

Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway

Ivanhoe Street Traffic Interchange Public Involvement Summary

September 2018

Prepared by:

HDR, Inc.

101 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 1950

Phoenix, AZ 85003

In cooperation with:

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)

Federal Highway Administration

Connect 202 Partners

1. Introduction

In 2018, ADOT began an environmental study to potentially realign Ivanhoe Street and include ramps to the future Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway to address access and traffic concerns. The study of this traffic interchange (TI) has been supported by the Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and the Maricopa Association of Governments. As part of the environmental study, ADOT requested that Connect 202 Partners (C202P) draft preliminary design plans to determine the feasibility of adding an interchange without acquiring additional properties. Also, ADOT began an environmental reevaluation to determine the feasibility of adding an interchange and to analyze changes in environment and social impacts that would result from the improvement. Figures 1 and 2 show the proposed conceptual design for the Ivanhoe Street TI.

Figure 1: Proposed Ivanhoe Street Traffic Interchange Concept (view 1)



Figure 2: Proposed Ivanhoe Street Traffic Interchange Concept (view 2)



Initially, ADOT presented one TI concept to the public: a typical diamond interchange with access to the east (Dusty Lane Community [DLC]) and west (Gila River Indian Community [GRIC]). After receiving input from stakeholders, ADOT developed four additional alternative concepts for evaluation. The four design concept roll plots for the Ivanhoe Street interchange are shown in Appendix B.

The four concepts are:

1. Build the TI at Ivanhoe Street. The DLC access would be at Ray Road under the freeway from 51st Avenue; no freeway access to the DLC.
2. Build the TI at Ivanhoe Street. Relocate Dusty Lane to the north side of the freeway; no freeway access to the DLC. (NOTE: This concept is not feasible because of protections under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act.)
3. Build the TI near multi-use crossing #3, southeast of the DLC. The DLC access would be at Ivanhoe Street under the freeway from 51st Avenue; no freeway access to the DLC. (NOTE: This concept is not feasible because of protections under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act.)
4. Build the TI at Ivanhoe Street. Build a restricted access frontage road from Ivanhoe Street along 45th Avenue to Galveston Street; restricted freeway access to the DLC

After considering public agency and GRIC stakeholder input and DLC requests, the concept proposed for construction and included for detailed study in this reevaluation was a variation of concept #1 above (referred to as Concept 1A in materials released to stakeholders and the public). The proposed concept includes a separate access into the DLC along Dusty Lane to eliminate a direct connection to the TI. Dusty Lane would cross under the SMF at Ray Road and a new road would parallel the SMF to its connection to Ivanhoe Street.

The purpose of the Ivanhoe Street TI would be to provide access to the GRIC and to residents in the DLC. It would also improve emergency access and relieve traffic congestion at 51st Avenue and Estrella Drive along the Loop 202 alignment.

1.1 Public Involvement Purpose and Process

Consistent with ADOT’s Public Involvement Plan and the Federal Highway Administration’s public involvement guiding principles, the Ivanhoe Street TI study team planned several phases of public involvement, including an “open house” style public meeting, to encourage adjacent community and agency stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposed interchange during the public comment period. The goal of this outreach plan was to solicit input on various design options and allow attendees to express support or opposition to the proposed TI. This enabled the project team to understand community issues and concerns.

The first step in the public involvement process was to engage with agency and elected officials to give them an overview of the study and to provide an opportunity for them to comment. The second step included an online questionnaire and an online Question and Answer (Q&A) resource. Once the agency officials had been engaged and the questionnaire and Q&A resource were published online, two open houses were held to encourage public participation in the environmental study process. Meetings were also held with the DLC in June and July, 2018, to discuss issues and concerns related to the Ivanhoe Street TI. This public involvement summary documents the public involvement process that occurred to solicit public comments during the public comment period, from May 2 through July 19, 2018, and the input received during that process. The original comment period, May 2 to June 4, 2018, was extended to July 19, 2018, at the request of community members from the DLC, the neighborhood adjacent to the Ivanhoe Street TI study area.

