

6 The Preferred System Alternative (Module 4)

This section presents the Tier One Preferred System Alternative, as well as stakeholder issues and requirements identified through the study process.

Chapter 6 includes a description of the procedures used to select the Preferred System Alternative, a description of the roadway alternative evaluation findings, and a discussion of complementary transit and bike/pedestrian system improvement strategies to be carried forward as elements of the Final EIS Preferred Alternative.

6.1 The Preferred Alternative Selection

Many alternative transportation solutions have been developed and evaluated over the past two years since the Elgin O'Hare - West Bypass (EO-WB) study first commenced. This included consideration of a broad array of roadway system alternatives, along with a set of complementary transit and bike/pedestrian system improvements. The remaining Finalist System Build Alternatives (203 and 402) and South Connection Options A and D were analyzed and screened based on an examination of all environmental documentation in the Draft EIS, engineering data, comparative travel performance analyses, and pertinent stakeholder input. The remaining alternatives share many similarities, however, each possess distinction that point to a clear recommendation of Alternative 203 with South Connection Option D as the Preferred System Alternative (see Exhibit 6-1).

The rationale for recommending a south bypass connection option (Option D) and an overall roadway system alternative (Alternative 203), as well as a summary of the multi-modal improvements incorporated into the Preferred System Alternative are presented below.

6.1.1 South Bypass Connection Options

The two remaining South Bypass Connection Options (A and D) were evaluated based on design and travel performance, environmental and social impacts, as well as stakeholder input. Option D was selected as the preferred connection layout based on a consideration of the following performance characteristics:

- From a design standpoint, Option D provides continuity in access as noted by the intersection of the freeway ramps to and from the south and directly connecting with proposed Taft Road. This connection is also more central to the industrial development in the area while the location of Option A was on the industrial area's western edge. That western location presents additional design challenges to mitigate noise and proximity impacts to neighboring residential properties.
- Travel performance was not considered for the South Bypass Connections evaluation since the location of the two options would not have a measurable effect on systemwide travel performance characteristics.

- Environmental impacts for the two South Connection Options are comparable, as shown in Table 6-1. The connections are located in a highly developed industrial area and therefore, have relatively minor impacts to wetlands, floodplains, threatened or endangered species, forested lands, or surface waters.
- Differentiators of social impacts for South Connection Options A and D were limited to the displacement of building structures, displacement of businesses and employees and tax revenue loss. As show in Table 6-1, Option A has a greater number of structures displaced (35 buildings versus 25 buildings), but relatively fewer (300) employees displaced as these businesses are smaller than those along Option D. The tax base impact or tax revenue loss is also lower for Option A than Option D. However, given that Option A is adjacent to residential and park areas in Bensenville, there is potential for impacts to noise sensitive areas and conflicts with the Village’s goal of buffering its residential areas. Conversely, Option D is located wholly within non-residential areas.

TABLE 6-1
Environmental and Socioeconomic Consequences of Options A and D

Resource	Option A	Option D
Wetlands (acre) ^a	0.2	0.4
Stream crossings (total number)	3	3
Surface waters (acre) ^a	0.4	0.3
Floodplain encroachments (acre)	0.6	0.6
Threatened or endangered Species (number)	0	0
Forested lands (acre)	0.9	0.3
Residential structure displacements (number)	7	0
Commercial or industrial structure displacements (number)	28	25
Business displacements (number)	45	22
Employee displacements (number)	600	911
Tax revenue loss (\$)	\$1.3M	\$2.6M

^a Totals include impacts to potentially jurisdictional areas, such as stormwater facilities. Subject to regulatory review, several manmade stormwater facilities may be exempt from regulation.

- Stakeholder comment has been clearly in favor of Option D. Bensenville has stated that Option A would be in conflict with the community’s vision, whereas the Village of Franklin Park has passed a resolution endorsing Option D. Franklin Park foresees the implementation of Option D as an opportunity to enhance the viability of the adjoining land uses through improved access, drainage improvements, and potential redevelopment.

