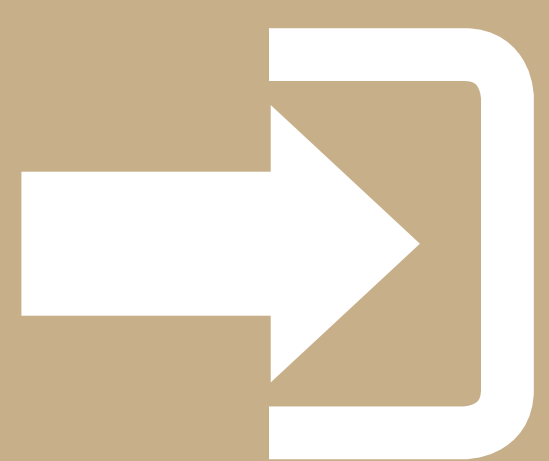


WELCOME to the NORTH–SOUTH CORRIDOR STUDY Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Hearing

Please Sign In



HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL

Por favor vea a los miembros del equipo de estudio si necesita ayuda de interpretación en Español.

Please see a study team member if you need Spanish interpretation assistance.

HOW TO COMMENT

All comment methods are considered equal.

The Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) public comment period ends on October 29, 2019.

All comments and formal responses to comments will be included in the Final Tier 1 EIS.

Throughout the public review and comment period, anyone can submit comments through the following methods:



Email:

northsouth@azdot.gov



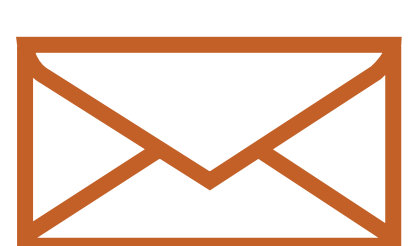
Voicemail:

855.712.8530



Online:

azdot.gov/NorthSouthStudy



Letters and comment forms:

c/o ADOT Communications
1655 W Jackson Street,
Mail Drop 126F
Phoenix, AZ 85007

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING PUBLIC STATEMENTS

“Mutual respect, courtesy, and patience are the hearing’s guiding principles.”

SPEAKERS: Maximum of 3 minutes each

LISTENING PANEL: Panelists are not allowed to respond. Discussions are welcome in the open house area.

COURT REPORTER: Please state your name and speak clearly.

Please remain quiet and silence cell phones while in the audience.

Please do not interrupt a speaker.

Please leave the area for side discussions.

STUDY OVERVIEW

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is conducting the environmental study for a new north–south transportation corridor in Pinal County, Arizona.

A Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other regulations.

STUDY AREA

- The Study Area is approximately **50 miles long** between Apache Junction and Eloy, and traverses central Pinal County.
- If a Corridor Alternative is selected, future Tier 2 studies would identify the specific location of the North–South alignment within the corridor.
- If constructed, the future North–South Corridor would generally be **400 feet wide**, which could include **travel lanes, shoulders, and median.**



STUDY PROCESS

The publication of the Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the culmination of:

- Extensive public outreach.
- Environmental analysis.
- Consultation with federal, state and local governments, tribal governments, planning organizations and agencies.

Tier 1 EIS



Evaluates wide corridors in multiple locations, at a programmatic level, within which a new transportation facility could be located.

Outcome: Select a single corridor within which an alignment would be identified during Tier 2 studies.

Tier 2 EIS



Evaluates design concepts for specific alignments within the corridor, such as 400 feet for a typical freeway alignment.

Outcome: Select an alignment and enable permitting for that alignment.

PURPOSE & NEED

Improve access to future activity centers



The proposed corridor would benefit the study area's new activity and population centers and undeveloped lands identified for development that are in various stages of local or regional planning processes.