2. Agency and Elected Official Outreach

The purpose of the elected official stakeholder outreach was to provide an overview of the project to officials representing the communities impacted by the project. Correspondence with GRIC occurred between ADOT and GRIC attorneys. Discussion of key project issues and challenges, schedule, and communication and outreach issues were presented. In addition to providing background and other pertinent information to elected officials, the outreach was designed to encourage stakeholders to identify issues, concerns, and opportunities they felt needed to be addressed during the study.

The study team prepared and distributed notification via email to MCDOT and elected official representatives identified as having a potential interest in the study. The emails were sent March 19, April 26, and May 2, 2018, to six local and state representatives (Table 1). Appendix A includes copies of the email notifications that were distributed.

Table 1: Agency and Elected Official Outreach

Date Briefed (Email/In-Person)	Elected Official/Agency
March 8: In-Person April 25, May 2: Email	MCDOT Director, Jennifer Toth MCDOT Planning Director, Denise Lacey
March 19, April 26, May 2: Email	Maricopa County Supervisor, Steve Gallardo, District 5
April 26, May 2: Email	City of Phoenix Councilwoman, Kate Gallego, District 8 Councilman Michael Nowakowski, District 7 Senator Catherine Miranda, District 27 Representative Rebecca Rios, District 27 Representative Reginald Bolding, District 27

3. Public Outreach

3.1 Public Notification of Study Comment Period

The public was notified of the Ivanhoe Street TI study and open house in the following ways. All notification is included in Appendix A.

- On May 1, 2018, ADOT mailed study information, the Q&A resource document, questionnaire, return mailer, and an invitation to attend the May 30, 2018, open house to 28 property owners in the DLC. ADOT used an address list developed by C202P and the Maricopa County Assessor’s website to obtain property owner information.
- ADOT distributed two news releases (May 2 and May 24, 2018):
 - [https://www.azdot.gov/projects/central-district-projects/loop-202-\(south-mountain-freeway\)/stay-in-the-loop/media/2018/05/02/adot-considering-two-additional-interchanges-for-south-mountain-freeway](https://www.azdot.gov/projects/central-district-projects/loop-202-(south-mountain-freeway)/stay-in-the-loop/media/2018/05/02/adot-considering-two-additional-interchanges-for-south-mountain-freeway)
 - [https://www.azdot.gov/projects/central-district-projects/loop-202-\(south-mountain-freeway\)/stay-in-the-loop/media/2018/05/24/south-mountain-freeway-open-house-may-30-on-potential-ivanhoe-street-interchange](https://www.azdot.gov/projects/central-district-projects/loop-202-(south-mountain-freeway)/stay-in-the-loop/media/2018/05/24/south-mountain-freeway-open-house-may-30-on-potential-ivanhoe-street-interchange)
- On May 2 and May 24, 2018, ADOT shared announcements and advertised the study on the South Mountain Freeway and ADOT Facebook pages:
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SouthMountainFreeway/photos/a.1962359563986886.1073741828.1936236886599154/2163012753921565/?type=3&theater>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SouthMountainFreeway/photos/a.1962359563986886.1073741828.1936236886599154/2188089751413865/?type=3&theater>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/AZDOT/photos/a.137665612971817.29041.117553941649651/1973579569380403/?type=3&theater>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/AZDOT/posts/2006549392750087>
- On May 9, 2018, the City of Phoenix posted notification of the comment period and open house dates on the City’s NextDoor page. Notification reach limits were north to Dobbins Road; south to Galveston Street; east to 39th Avenue; and west to 67th Avenue.
- On June 1, 2018, an advertisement of the GRIC-sponsored open house was published in the *Gila River Indian News*.

3.2 Ivanhoe Street Questionnaire

ADOT invited the public to respond to a questionnaire during the public comment period (May 4 to July 19, 2018) regarding the proposed TI environmental study. The online questionnaire was provided in English and Spanish, and included the Title VI disclosure and project background and history. The questionnaire could be completed online or on paper at the public open houses. The questionnaire asked participants to provide information on how the interchange might impact the community and the surrounding area. A summary of the questionnaire is provided in the *Public Comment Summary*, page 7, and is included in Appendix B.

3.3 Question and Answer Resource

The study team developed a series of nine questions and answers to help proactively address questions they anticipated the community would have about the study. The Q&A resource was published on the study website at the beginning of the public comment period on May 4, 2018. Halfway through the public comment period, responses to the questionnaire were analyzed and categorized to extract common themes and derive frequently asked questions that were included in the updated Q&A resource on May 22, 2018.

