



## **I-580/MEADOWOOD COMPLEX IMPROVEMENTS**

### **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

The Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC), in partnership with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the City of Reno and in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to improve the Interstate-580 (I-580) interchange access between the South Virginia Street southbound ramp (Exit 63) and Neil Road (Exit 62). The proposed project is located entirely within the City of Reno.

I-580 is the north/south freeway through the Reno/Sparks metropolitan area of Washoe County. The existing I-580 interchange at South Virginia Street (Exit 63) is only a partial interchange, providing only a northbound entrance on to the freeway and southbound exit off the freeway. The closest southbound I-580 on-ramp and northbound off-ramp are found at either the Neil Road interchange (Exit 62) or the Moana Lane interchange (Exit 64). South Virginia Street is a major north/south arterial within the project area with extensive commercial development. The major east/west arterial is South McCarran Boulevard. Traffic passing through the intersection of these two arterials generally is bound for the commercial developments in the area, or is attempting to enter or exit the I-580 freeway via the South Virginia ramps.

The important features of the proposed project are the extension of Meadowood Mall Way from South Virginia Street, under I-580, to Kietzke Lane and the new freeway interchange. The construction of a northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp at Meadowood Mall Way and I-580 will create a new half diamond interchange at Meadowood Mall Way. As part of the project, the connection of the existing northbound on-ramp and southbound off-ramp to I580 will be removed at Neil Road, resulting in a half-diamond interchange at Neil Road. New one-way frontage roads are proposed on each side of I-580 to connect Meadowood Mall Way and Neil Road. The northbound frontage road will allow traffic from Neil Road to enter I-580 at the Meadowood Mall Way on-ramp. The southbound frontage road will allow traffic exiting I-580 at Meadowood Mall Way to continue south to Neil Road. The connection of the two half-diamond interchanges at Meadowood Mall Way and at Neil Road will create a split-diamond interchange.

The new northbound frontage road between Neil Road and Meadowood Mall Way will include a connection to Crummer Lane at its current terminus.

The proposed project is designed to provide greater connectivity of the regional road network with new freeway access; thereby reducing congestion in the project area. The new interchange configuration is designed to reduce the number of vehicles attempting to enter the northbound I-580 on-ramp from South Virginia Street. In addition to the significant number of u-turns from southbound South Virginia Street to the existing northbound I-580 on-ramp, this access is especially difficult for the vehicles making the turn from eastbound South McCarran Boulevard to northbound South Virginia Street, then weaving right to reach the I-580 on-ramp.

The proposed I-580 freeway on-ramp and off-ramp and frontage roads will require new NDOT cobra head light poles. Additional street lighting will be installed along the new segment of Meadowood Mall Way to Kietzke Lane. The proposed project also includes additional lighting and new traffic signals at the following intersections:

1. Kietzke Lane / Meadowood Mall Way / Sierra Rose Drive;
2. Northbound I-580 on-ramp / northbound frontage road / Meadowood Mall Way; and
3. Southbound I-580 off-ramp / southbound frontage road/ Meadowood Mall Way.

These three new signals will be timed and coordinated with the existing signals operating in the area. The intersection of Kietzke Lane/Meadowood Mall Way/Sierra Rose Drive has been designed to accommodate u-turns and u-turns will be signed in the southbound direction. The existing intersection of Meadowood Mall Way at South Virginia Street will be improved to accommodate u-turns and u-turns will be signed in the northbound direction.

A new cast-in-place post-tensioned concrete box girder bridge will be constructed on the freeway over Meadowood Mall Way, and the existing steel bridges at South McCarran and South Virginia will be widened. The existing concrete underpass immediately south of South McCarran Boulevard will be abandoned.

Other features include new signing and striping on the freeway, the frontage roads and local streets; drainage improvements; modification, reconstruction and/or new construction (including relocation) of commercial approaches in the project area; and traffic control during construction.

The proposed project has been designed in accordance with NDOT's Landscape and Aesthetics Master Plan and US 395 Corridor Plan, and will include retaining wall aesthetic upgrades, decorative concrete light towers at the new Meadowood Mall Way undercrossing, and native landscaping and revegetation.

The project received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which completed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements in May of 2007. Final approval for a Change in the Control of the I580 Access was granted in August of 2007. Funding is anticipated to be from a number of sources including Regional Road Impact Fees (RRIF); RTC bonds; and Federal money including Interstate Maintenance Discretionary (IMD), Surface Transportation Program (STP) Washoe, High Priority and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds.

The proposed project requires the acquisition of some private property for local street right-of-way and for the I-580 right-of-way.

The proposed project is scheduled to begin construction in 2009 and will take approximately 24 to 30 months to complete. The public information process during construction is expected to be initiated concurrent with the Notice to Contractors inviting bids for the project construction.