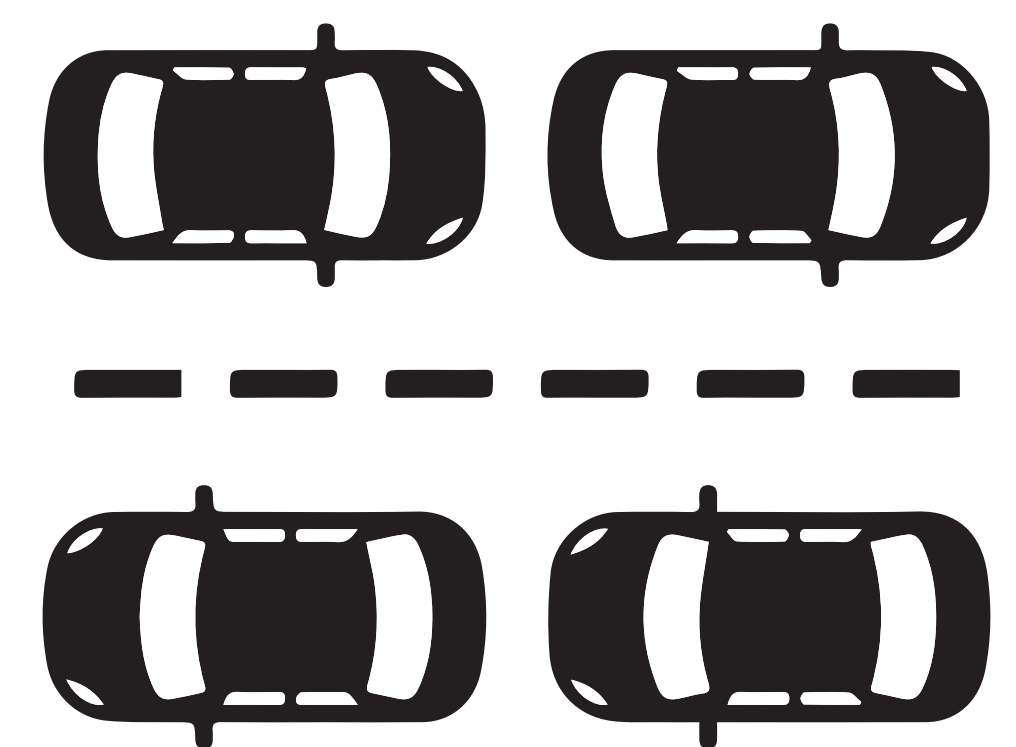
Population and Employment Growth

Consistent with state, regional, and municipal planning initiatives, the proposed corridor would accommodate anticipated growth in the study area and across the larger region.



Improve regional mobility

The proposed corridor would provide additional roadway capacity ahead of full development build-out to avoid congestion associated with anticipated growth.



Improve north-to-south connectivity

The proposed corridor would connect eastern portions of the Phoenix metropolitan area with Pinal County and destinations to the south, including Tucson.



Provide an alternative to avoid congestion on I-10

The proposed corridor would provide a continuous alternative to I-10 to reduce traffic delays at full development build-out.