Appendix B includes a copy of the Q&A resource that was published online and provided at the public open houses.

3.4 Open Houses

The purpose of the public open houses was to introduce the study, provide preliminary information regarding the study process, and give attendees the opportunity to ask questions and submit comments. Approximately 37 people attended the open house on May 30, 2018, and approximately 12 people attended the open house on June 23, 2018.

The first open house was held on May 30, 2018, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Laveen Elementary School District offices, 5001 W. Dobbins Road, Laveen. The second open house was held on June 23, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Boys and Girls Club, Gila River Branch – Komatke, 5047 W. Pecos Road, Laveen. The open house

format was chosen to give attendees the opportunity to view renderings, provide feedback on the Ivanhoe Street TI, and get Loop 202 Center Segment construction information updates. There was no formal presentation and attendees could speak one-on-one with project staff about the environmental study and Center Segment construction. The meeting began with registration at the door, where attendees were asked to sign in. The sign-in sheets were created to provide a record of attendance and update the email list. Attendees were encouraged to walk around the various stations, view the displays, and ask questions of project staff. They were given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and/or comment form.

3.4.1 Open House Materials

A variety of materials were available to the public at the open houses; copies can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.2 Open House Stations

The open houses were set up and organized into three specific areas: (1) welcome/sign-in; (2) Ivanhoe Street TI; and (3) Center Segment Construction Update. Stations included:

Welcome/Sign-In

- Sign-in sheets
- Title VI notice and voluntary Self-Identification survey cards
- Ivanhoe Street questionnaire and comment form
- Connect 202 Partners business cards

Ivanhoe Street TI

- Display boards
 - Environmental reevaluation study timeline
 - Environmental issues under study
 - Proposed Ivanhoe Street TI rendering
- Roll plots of preliminary design plans showing Ivanhoe Street with and without a TI
- Printed Ivanhoe Street questionnaire and iPads to provide access to the online questionnaire
- Ivanhoe Street Q&A

Center Segment Construction Update

- Bridge and sound wall aesthetics display boards
- Center Segment roll plot showing sound walls, interchanges, and multi-use crossings
- Fly-over video simulation
- 2018 Center Segment phasing and a general construction forecast schedule
- Construction Notice #3

3.4.3 Community Meetings

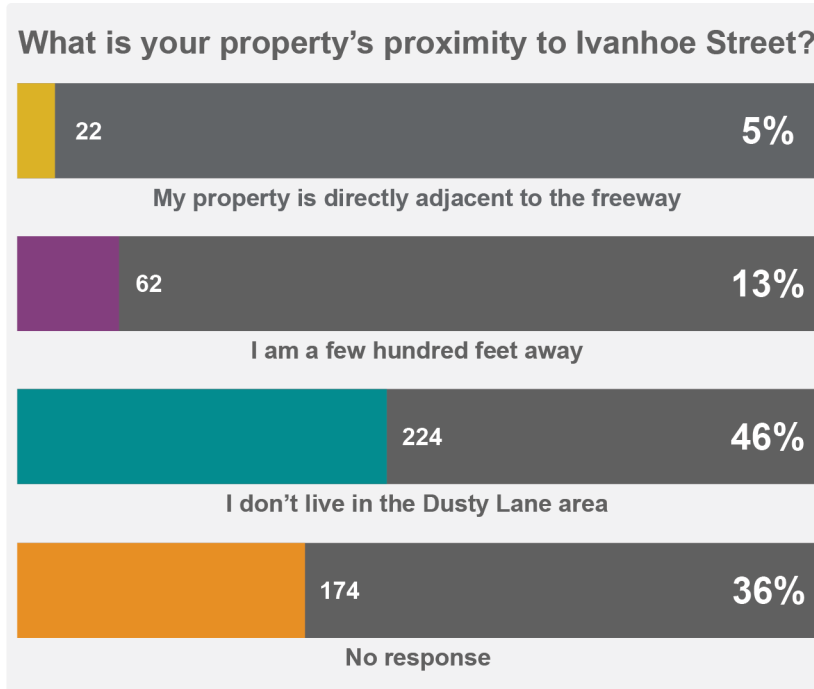
The DLC requested a meeting with ADOT after the May 30, 2018 open house to discuss possible alternatives to the TI and access at Ivanhoe Street. Two meetings were held on June 27 and July 10, 2018. The presentations and summaries are included in Appendix B.