6.1.2 Alternatives 203 and 402

Improvements to the Elgin O’Hare corridor, including both the Elgin O’Hare Expressway and Thorndale Avenue, extend from the Gary Avenue interchange in the west to the future O’Hare West terminal. These improvements are common to both Alternatives 203 and 402.

Differences are presented on the north portion of the West Bypass between the Elgin O'Hare Extension and the north connection to I-90 (Jane Addams Memorial Tollway). In Alternative 203, improvements in this area consist of the West Bypass as a new freeway corridor while in Alternative 402, improvements in this area consist of arterial widening along Elmhurst/York Road. Alternative 203 was selected as the Preferred System Alternative based on a consideration of the following performance characteristics:

- The travel performance for the remaining two build alternatives is comparable, with Alternative 203 offering slightly better travel performance than Alternative 402 when both local and more regional measures are considered (see Table 6-2).

TABLE 6-2
Build Alternatives Systemwide Travel Performance Comparisons

	Alternative 203	Alternative 402
Percent Increase in Regional Travel Efficiency in Study Area	10%	8%
Percent Decrease in Congested VMT on Secondary Roadways (P.M. Peak)	15.2%	12.3%
Percent Increase in Network Speeds on Principal Arterials (P.M. Peak)	8%	7%
Improve O'Hare West Access—Travel Time Savings from the Study Area West to O'Hare	49%	47%
Improve Accessibility—Percent Increase in Trips within Five Minutes to Interstate/Freeway facilities	50%	41%
Percent Increase in Transit Trips	37%	34%

- The environmental analysis shows that the impacts from Alternatives 203 and 402 are comparable, with Alternative 402 having slightly lower impacts (see Table 6-3). Avoidance and minimization techniques throughout the process have reduced environmental resource impacts to manageable levels and the impact difference between the alternatives is small. In the final analysis, most environmental impacts are common to both alternatives, with only the north leg of each alternative accounting for slight differences. Thus, from the perspective of environmental resources there are no effects that distinguish the alternatives.

TABLE 6-3
Summary of Environmental Consequences

	Alternative 203	Alternative 402
Wetlands (acre) ^a	39.1	36.5
Stream crossings (total number)	22	20
Surface waters (acre) ^a	18.1	15.1
Floodplain encroachments (acre)	24.7	27.2
Threatened or endangered species (number)	0	0
Noise-sensitive Resources	75	68

TABLE 6-3
Summary of Environmental Consequences

	Alternative 203	Alternative 402
Architectural and Archaeological Resources	0	0
Acres of potential forest preserve and local park 4(f) impacts (number of properties)	5.9 (8)	3.1 (6)
Special Waste Sites	242	237

^a Totals include impacts to potentially jurisdictional areas, such as stormwater facilities. Subject to regulatory review, several manmade stormwater facilities may be exempt from regulation.

- Socioeconomic impacts favor Alternative 402 with slightly fewer displacements of residential, commercial and industrial structures, fewer job displacements, and lower tax revenue losses (see Table 6-4). However, in the examination of socioeconomic benefits, both alternatives possess significant economic benefit potential in terms of value added to the economy and job creation. With the use of an econometric model it was estimated that with either alternative the total economic effect is greater than the initial investment. The spending and consumption of project investment dollars would be greatest with Alternative 203 with an added value to the regional economy of \$5 billion versus \$4 billion from Alternative 402. Alternative 203 provides greater job growth with 21,600 jobs during the three year construction period of the project, whereas Alternative 402 would create 16,600 jobs during that same period.