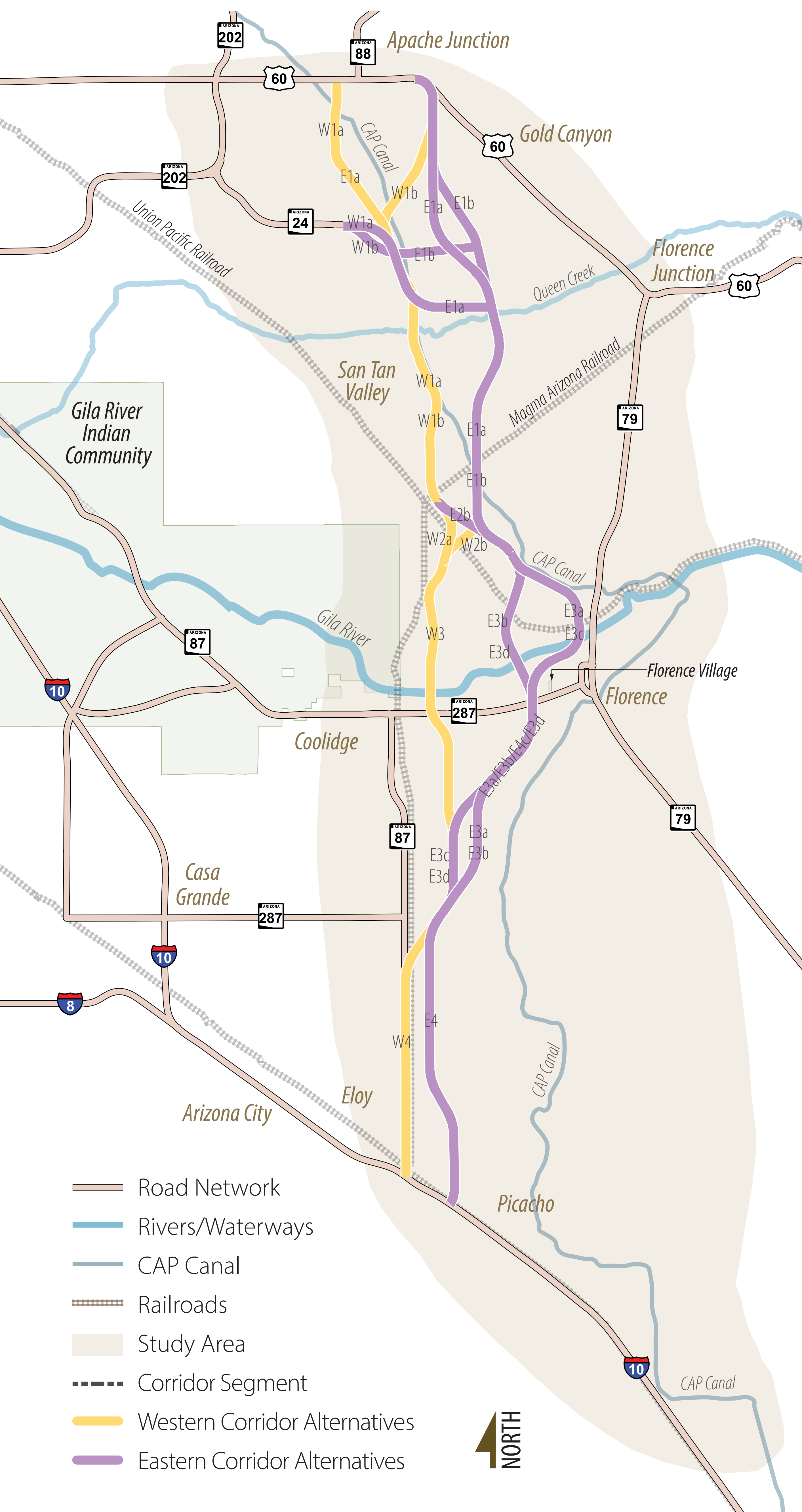


Integrate the region's transportation network

The proposed corridor would provide a critical link, currently missing, in the transportation network to provide regional connectivity.



DEVELOPMENT OF CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES



The range of corridor options to meet the **purpose and need** for the North-South Corridor are based on:

- public input
- local, regional, state, and federal agencies and tribal coordination
- findings from previous studies
- avoidance or minimization of environmental impacts

NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The **No-Build Alternative** is used as a baseline, or a benchmark, to compare against the **Build Corridor Alternatives**. It is used to understand the condition of the Study Area in the future with no proposed North–South Corridor freeway, and to understand how a Build Corridor Alternative could influence the Study Area—for better or worse.

The **No-Build Alternative** represents the existing transportation system, along with committed improvement projects that are programmed for funding.

Based on the findings of the Draft Tier 1 EIS, the **No-Build Alternative is not the recommended solution.**




PREFERRED CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE

The Preferred Corridor Alternative:

- Minimizes the potential for adverse impacts to sensitive environmental resources.
- **Best serves areas of planned growth**, including Apache Junction, Town of Florence, Coolidge, and Eloy.
- Serves existing and emerging economic activity centers within the Study Area, **providing critical connections** between employment hubs and the broader population.
- Would provide a **continuous north–south transportation facility**.
- Would **reduce congestion** throughout the Study Area over the No-Build Alternative in 2040.
- Provides an **alternate to I-10** to help alleviate congestion and help prevent bottlenecks during emergencies.