4. Public Feedback

4.1 Ivanhoe Street Questionnaire Results

A public questionnaire was available online during the public comment period from May 4 to July 19, 2018. Hard copy questionnaires were provided to attendees at the May 30, 2018, public open house. The purpose of the questionnaire was to seek information on how the interchange would impact the community and the surrounding area. Over 482 questionnaires were received and the results are shown in Figure 2. All responses are included in Appendix C. A summary of the comments received through the questionnaire can be found in the *Public Comment Summary*, page 7.

Figure 2: Questionnaire Responses



There are 35 property owners in the Dusty Lane Community.

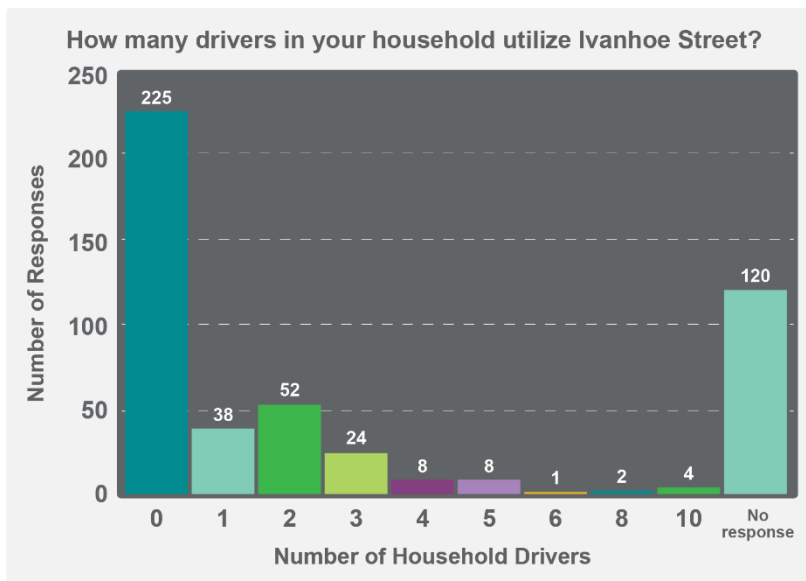
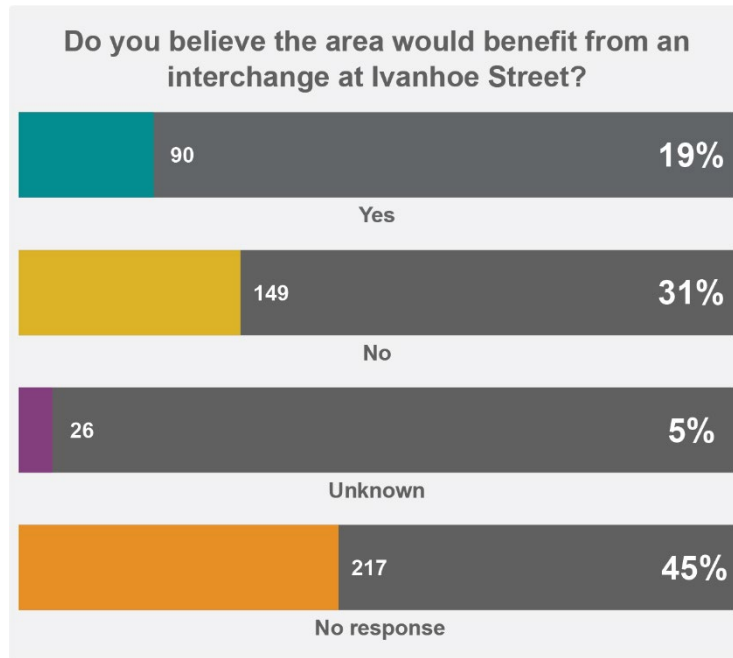


Figure 2: Questionnaire Responses (*continued*)

4.2 Public Comment Summary

This section presents a summary of the comments received during the comment period. Common themes in the comments were identified and are listed below:

- Cost
- Construction
- Casino/Commercial access
- Residential access
- General opposition
- General support
- Safety
- Environmental
- Bike/South Mountain Park Preserve access
- Light/Noise
- Traffic volumes
- Miscellaneous

A total of 588 comments were received during the comment period. All comments received were coded for specific issues or recommendations raised by the commenter. During the comment period, comments could be submitted in a variety of ways: US mail, project telephone line, email, Open House comment form, and through the questionnaire (available in both hardcopy and online versions). A summary of the comments received is shown below and all comments received are included in Appendix C.

