of this Final EIS for review in the Federal Register, in local newspapers, and on NDOT and RTC project websites. This Final EIS will be made available for public review at the following locations:

- Spanish Springs Library, 7100A Pyramid Lake Highway, Sparks, Nevada
- Sparks Library at 1125 12th Street, Sparks, Nevada
- Sun Valley General Improvement District Offices at 5000 Sun Valley Boulevard, Sun Valley, Nevada
- RTC Offices at 1105 Terminal Way, Suite 108, Reno, Nevada
- NDOT District II offices, 310 Galletti Way, Sparks, Nevada
- RTC and NDOT websites

The RTC will distribute this Final EIS for review to the local, state, and federal agencies, and Native American tribes listed in Chapter 8.0 List of Recipients. The Final EIS will be provided to members of the public at their request. A 30-day review period will be provided for the Final EIS.
Following receipt of comments on this Final EIS, FHWA will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD) that presents the formal decision on selecting the Preferred Alternative and concludes the NEPA process for this project. In the ROD, FHWA will:

- Identify the Preferred Alternative selected and the basis for its selection.
- Briefly describe each alternative considered.
- Summarize the basis for the Section 4(f) *de minimis* finding.
- Describe the measures adopted to minimize environmental harm.
- Describe mitigation commitments.
- Provide responses to substantive comments received on the Final EIS.

After the NEPA process for this project is completed, public and agency involvement will continue as appropriate as the project moves into the final design and construction phases.