With the assistance of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), a special analysis was also performed estimating the year 2030 employment with the project improvements. The improved access to the study area would increase the competitive advantage of local businesses by improving access to the interstate system, shortening travel times to industrial areas within the study limits, reducing traffic on local roads by shifting non-local trips to higher capacity roads, and enhancing the possibility for the redevelopment of underused properties. As a result, Alternative 203 is forecasted to add 62,500 employees or long-term jobs to the study area by 2030 compared to the No-Action Alternative versus adding a forecasted 48,500 employees or long-term jobs to the study area from Alternative 402. In terms of project costs, a design that features an arterial connection to the north instead of a full bypass lead to lower costs for Alternative 402. However, the layout and design of Alternative 203, while having a higher cost, satisfies a critical stakeholder concern with respect to community planning and cohesiveness, and provides the greatest potential long term job creation.

TABLE 6-4
Summary of Socioeconomic Impacts and Benefits

	Alternative 203	Alternative 402
Residential, commercial and industrial displacements	50	46
Employees displaced	1,203	1,040
Roadway construction costs (1999 \$)	\$2.99B	\$2.33B
Value added to the regional economy	\$5B	\$4B
Short-term job creation	21,600	16,600
Long-term job creation	62,000	48,500
Tax revenue loss	\$4.45M	\$3.54M

From the project's inception through selection of the Preferred Alternative, roughly 130 meetings were held with established stakeholder groups, communities, transportation service providers, federal and state resource agencies, business owners, and the general public. The result has been a consensus on which alternative and south bypass connection option should be selected as the Preferred Alternative (see Table 6-5 for a summary of public comments). Over the course of those public events, the overwhelming majority of stakeholder comments were in support of Alternative 203 and South Bypass Connection Option D. The strong consensus for Alternative 203 is rooted in the need for a solution that will better manage traffic in the study area. Because the study area is rich in commercial and industrial development, which is the economic engine of many communities, stakeholders favor Alternative 203. This alternative provides better access and greater potential for reinvestment in aging properties in the area. In addition, communities agree that Alternative 203 is most compatible with their land use policies and plans while not disrupting existing land use patterns.

TABLE 6-5
Summary of Public, Municipality, and Agency Comments and Resolutions

	Support Alternative 203 and/or Option D	Support Other Proposed Alternatives	Other Comments
March, 2009 Public Information Meeting #3 Comments	36,700	NA	NA
October, 2009 Public Hearing	46	3	23

6.1.3 Multi-Modal Improvements

The Tier One Preferred Alternative consists of a combination of roadway, transit, and bike/pedestrian system improvements which together address multi-modal transportation issues in the study area. The solution was identified in collaboration with regional transit planning agencies, service boards and stakeholder input. Further analyses of complementary transit and bike/pedestrian improvements, as well as consideration of transportation system management (TSM) and transportation demand management (TDM) strategies will be performed during Tier Two studies.

Proposed transit system improvements included in the Tier One Preferred Alternative consist of a combination of expanded commuter rail service, rail or bus rapid transit (BRT), express bus, local bus and shuttle service (see Exhibit 6-2), including:

- New fixed-route transit service along the Elgin O'Hare corridor extending from the Metra Schaumburg Station to the O'Hare West Terminal. Proposed roadway improvements along this corridor will be designed to reserve space for this potential future transit service. Future studies will also consider a potential westerly extension of new fixed route service to the Hanover Park Metra Station based on recent stakeholder input (see Section 6.3).
- New fixed-route transit service was proposed along the north leg of the West Bypass, providing a link between the planned I-90 STAR Line alignment (Metra) and the planned O'Hare West Terminal Transportation Center. Proposed roadway improvements along this corridor will be designed to reserve space for this potential future transit service.
- A new transportation hub at the planned O'Hare West Terminal.
- New transit stations, intermodal facilities or transit centers, and park and ride facilities.

A concept plan for improving the regional and local bike/pedestrian network in the study area was also identified with the Tier One Preferred Alternative. The plan focuses on addressing system gaps, and improving accessibility to existing and planned transit service. Features of the plan include a potential trail along the Elgin O'Hare corridor extending from Gary Avenue to Meacham Road, and from Salt Creek to York Road (see Exhibit 6-3).