Table 2: Comment Summary

Comment Received	Quantity	Support	Oppose	Unknown	No Response
Email	86	1	85	N/A	N/A
US mail	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Telephone line	3	N/A	3	N/A	N/A
Open House comment form	12	1	4	7	N/A
Total					N/A
Online and hard copy questionnaire	487	92	151	27	217
Total	588	94	243	34	217

All comments were assigned either support, opposition, or neutral stance on the TI*. The comments were quantified as:

- Support the Ivanhoe Street TI: 94
- Oppose the Ivanhoe Street TI: 243
- Preference unknown: 34
- No response: 217

**Respondents were able to submit their comments more than once.*

Comments were also evaluated to identify the reason(s) for support or opposition and sorted as appropriate into the classification categories described earlier. The results of that evaluation are depicted in Figures 3, 4, and 5.

Figure 3: Support Categories

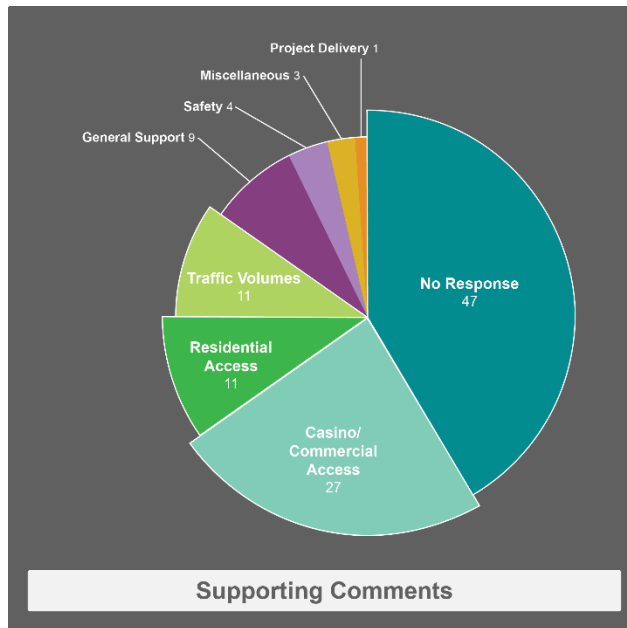


Figure 4: Opposition Categories

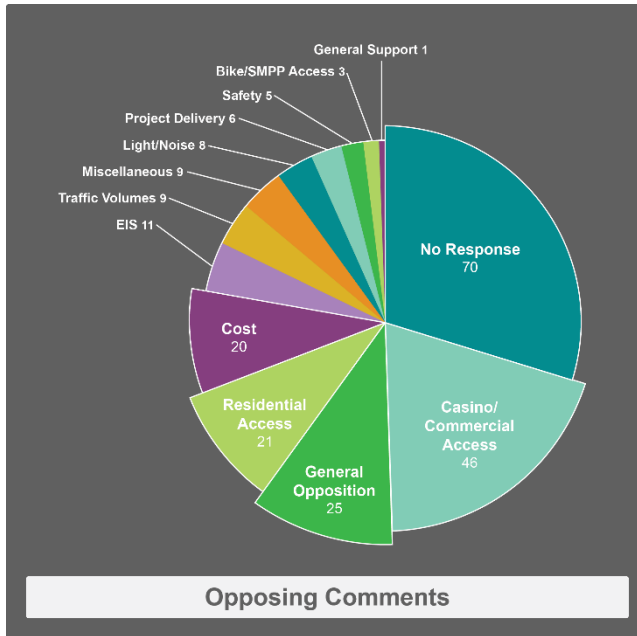
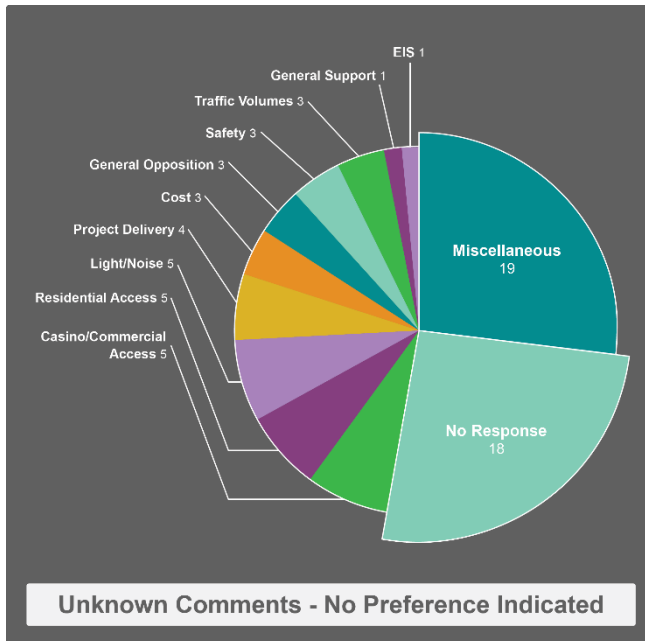