PREFERRED CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE RATIONALE

SEGMENT ID / LOCATION	RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION
 <p>E1b</p>	<p>SEGMENT 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Less disruptive to existing development and roadway network than Ironwood Drive connection.✓ Consistent with the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan and planning for Superstition Vistas.✓ Avoids impacts to Rittenhouse Army Heliport.✓ Lower risk of impacts to Section 4(f) properties (parks, recreation areas, and cultural resources).
<p>E2a</p>	<p>SEGMENT 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Connecting the better performing alternatives in Segment 1 and 3 guided the selection of the E2a Alternative.
<p>E3b</p>	<p>SEGMENT 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Less potential impacts to Gila River and associated drainage features.✓ Generally compatible with local land use planning.
<p>E4</p>	<p>SEGMENT 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Lower risk of residential and business displacements.✓ Lower risk of impacts on minority and/or low-income populations and historic properties.

CULTURAL RESOURCES (SECTION 106)



The impacts of a project on historic and archaeological resources are regulated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. ADOT evaluated how the proposed North–South Corridor project could impact cultural resources.

- ADOT considered the potential for impacts on the identified cultural resources in developing corridor alternatives and identifying the Preferred Corridor Alternative.
- In consultation with agencies, Tribes and other interested parties, ADOT drafted a Programmatic Agreement (PA) to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act.
- The draft PA will be revised, as necessary, in response to comments on the Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and executed in conjunction with the Final Tier 1 (EIS), before the Record of Decision (ROD) is issued.

The PA stipulates procedures to complete the inventory and evaluation of cultural resources and assess effects on properties listed in or eligible for the National Register for each Tier 2 project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

FHWA and ADOT evaluated the extent to which the construction and operation of the proposed North–South Corridor would affect biological resources. Federal, state and local regulations relevant to biological resources were reviewed and baseline data was collected on:

- Plant and animal biotic communities
- Protected species
- Designated or proposed critical habitats
- Wildlife movement corridors

The results of the biological resources analysis were considered when identifying the Preferred Corridor Alternative.

Mitigation strategies to avoid or minimize potential impacts to biological resources are included in the Preferred Corridor Alternative.