Tier Two studies of proposed highway improvements will continue to be developed in collaboration with transit agencies and interested stakeholders to ensure that proposed improvements include appropriate accommodations for other travel modes. Further, a variety of transportation system and demand management strategies will be considered as part of future Tier Two studies, with the objective of optimizing operation and efficiency of systemwide improvements.

6.2 Refinements to Representative Roadway Layout

The Preferred System Alternative evolved from a rigorous examination of many system alternatives. Stakeholder input, context-sensitive solution principles, and environmental sequencing (e.g., avoidance and minimization of impacts) were important considerations during the development and refinement of a representative conceptual layout for the proposed improvements. The conceptual layout and associated footprint requirements of the Preferred System Alternative discussed in Section 3 of the *Final EIS* is generally the same as the layout of the Finalist System Build Alternatives described in Chapter 5, with the exception of the following areas:

Franklin Avenue – Green Street Corridor: Proposed improvement limits along the Franklin Avenue and Green Street corridor were refined. The improvement limit along Green Street was extended 700' to the west of County Line Road. This western improvement limit extension along Green Street was needed to accommodate widening of the corridor to two-

lanes in each direction with median separation. In addition, the eastern improvement limit along Franklin Avenue was also extended approximately 1200' east of Wolf Road to accommodate the widening of the corridor and to provide a consistent cross section along the roadway. The proposed widening will establish a continuous homogenous segment along Green Street/Franklin Avenue and will assist in traffic distribution to the adjacent land uses in the vicinity of the interchange. In addition, the configuration of the proposed Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) over Franklin Avenue/Green Street bridge replacement by the O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) was modified to accommodate this planned roadway widening.

West Bypass – South Connection Option D: Through stakeholder discussions related to the area adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPRR) west of County Line Road, adjustments were made to the South Connection Option D. Specifically, the conceptual layout and footprint were shifted to the south (as compared to the layout included in the Finalist System Build Alternatives) for the section extending from County Line Road and the West Bypass tunnel under the Bensenville Rail Yard. This refinement was added to accommodate future operational requirements at the Bensenville West Yard.

The refined plan and profiles of the Preferred Alternative and South Connection Option D are included in Appendix N, Sections 3 and 4.

6.3 Tier One Stakeholder Issues and Requirements

The Tier One Preferred Alternative emerged out of an alternatives development and evaluation process that was comprehensive, structured, and stakeholder driven. A broad range of multi-modal transportation system solutions was considered and screened through this effort. The Preferred Alternative was selected on the basis of its' transportation benefits, and extensive stakeholder input and support.

The representative layout of the Preferred Alternative was developed at a conceptual level of detail required to demonstrate its' characteristics, design viability and estimated footprint requirements. The general location and layout was developed in coordination with involved agencies and communities, with the objective of ensuring that improvements are compatible with the context of the study area. This layout will serve as a starting point for the detailed design alternative analyses that will be performed with future Tier Two studies.

Various issues were identified by stakeholders through the Tier One process. These included issues such as: improvement feature requirements; potential impacts to be evaluated with Tier Two studies; design alternatives and financing/implementation scenarios (e.g. tollroads, phased construction of major project elements) to be considered during Tier Two. In some cases, these requirements were identified as a condition of supporting the project.

Stakeholder issues and requirements identified through the Tier One process are presented below. This input will be considered and addressed during Tier Two.