Figure 5: Unknown Categories



Totals in Figure 3, 4, and 5 do not equal 100 because multiple topics may have been included in individual comments.

4.2.1 Summary of Comments Supporting Traffic Interchange

Casino access, traffic volumes, and general support were the most commonly referenced reasons for needing the interchange. Some felt that an interchange would help alleviate cut-through traffic for those trying to access the casino, others felt an interchange would provide better emergency response times, and some felt it would make the future Estrella Road traffic interchange safer at 51st Avenue and Estrella Road.

Following is a sample of the comments received related to the top seven support categories. Comments are verbatim.

Casino/Commercial Access

Most of the comments supporting the traffic interchange were related to Vee Quiva Casino access. A sample of the comments included:

- It would limit or eliminate increased traffic in nearby neighborhoods without adversely affecting the Ivanhoe neighborhood. I do business with the casino and would much prefer to access it from Ivanhoe and not have to travel over other surface streets in the area.
- Better access for business and residents, it will alleviate cut-through traffic and non-local people from using local streets.
- This is where the exit for the casino should be. There are only a handful of houses on Dusty Lane compared to hundreds that will be affected by the Estrella exit.
- Direct access to the Casino will be awesome for the community.

Traffic Volumes

- Ivanhoe better choice less thru traffic. Less families living in the area.
- Traffic congestion off the freeway onto 51st Ave. Already congested as it is.
- I Think it helps total neighborhood traffic flow by having an exit at Ivanhoe. Please get it done!

Residential Access

Many of the comments received supporting the traffic interchange mentioned residential access. A sample of the comments included:

- Option 1A would provide better access to the DLC, and Casino, It would also reduce Casino traffic on 51st ave and Estrella benefiting future projects in the area.
- It will make emergency response times shorter not to mention the increase in property value due to ease of access to essentially the entire valley. All this by simply adding freeway access to the area.
- Even though I do not like the exit, it is feasible as an exit for those residents nearby

Safety

There were several comments supporting the traffic interchange concerned with safety. A sample of the comments included:

- I highly favor an Ivanhoe interchange. It would greatly alleviate traffic (mostly casino goers) to the north on 51st Ave., Carver and Estrella. It would help make 51st Ave. in particular much safer!
- I'm concerned that if they don't include the Ivanhoe interchange there will be a lot of traffic forced to use other nearby surface streets creating safety issues and changing the character of nearby neighborhoods.
- None! My concerns are with the casino traffic dumping onto Estrella Dr. There is only a 2 way stop at 51st/Estrella and since the casino opened there have been at least 4 fatalities and more accidents than I can count. I see the casino exit at Estrella only adding to the body count! We are strong supporters of this final leg of the 202 and are anxious for its completion. Please consider OUR neighborhood too! We have already been bombarded by casino traffic not only on 51st Ave, but also Estrella and Carver roads by patrons from the East Valley who have discovered the back roads. Thank you.