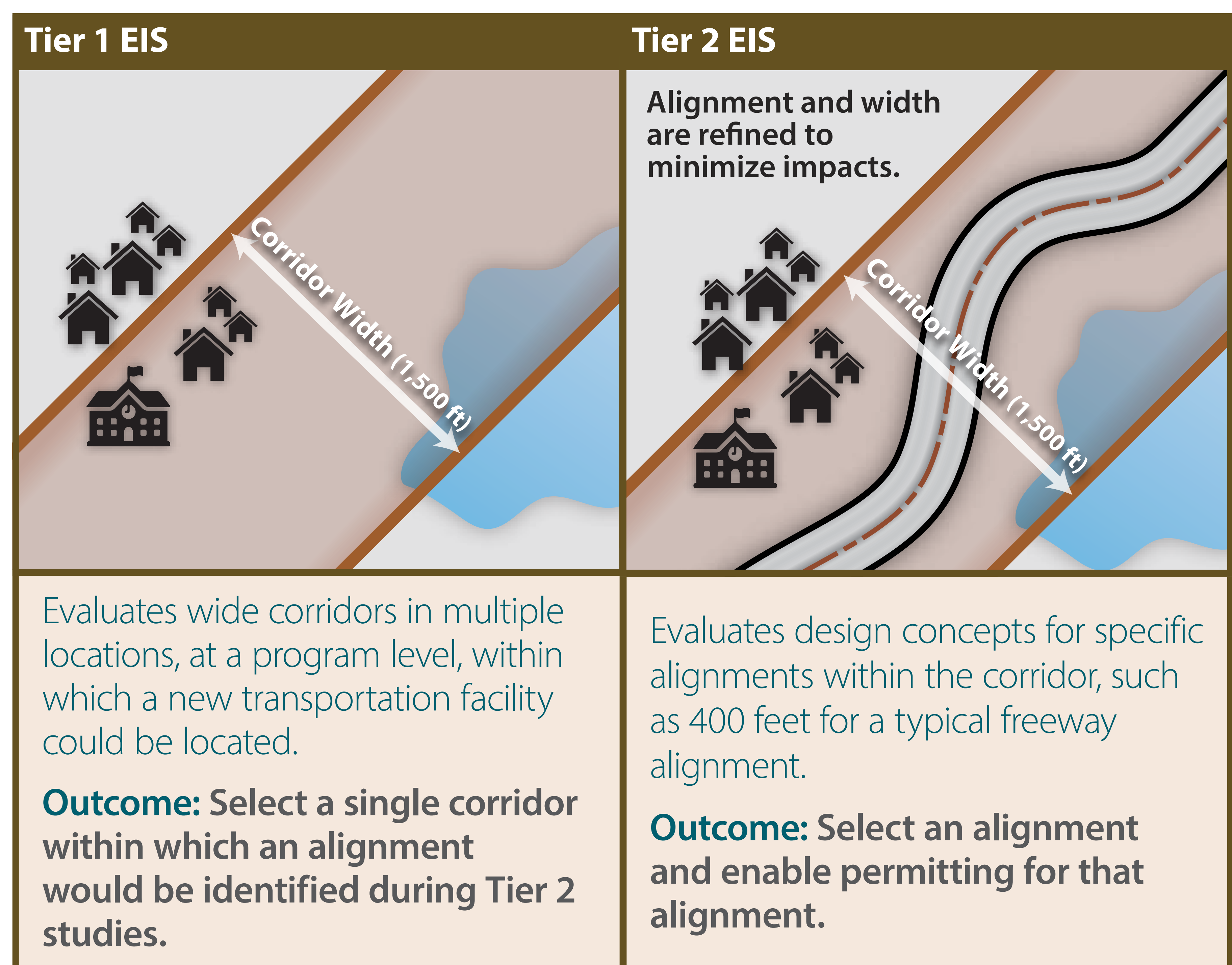


The analysis was conducted in coordination with cooperating agencies, including Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and others.

RIGHT-OF-WAY PROCESS

Right-of-Way property acquisition in the Study Process

- If a Build Corridor Alternative is selected, future Tier 2 studies would identify an approximately 400-foot-wide alignment within the 1,500-foot-wide corridor.
- If future Tier 2 studies determine that property acquisition is necessary, ADOT will notify and work with property owners, following the rules set forth in the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Future Tier 2 studies are currently unfunded and there is no timeline for a potential property acquisition process.



ADOT follows the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 which requires that property owners (residential and business) receive fair market value for their property and relocation benefits, and that displaced persons receive fair and equitable treatment and do not suffer disproportionate injuries because of programs designed for overall public benefit.