Freight Rail: Given the proximity of the proposed roadway improvements to major regional freight rail corridors and yards, close coordination will continue with freight rail operators to ensure design acceptability. Of particular concern are freight facilities at the following

locations: the south leg of the West Bypass corridor (Union Pacific Milwaukee Sub track and North Proviso Rail Yard, Canadian Pacific Railway and Bensenville Rail Yard), north leg of the West Bypass corridor (UP Milwaukee Sub track, CPRR track and UP Milwaukee Sub Yard), and spur rail connections to adjacent industrial properties (Elk Grove Centex Industrial Park, O'Hare Metro Industrial District, Bensenville/Franklin Park Industrial Area south of Franklin Avenue/Green Street south of the Bensenville Rail Yard). Preliminary engineering (geometrics) will be developed in coordination with railroad operators, with a focus on constructability, maintenance of traffic during construction, and compatibility with existing and future freight rail operations. Railroad relocation studies will be performed to identify railroad relocations required to facilitate construction of the proposed roadway improvements. Based on input received during Tier One studies, freight railroad operators were generally in agreement with the location and general layout of the proposed improvements, with the understanding that detailed studies of impacts and relocation requirements will be performed during Tier Two, including the following:

- Relocation or replacement in-kind of the Bensenville Yard turntable and machine shop will be required.
- Construction of a tunnel structure for the West Bypass at the west end of the west Bensenville Yard will be staged to accommodate uninterrupted freight and commuter rail traffic.
- Construction of the West Bypass along the South Connection Option D corridor will be staged to accommodate a 40 mph track speed, and provision of a minimum vertical clearance of 23'-4".
- Construction of the UPRR bridge over the proposed West Bypass just north of the Bensenville Yard.

Transit: Tier Two studies will include continued analysis of transit improvement corridors, with a focus on locations within or proximate to proposed roadway improvements. These analyses will include refining the rail/BRT cross section for the Elgin O'Hare/Thorndale corridor service, developing north-south transit service connections with the Elgin O'Hare/Thorndale corridor, refining station locations and access concepts, and evaluating alternatives for connections with the Blue Line terminus at the O'Hare Terminal core. The studies will be performed in close coordination with RTA, Metra, PACE and CTA, in conformance with terms of the Intergovernmental Agreement between IDOT and RTA.

O'Hare International Airport, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA): Given the project's proximity to O'Hare International Airport and nature of improvements being implemented through the O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP), existing and future airport layout and airspace constraints will be evaluated and closely coordinated with the Chicago Department of Aviation to ensure permissibility of the proposed EO-WB improvements. This will include consideration of the design issues identified by the FAA through their Tier One preliminary 7460 review, and prior design coordination efforts, including:

- FAA does not permit construction of permanent facilities that will encroach into the runway protection zones and glide plane surfaces adjacent to the runways. Highway alignments will be developed to accommodate FAA airspace vertical and horizontal clearance requirements, and requirements to address potential Instrument Flight Rule (ID+FR) impacts will be identified. Highway appurtenances, including roadway lighting and sign truss structures, will be designed to avoid impacts to

- airspace and to incorporate appropriate safety delineations. A formal 7460 review will be performed by the FAA during Tier Two upon availability of geometric plans.
- EO-WB improvements will be developed to the extent practicable within the 300' transportation corridor reserved for surface transportation improvements on the western edge of O'Hare Airport property. Improvements will be developed to minimize impacts to sensitive areas, and comply with design requirements related to adjacent airport facilities and improvements.
 - The OMP will design and construct their proposed Franklin Ave/Green St UPRR bridge improvement to accommodate anticipated future widening improvements along Franklin Avenue related to the EO-WB project.
 - The OMP will design and construct their proposed IL 19 improvement to accommodate, where possible, future highway improvements proposed as part of the EO-WB. This includes improvements in the vicinity of the proposed West Bypass/IL 19 interchange and the proposed Taft Road Extension near IL 19.
 - The FAA invokes a process that evaluates changes in airport land use, unrelated to aeronautical activities, which would result in conversion of airport property dedicated for aviation activity to other revenue producing uses. This analysis, along with the FAA's consent to the conversion of land to non-airport use, will be required for the EO-WB.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago: Planned roadway improvements will continue to be coordinated with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC). Of particular interest are plans for the proposed flyover ramps at the West Bypass/I-90 interchange and their potential effect on the O'Hare Reservoir, and potential effects on the TARP Reservoir (O'Hare C.U.P site) in the southwest corner of Elmhurst Road and I-90. Design issues of concern include site capacity, maintaining the integrity of the basin liners, maintaining access to the facilities, and maintaining sufficient clearances for equipment access and operations.