Cost

- Concerned that it won't be added to the Connect 202 project only to learn that later (and at a greater cost) it is necessary for the continued growth of the area.
- Spend the money now instead of rebuilding it 10 years at 101 the cost.

Environmental

- I am concerned about additional noise and pollution that an Ivanhoe interchange will bring. In addition, the original proposal leaving the DLC open to freeway and casino traffic is alarming for a whole slew of reasons. Safety of our children, increased probability of crime and the hazards of navigating a busy interchange as our only option for entering or exiting our community come quickly to mind. Option 1A appears to be win win win solution. The DLC gets our privacy and safety back as well as an improved access road to our community with significant flood mitigation over our current situation or even the no build option. The GRIC gets the exit they desire. ADOT, MCDOT, and the yet to be built community at 51st ave and Estrella get the benefit of removing the vast majority of casino traffic from 51st ave and Estralla. Noise and pollution remain a concern.

General Approval

- Love the idea of another exit for the casino. Need 2 not just one. Great plan. Go forward with this please. It will relieve traffic at 51st Ave and Estrella Dr. A Much-needed improvement.
- I think the new exit proposals for options 1 and 4 are both excellent resolutions. I support options 1 and 4.
- The exit at Ivanhoe is wonderful. This will lessen the load on Estrella Dr. The casino traffic should be located closer to the Casino and Estrella Dr should not have to be burdened with the excessive traffic that will occur. Plus the drivers will not get lost and end up on Estrella Dr. Casino can advertise easier and keep the property values on Estrella Dr increasing instead of decreasing

4.2.2 Summary of Comments Opposing Traffic Interchange

Casino access, cost, and general opposition were the most commonly referenced reasons for opposing the interchange. In general, the community expressed concern that a TI at Ivanhoe Street would cause increased traffic volumes in the area, which would negatively impact the DLC.

Following is a sample of the comments received related to the top three opposition categories.

Casino Access

- The Dusty Lane area would benefit by the conscience of the interchange. However, the interchange would be used primarily for the GRIC Casino, which did not support the project. The interchange would be a nuisance for the Dusty Lane area, which previously has been somewhat isolated. The interchange would bring in significant traffic and pan handlers.
- The only benefit would be to the casino. Other than that, it is all just a big mess. Our little community does not want a lot of traffic, a lot of noise, more pollution than we will have to have. I am not against the Highway but why not keep it at 51st ave as was in the first plan? NO! For safety of our children not for someone's convenience.
- Patrons of the casino will enjoy a quick hop off the freeway to deposit funds, but there is no other purpose or benefit.
- It is only being proposed to benefit Vee Quiva. There is not a large enough community there to support the interchange.

Cost

- It is a waste of money which would be better used to build a light and sound wall on north side of freeway that encroaches on the once peaceful desirable neighborhood.
- This is a waste of taxpayers funds building an interchange for the sole purpose to service Vee Queva Casino. We should not pay to provide an interchange to help drive up traffic to the casino. The only acceptable option would be to install a toll booth to get the taxpayers money back from the casino patrons.

- Spending too much money on multiple exits that are too close to each other.
- It's costing tax payers more money.

General Opposition

- It is unnecessary
- It would not benefit at all.
- The interchange on Estrella is enough. The area surrounding it doesn't need both interchanges
- There does not seem to be enough traffic to warrant the additional expense.

Samples of other comments expressing opposition are provided below. Summary tables are provided in Appendix C.

Construction

- I live in Laveen near Baseline and 67th Ave near where the 202 construction is currently underway. I think the original plans have adequate interchanges. The proposed interchange at Ivanhoe St would serve to disrupt that neighborhood unnecessarily.

Residential Access

- My family lives in Dusty Lane area, and they have a young daughter. The area is wonderful currently because it is open, with little traffic and noise. A freeway interchange through the neighborhood would negatively impact that.
- The reason people live there is the quiet area without much traffic.
- The area is only a few miles from the freeway as it is. The residents chose to live there often to get out from directly under the challenges of having a major roadway nearby.

Safety

- This is not to benefit the people that live in Dusty Lane but the casino. If you make the casino more accessible you only put more "Drunks" on the roads! I have friends that live in Dusty Lane and they are against it!
- Is a huge safety concern and not needed
- This interchange is for the benefit of one and only one private enterprise. This is not a benefit for the community and will actually cause harm to the surrounding area.