NEXT STEPS

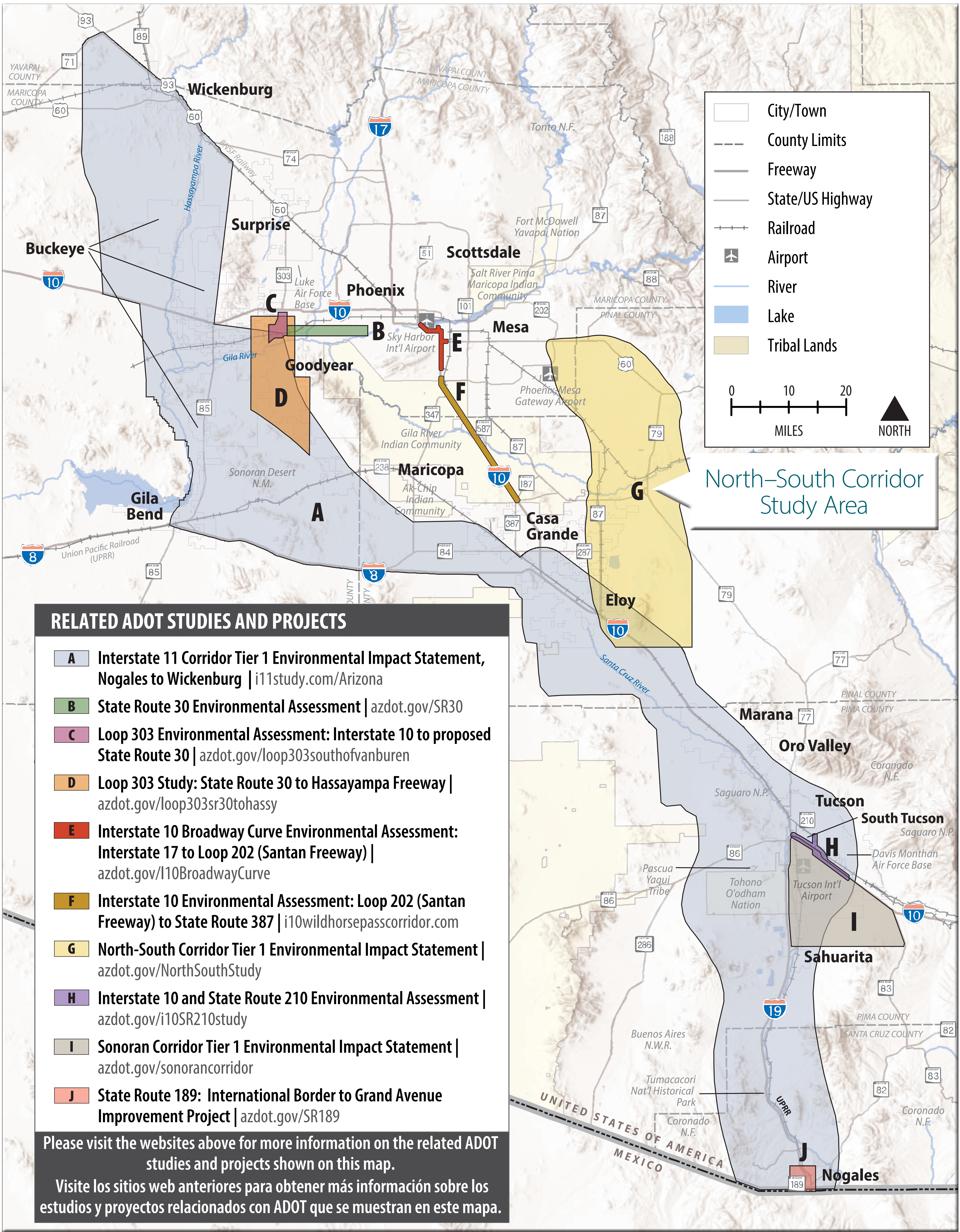
Public Review Period on Draft Tier 1 EIS

- The public review and comment period for the Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is September 6, 2019 through October 29, 2019.
- All comments and formal responses to comments will be included in the Final Tier 1 EIS and Record of Decision.

Final Tier 1 EIS and Record of Decision

- The Final Tier 1 EIS/Record of Decision (ROD) will be a combined document that consists of an FEIS and ROD.
- The Final Tier 1 EIS/ROD will take into consideration all of the comments received from the public, agencies, Tribes and stakeholders.
- The Final Tier 1 EIS/ROD will identify a Selected Corridor Alternative, which can be a No Build or Build Corridor Alternative.
- The Record of Decision identifies the Selected Corridor Alternative and describes the basis for the decision.
- If the Selected Corridor Alternative is a Build Corridor Alternative, it may endorse or modify the Preferred Corridor Alternative.
- If ADOT selects a Build Corridor Alternative, the Record of Decision will include strategies to minimize environmental impacts.

RELATED ADOT STUDIES AND PROJECTS



PROJECT MILESTONES