Hanover Park: The scope and westerly limits of transit system improvements and supporting roadway improvements along the Elgin O'Hare corridor will need to be reviewed during Tier Two. Specific issues to be considered include a westerly extension of planned fixed route transit service along the Elgin O'Hare corridor to the Hanover Park Metra Station, as well as improvements to existing arterials in the vicinity of the current Elgin O'Hare Expressway terminus at US 20. Also, accommodations for enhanced north-south bike/pedestrian connections in the vicinity of the western terminus of the Elgin O'Hare Expressway will be evaluated.

Roselle: The community supports planned transit improvements in the Elgin O'Hare corridor and emphasizes that transit remain an integral part of future corridor improvements. Issues of concern related to improvements along the existing Elgin O'Hare Expressway include traffic impacts of potential tolling scenarios, potential noise impacts, and the need for drainage system improvements.

Schaumburg: The community supports transit in the Elgin O'Hare corridor and recommends that transit remain an integral part of future corridor improvements. Roadway improvements along the existing Elgin O'Hare Expressway should be coordinated with the planned Wright Boulevard project.

Itasca: The community places a high value on designing the EO-WB to relieve congestion on arterials such as IL 19, as well as providing access to major arterials and adjacent industrial and employment centers. In particular, improvements must provide effective access to the Hamilton Lakes development, a major employment center vital to the local and regional economy, as well as full access to the industrial area along the Rohlwing Road corridor. A priority is ingress into the Hamilton Lakes area in the vicinity of Park Boulevard. Other issues of concern related to the planned Elgin O'Hare Extension include noise and visual impacts to residential areas.

Wood Dale: Roadway and transit improvements identified with the Tier One Preferred Alternative are vital to the City's planned transit oriented development along the Elgin O'Hare Extension in the vicinity of Lively Boulevard. In particular, freeway ramp connections, continuous frontage roads, and transit station accommodations are needed to provide proper ingress, egress, and traffic circulation in the area. An issue which should be considered with future studies is the opportunity for joint stormwater management improvements.

Elk Grove Village: The community's support for the Preferred Alternative aligns with their community values and land use initiatives. Alternative 203, which includes construction of a full West Bypass extending from I-90 to I-294, effectively facilitates the movement of traffic through the heavily congested area west of O'Hare International Airport while minimizing disruption to adjacent industrial land uses. Vital features of this plan include the proposed placement of the West Bypass corridor east of Elmhurst Road/York Road, and a full access interchange at Elmhurst Road and I-90. Given the substantial congestion and mobility issues in this area, it is important that the north and south portions of the West Bypass be implemented simultaneously. Issues of concern that must be considered with future studies include potential traffic impacts on local streets related to the placement of new interchange ramps.

Bensenville: Alternative 203 Option D effectively accommodates local and regional transportation needs while minimizing impacts to industrial and residential developments in the Village of Bensenville. The proposed location of the West Bypass corridor east of the UPRR corridor is a vital feature of the project. Moving forward, it is important that project design features and implementation be effectively coordinated with other improvements in the area, including the ongoing O'Hare Modernization Program and with the proposed IL 19 at York Road intersection/railroad grade separation project. The IL 19/York Road intersection and grade separation improvements are a community priority and must be in place prior to construction of the West Bypass. Design characteristics of the West Bypass corridor should complement local land use plans and incorporate appropriate aesthetic enhancements.

Northlake: An important feature of the Tier One Preferred Alternative is the proposed improvement of the I-294 at IL 64 interchange. Future Tier Two studies will be coordinated with the City's Draft Access Justification Report studies of the interchange, with the ultimate goal of securing a NEPA and Design Approval for this location as part of the EO-WB Tier Two studies.