Traffic Volumes

- The only benefit would be to the casino. Other than that, it is all just a big mess. Our little community does not want a lot of traffic, a lot of noise, more pollution than we will have to have. I am not against the Highway but why not keep it at 51st ave as was in the first plan?
- The reason people live there is the quiet area without much traffic.
- The casino has a steady stream of cars using the existing traffic pattern without a freeway that requires people to drive many miles out of the way to reach the venue. The freeway with the approved exit at Estrella will be less than 1/2 a mile from from the venue and will still utilize the existing traffic pattern of 51st Avenue. Also the undeveloped property on Estrella will have the potential to be zoned commercial which could add much needed job opportunities and entertainment possibilities a win-win for the area.

Light/Noise Pollution

- ...Placing a traffic interchange at Ivanhoe would undoubtedly cause an increase of undesirable traffic in our (Dusty Lane) community. Ours is a community where we have purchased property (homes) to live in quiet seclusion to enjoy the peace and beauty of the Arizona Desert without the intrusion of light, noise and increased air pollution as well as large volumes of vehicle traffic. The Ivanhoe traffic interchange will not only substantially increase all of these factors but the Dusty Lane Community is not set up to handle these large volumes of traffic. ALL of our streets are NARROW and DEAD END. Imagine the chaos of volumes of traffic

trying to negotiate these streets. Larger vehicles will not even be able to turn around on the dead-end streets without entering on private property and even regular sized vehicles will require at least a three-point turn.

- ...I want to visit my friends and enjoy their quiet serenity, not be jockeying for a lane to enter and exit the freeway.
- By ADOT dumping multiple thousands of cars in our community on a dead end rural residential neighborhood are losing all perceived rights of privacy, security as well as peace and quiet....

4.2.3 Summary of Comments Neutral toward Traffic Interchange

Residents living near 51st Avenue and Estrella Drive and 51st Avenue and Carver Road stated their concerns for increased traffic near the Estrella Drive TI. Others had general comments related to the interchange. A sample of comments received is provided below.

Miscellaneous

- The community between S. 35th Ave & W. Carver Rd and between S. 35th to 51st Ave is concerned for our safety. We want to be heard and we want to feel safe driving on Carver Rd. With the addition of on ramps on Elliot & Estrella it will promote more traffic through Carver Rd for commuters who want to avoid lights and traffic on Baseline & Dobbins. Carver is a community road not a public and high traffic rd like Baseline & Dobbins. We urge you to do a case study of how traffic will impact residents living on Carver Rd. Please be advised that currently (before freeway) Carver Rd has experienced multiple fatalities due to excessive speed and thru traffic that doesn't belong on Carver. We urge you to work with the County officials to help make residents of Carver Rd safe.
- I live on Estrella Dr which is on the east side of 51st ave. Lots of traffic as people use it as a short cut. However at 43rd ave is a curve going north. People think Estrella is a thru street which it's not on the east side of 51st ave. If a sign at 51 & Estrella going east would be put up saying it's not a through street it would help stop construction trucks, etc using it. Maybe even speed would help if no signage is put up. The speed limit is 40 MPH very few people or trucks do that speed.
- Would like the freeway to represent our tribe, our community with our symbols, our design, anything that represents the Pima tribe. Thank you and make it nice, unique and irresistible with grass, water and walkways (sidewalks).
- Being a member of the Gila River Indian Community not only I myself but request of other community members would like to see our native design symbols along side with the new 202 freeway, being close to our community so close to home we the community would like to have our Gila River print.
- The interchange at Ivanhoe St needs to be able to accommodate special event traffic exiting the casino. Two dedicated turn lanes (instead of the 1 currently proposed) need to be built for EB Ivanhoe traffic heading southbound. It should also be made clear that EB traffic entering the Duty lane area should only be local traffic.
- I am concerned about access to South Mountain Park and accessibility for people riding bikes in the area. This plan needs to include directions for individuals exiting in order to enjoy South Mountain Park, and it also needs to include appropriate bike lanes, paths, signaling and infrastructure for commuters riding to Phoenix or Ahwautukee from the Dusty Lane are, GRIC, and South Mountain park.