Elmhurst: Alternative 203 Option D effectively accommodates local and regional transportation needs. An important feature of the plan is the proposed improvement of the

I-294 at IL 64 interchange, with a particular emphasis on the southbound I-294 to eastbound IL 64 movement. Access improvements along this portion of the I-294 corridor should be further explored with future studies.

Franklin Park: The Village supports the location of the West Bypass South Connection (Option D) as the most viable plan, provided that: proposed roadway improvements be developed in a manner that addresses stormwater management issues in the area; improvements include construction of stormwater detention facilities to adequately address highway runoff and local flooding issues; Franklin Avenue be widened and reconstructed through the Village's corporate boundaries to properly accommodate increased traffic along Franklin Avenue; access to the area be provided via the West Bypass corridor. Tier Two planning efforts including scope, logical termini, access, and drainage improvements need to be coordinated with the Village's Phase I study along Franklin Avenue.

Mount Prospect Park District: Leased park district properties at the MWRD site is accessed from Elmhurst and Mount Prospect Road. Access from Elmhurst Road will be impacted by the proposed improvements, and plans for reinstating proper access to the site will need to be developed with future studies.

Mount Prospect: The community supports the project, but favors design options that minimize displacement of commercial buildings in their community. Other issues of concern to be addressed with future studies include traffic impacts to adjacent arterials.

Des Plaines: The City of Des Plaines supports Alternative 203 Option D with the understanding that IDOT will continue to work with the community and involve stakeholders to ensure that potential impacts are minimized and, where appropriate, mitigation measures are incorporated into the plan. Issues of concern to be addressed with future studies include community financial obligations related to the proposed improvements.

6.4 Summary of Stakeholder Input

Opportunities for input from project stakeholders were available throughout the selection of the Preferred Alternative. This included Corridor Planning Group Meetings, Task Force Meetings, three Public Meetings, small group meetings, one-on-one meetings with various agencies and municipalities, and a Public Hearing. The Tier One Draft EIS was presented to the public and distributed for review and comment. During the Draft EIS public comment period (September 11, 2009 through October 26, 2009) and throughout the process, stakeholders were given an opportunity to provide meaningful input on the evaluation. Table 6-6 summarizes stakeholder input related to the Preferred System Alternative selection process.

TABLE 6-6
Summary of Stakeholder Input—Preferred Alternative

Event	Date	Objectives	Summary of Input
CPG and Task Force Meeting #10	9/10/09	Presented description of the signed Draft EIS (Purpose and Need, Alternatives, Affected Environment/Environmental Consequences); explained commencement of public comment period; Public Hearing previewed	General agreement with Draft EIS content and understanding of upcoming comment period.
Public Hearing	10/8/09	Displayed Draft EIS findings; sought comment on the Draft EIS and the Finalist System Build Alternatives	Written and oral comments were provided on the Draft EIS ^a
CPG and Task Force Meeting #11	12/9/09	Summary of Draft EIS comments received from agencies, municipalities, and members of the public; presentation of Alternative 203 with Option D as the Preferred Alternative; description of the transit and bicycle/pedestrian features accompanying the proposed roadway improvements; next steps of the conclusion of Tier One and beginning of Tier Two studies.	General consensus with the evaluation and selection of the Preferred Alternative

^a See Table 6-5 for the summary of comments received at the Public Hearing.

6.5 Next Steps

The Tier One Preferred Alternative provides the representative conceptual layout for the roadway, transit and bike/pedestrian improvements in the corridor. The Preferred Alternative will serve as the starting point for Tier Two studies, which consists of traditional level of Phase One engineering and environmental studies, including the consideration of design alternatives, construction sequencing, and project financing/implementation strategies. Throughout the next phase of the project, stakeholder involvement will be essential to all aspects of the study and the comments received during Tier One will be dually considered.